

Council on Public Legal Education

MINUTES

June 1, 2009 - draft

Present:

CPLE Members:

Hon. Marlin Appelwick, Co-chair
Judith Billings, Co-chair
Hon. Mary Fairhurst*
Margaret Fisher
Paula Fraser
Julia Gold
Mark Lindquist*
Will Linser
Margit McGuire
Robert Pittman
Robert Russell
Barbara Serrano
Shannon Smith

Honorary Members, Liaisons, Committee Members, Guests & Staff:

Ayako Inayoshi
Pam Inglesby
Paula Littlewood
Nell McNamara
Caleb Perkins
Gail Stone
Norma Wright

** by telephone*

Welcome and Announcements

Welcome to Judge Ayako Inayoshi from Japan, a visiting scholar at the University of Washington School of Law researching law-related education.

CPLE Business

The minutes of the February 2009 CPLE meeting were approved.

Pam Inglesby reported the budget for CPLE meetings will likely be increased in the WSBA's budget for the fiscal year beginning October 1st to cover the cost of members travelling from Eastern Washington.

A special presentation of the CPLE's Flame of Democracy Award was made to Caleb Perkins, who is leaving his position as Supervisor of Social Studies at the state's Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. CPLE members gave him a standing ovation and expressed gratitude for his leadership in social studies assessment. In return, Caleb thanked the CPLE for its support of Civics education and assessment in the legislature, and pointed to the recent Civics Education Forum co-sponsored by the CPLE as an example of the kind of work that is helpful. His new position is in the administration of the New York City school district.

CPLE progress report for FY 2009 and goals for FY 2010

Pam Inglesby called attention to the CPLE progress report document in today's meeting materials which will be submitted, in a different format, to the WSBA Board of Governors as the annual committee report. The CPLE is also required to annually submit a list of goals for the coming fiscal year. Coincidentally, at the same time the BOG receives these reports it will also consider recommendations about the WSBA's Public Legal Education program submitted by the BOG's Program Review Committee.

Paula Littlewood, Executive Director of the WSBA, reported on the PLE program review. After consulting with many stakeholders (including the CPLE), WSBA staff is recommending to the Board of Governors that the WSBA's PLE program be focused on educating the public (both youth and adults) about the three branches of government. If this recommendation is adopted, the CPLE's future goals should be compatible with this focus. Paula also reported that WSBA President Elect Sal Mungia plans to start a program that will recruit volunteer lawyers to act as mentors to third grade classrooms with the goal of improving students' academic achievement in basic subjects and reducing future dropout rates. He hopes to involve other professions as well. The program will begin with three pilot sites (probably Tacoma, Yakima and White Center). CPLE members suggested that Civics could be integrated into the program, especially in reading and writing activities. This is particularly important as social studies is not being taught in many elementary schools. Sal will be asked if he would like to meet with interested CPLE members.

The following additions and clarifications were made to the CPLE's FY 2009 progress report:

- *Lawforwa website:*
 - The CPLE received feedback on the Public Service Announcement from someone who heard it on 1090AM via iTunes radio. He found it annoying.
 - Students from the Seattle University School of Law will start work this summer on developing the Legal Wellness area of the website.
 - A website development co-op has offered to move and redesign the website at a relatively low cost, assuming we can raise the funds.
- *Promote civics education:* The Civic Mission of Schools and CIRCLE want to do a study of Washington state's Civics classroom-based assessments, and possibly propose them as a model to the U.S. Department of Education.
- *Civics in the elementary grades:* There is good Civics curriculum material available for the elementary grades, and funding is available to provide the Center for Civic Education's Foundations of Democracy materials to one school.
- *Local PLE councils:* As a result of Bob Russell's efforts in Whitman County, Judge Doug Robinson is working on starting a youth court. The group that has been meeting is also interested in Street Law.

The following goals will be submitted to the WSBA's Board of Governors for FY 2010:

Big Picture:

- In synch with WSBA's guiding principles, educate the public about rule of law & courts.
- Audience: Focus on both K-12 and general public.
- Content: Focus on three branches of government as an umbrella that covers many topics.

- Other WSBA entities will also work on PLE re 3 branches of government – it will be a focus for the whole organization, not just the CPLE.
- What doesn't fit under the three branches of government? Educating about substantive law for its own sake, without reference to the three branches.

Extension of existing goals:

- Lawforwa:
 - Continue to maintain content
 - Expand content using S.U. law students
 - Restructure architecture
 - Find new home
- Street Law:
 - Two new sites and training for 2010-11 school year
 - Is there a way to use the judge volunteers who we don't have classrooms for?
- Youth Courts:
 - Collaborate with state association on trainings and conference with funding from WJF
 - Outreach: Presentations to stakeholders
- Flame of Democracy Award:
 - [Off year, but could give special award if appropriate]
- Promote civics education:
 - Stay on top of legislative activity and intercede as appropriate
 - Do another forum-type event that includes school administrators, students, legislators. Fall is better time for legislature. September – interim assembly – would need to be short. Or a holiday in January/February? Connect with Civic Education Day? Or focus more on administrators – look at their annual conferences – do something before or after or in conjunction? School directors association head former NCSS President.
 - Identify Civics education leaders in state and get them placed in speaking positions, TV, etc.
 - Publicize results of CBA reporting – pressure OSPI for results
- Civics in the elementary grades:
 - Work with WSBA President's initiative
 - Promote elementary civics CBAs, given legislative action resulting in de-emphasis – hold an event?
- Educating the general public:
 - Develop structure for educating public through media (newspapers and talk radio) – revive WSBA proposal for identifying spokespeople around the state to work with local media to promote discussion of legal issues and the courts as they arise (e.g., Supreme Court nominations, controversial rulings) – use volunteer lawyers, retired judges – address concepts such as judicial precedent – need to coordinate with WSBA's Deputy Director for External Relations – develop background materials to distribute to spokespeople and the media. Needs to be proactive – someone from WSBA needs to make the calls and develop relationships with editors/radio producers.
 - Start small – identify a couple markets/spokespeople?
- Local PLE:

- Assist Whitman County PLE Council as needed – they are starting a youth court and looking at other programs
- Pierce County – keep talking – connect with Sal’s elementary initiative in Tacoma? Assist as needed.
- Start two new ones – Clark County? Kitsap? Chelan?
- Professional Development for Teachers:
 - Continue workshops and display tables
- Civic Education Day:
 - Continue display table
- Coordination with other PLE:
 - Continue

New goals:

- How to collaborate with Civic Mission of Schools? Work with state coordinator. Work with OSPI on the research study?
- Have input into the OSPI search committee that’s replacing Caleb. Help new person stay focused on CBAs.
- Ask the Bar News to run an issue or article on PLE.

PLE Show & Tell

Justice Mary Fairhurst, Chair of the Board for Judicial Administration's Public Trust & Confidence Committee, reported that the PTC has created a Children's Activity Book and is looking for suggestions for how to publicize it to schools.

Margaret Fisher recently met Mary Beth Tinker (of the famous Supreme Court case on student free speech rights) and may recruit her to speak at a conference of the Washington State Council for the Social Studies.

Justice Mary Fairhurst reported that Sandra Day O'Connor will be in Seattle in September to participate in a program on judicial independence at the Seattle University School of Law. Justice Fairhurst is in touch with the event sponsors and has communicated to them the CPLE's hopes that O'Connor will also talk about Civics education when she is in Seattle.

ADJOURNMENT