



OJEN Algoma Committee Report

Sault Ste. Marie Virtual Courthouse Tours
2020-2021 Academic Year

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INTRODUCTION

Our OJEN Committee is comprised of different individuals coming from all areas of the justice system. Judges, Justices of the Peace (both presiding and retired), school board representatives, Managers of Court Operations, Supervisors of Court Operations, Mediators, and Court Services staff work together on the committee. Each member brings something unique and diverse to the team. Our team began facilitating school tours in April of 2021 and completed the school year in August 2021.

OUR OJEN COMMITTEE

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenging time for everyone. Our Sault Ste. Marie & Algoma Region OJEN team did not let the inability to have school visits in person inhibit access to justice for students.

MISSION

Our goal as a committee is to bring access to justice to the community. We are committed to creating a responsive and inclusive justice system for all members of the public to be able to experience. It was important to the team to continue to promote public understanding during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to us that both adults and youth have education revolving around the justice system. We also strive to include the youth in our community in the justice system in a positive environment. To continue to support the community, the group has been hosting virtual courthouse tours as program delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Access to Justice is important to us; let us share this opportunity with your classroom.

VIRTUAL COURTHOUSE TOURS

The team created a flyer to share with the school board representatives who shared with their teachers. The tours are hosted by Court Services Division members. They have toured students to different locations of the courthouse such as courtrooms, cells, Judicial Chambers, as well as stopped and talked to key players throughout.

The interactive virtual tour includes many different special guests as speakers, each tour being unique.

PRESENTERS & SPECIAL GUESTS

Our CSD staff reached out to members of the committee to speak on the tours as well as other members of the community and stakeholders. Our tours were a combination of several presenters including Superior Court Judges, Ontario Court Judges, Justices of the Peace, Assistant Crown Attorneys, Criminal Defence Lawyers, Family Law Lawyers, Legal Aid Lawyers, Mediators, and Sault Ste. Marie Police Service Special Constables. Each presenter spoke about their background, education, career path, studies, professional life, and more. Students were able to ask questions to each presenter during the tour. The tour was live each time and interactive with the participants and the students. Some of the speakers played mini trivia games with the students to keep them engaged and interactive. Students were able to learn about the importance of each role in the justice system. Our CSD staff gave a tour of one of our largest courtrooms in the Sault Ste. Marie Courthouse and explained the roles of the court staff in a courtroom as well as describing to the students where each player is located inside the courtroom.

SCHOOLS & STUDENTS

Creating a virtual platform for these courthouse tours allowed us to reach out to more students, youth, teachers, and members of the public. In the 2020-2021 academic year, our OJEN committee toured over **23 classes** in the Algoma Region. During this time, we reached more students than we ever have been able to accommodate before. Our tours were hosted by ZOOM and administered by one of our CSD staff. We had two tour hosts and one cameraman. Our Sault Ste. Marie Special Constables joined us on the tours to share their role in the justice system with all the participants.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY OF LAW YOUTH SUMMER PROGRAM

A member of the U of T Faculty of Law Youth Summer Program reached out regarding the observation of a court proceeding and what better way to show access to justice than through one of our courthouse tours. We had the opportunity to provide a tour to both their Trial Advocacy Module and their Criminal Law Module. The Trial Advocacy Program had **15 students** and the Criminal Law Module had **27 students**. These students came from all over Canada and the world including Vancouver, Alberta, Ottawa, Dubai, Shanghai China, Hong Kong and the Toronto region.

SURVEY RESULTS

CSD staff created a survey monkey survey to send each of the participants to complete at the end of each tour to gain positive and constructive feedback.