

155407



STUDENT COURT

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North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence
3824 Barrett Drive, Suite 303, Raleigh, N.C. 27609-7220
1-800-299-6054 • 919-571-4954 • FAX: 919-571-4957

155407

**U.S. Department of Justice
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THE PROBLEM

In schools today administrators and teachers find themselves dealing with problems that were non-existent a half century ago. In 1940, public school teachers rated the top disciplinary problems as talking out of turn, chewing gum, running in the halls and cutting in line. (Source: U.S. News & World Report, November 8, 1993). Today, educators are being asked to address societal issues with which most are not formally trained to cope. This allows less time to be devoted to core educational courses. Addressing such societal issues has encroached upon classroom time normally devoted to the base educational curriculum. Administrators are finding their time taken by the demands of dealing with offenses which may require the attention of local law enforcement. These offenses include weapons possession, assaults, drug and alcohol possession/abuse, robbery and rape. The issues mentioned, although still a concern to school officials, have forced administrators to look to other avenues of enforcement for school discipline codes. Students, on the other hand, want to be talked *with*, not *at*.

In an effort which has been modeled after N.C. Administrative Office of the Court program, Smithfield-Selma High School has established a system to allow students to be judged by a peer jury. It is the intent of the school's administration to transfer some of the burden of discipline enforcement from the administration by allowing students to be disciplined in **Student Court**.

THE PROGRAM'S PURPOSE

Student Court is structured in a manner similar to Superior Court and is designed to offer the student offender an alternative to Out-Of-School Suspension imposed by the Administration. The additional benefit to the Student is that Student Court gives an insight to the procedural steps which one might encounter in Superior Court.

In addition to the benefits realized by the student offender, the students who take on the roles of Judges, Jurors, School and Student Advocate Teams, Clerks and Probation Officers are students enrolled in the Social Studies Department's Judicial Review and Court Training Classes. The Student Court reinforces the lessons learned in class and lends a practical experience which would not be cost effective to teach in another setting.

STEPS IN THE PROGRAM

The Student Court is an alternative judgement program dealing with violations of the Johnston County Board of Education Code of Student Conduct. Violations of the general student rules of Smithfield-Selma High School are referred to this program by the school's administration. Student Court deals with *Level One* (See attached) violations of the conduct code. These violations include profanity, smoking in unauthorized areas, littering, possession of electronic equipment, food/drink in unauthorized areas, insubordination, cheating, gambling and overly affectionate behavior between students.

The judicial principle "innocent until proven guilty" is the foundation for the Student Court. Students appearing before the Court take an active role in their own defense. Preparation for Student Court is offered to the accused by students enrolled in the Social Studies Department's Judicial Review and Court Training Classes. Students in these law-related education classes take on the roles of Judge, Jury, Defense and Prosecution Team. The Principal reviews and approves all Student Court adjudications. The desired outcome of the Student Court is best found in their **Mission Statement** which reads:

We, the Student Judiciary of Smithfield-Selma High School, will promote a culture based on teamwork and respect for the individual, will initiate harmony between the administration and students, and will enhance the success of the school community. By striving for consistency in quality decision-making, we will provide a positive influence on the student body, will uphold the Johnston County School Board policies, and will strive for equality and fairness while promoting the safety and well-being of the entire student body. We, the Student Judiciary, have been given the opportunity and the ability to make a real difference. Vision, with dedication to our mission, can change the world!

PROCEDURES

1. The Administrator informs the student eligible for entry into Student Court of the judicial alternatives. If the student decides to have their case heard by the Student Court as opposed to being handled by the Administration, the following steps will occur. (See Form #:1-SC)
2. The Administrator advises the Student Court of the request for adjudication as well as the parties involved in the alleged offense and a description of the alleged offense.

3. The student is given a form (Form # 2-SC) to be signed by a Parent or Guardian advising those individuals that the student has chosen to be judged by a jury of their peers in an adversarial setting. The accused will be required to present a case showing their innocence. The student is given two school days to return this form or the offense will be dealt with by the office and not the Student Court. When the form is received, the following will occur.
4. The accused student will be contacted by the Student Advocate Team (defense counsel). The Court Process is explained to the defendant and the possibility of a plea bargain is discussed. If a plea bargain is requested by the defendant, then the Student Advocate Team will meet with students assigned to the School Advocate Team (prosecution) for review of the plea. If there is no plea, the School Advocate Team, also comprised of students, will proceed with arraignment. (Form #:3-SC).
5. The Student Judge assigned to the case reads the charges against the student and at that time the student may enter a plea of *guilty* or *not guilty*. Plea bargains, if applicable, are stated by the School Advocate Team and the consequences and conditions of noncompliance with any possible sentences given by the Student Court are explained. Final approval of a guilty plea rests with the Administrator. If the student pleads not guilty, a trial date is set by the Judge. (Form #:4-SC).
6. The Student is formally arraigned before the Judge. The charges are read and the student, formally, presents their plea of *guilty* or *not guilty*. The Administrator is informed of any guilty pleas and has two school days to accept the plea and approve the sentence and set up a monitoring schedule. If the student has plead not guilty, a trial date is set. (Forms # 5-SC,6-SC,7-SC).
7. Pretrial activities include the subpoenaing of witnesses and a review of the evidence by both the School and Student Advocate Teams.(Forms # 9-SC, 10-SC).
8. The Student Court is called into session by the Clerk. Opening statements are made to the Jury (4 jurors) by both the School advocate Team and Student Advocate Team, respectively. All witnesses testifying under an Oath of Truthful Testimony and records of that testimony are recorded. Closing arguments are made by both Teams. The Judge instructs the Jury to base their verdict solely on the evidence presented and to return a verdict, in writing, with an explanation of that verdict. The Judge cases any tie-breaking votes. The Administration is informed of the verdict. (Forms # 11-SC, 12-SC & 10-SC).

10. Within three days of the trial's completion the Jury Foreman, whom the Jurors select, announces the Verdict in a reconvened Court. The Judge announces any sentence, if applicable, to the Student. The Student is also informed of the Administration's approval/disapproval of the sentence and the consequences of noncompliance. (Forms #13-SC, 14-SC & 17-SC).
11. The Clerk forwards to the Administrator the case file with the respective forms showing guilt or innocence. Approval or rejection of the sentence is returned to the Student Court within two days.
12. The Student is notified by the Probation Officers of the implementation of sentence. Class schedules are obtained by the Probation Officers and reports are filed following each supervisory contact between the Student and the Probation Officers. Should the terms of the sentence be violated the Student is brought back into Student Court for a Revocation Hearing and referral to the Administrator for implementation of the original suspension (Forms #15-SC & 16-SC).
13. A follow-up Evaluation of the Student by the Probation Officers is completed and reviewed. All court Transcripts, forms Probation Officers reports as well as other materials pertaining to Student Court are kept on file with the Student Court (Forms #18-SC & 19-SC).

If you are interested in starting a Student Court in your school, please contact your principal or the North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence. Additional information on this program may be obtained by contacting:

Ms. Vennie James
Program Director
Student Court
Smithfield-Selma High School
Booker Diary Road
Smithfield, N.C. 27577
(919) 934-5191

The following pages are examples of forms used by Student Court at Smithfield-Selma High School.

To be placed in Case File

STUDENT COURT CASE DATA SHEET

STUDENT: _____ Case _____

Offense : _____

Date of Offense _____ Judge assigned to Case: _____

Arraignment Date : _____

Arraignment Plea: _____ *Guilty** _____ *Not Guilty***

*If *Guilty* plea was entered, plea bargain agreement submitted by both
Advocate Teams:

** If a *Not Guilty* plea was entered, witnesses to be subpoenaed:

Name: _____ th Period Teacher _____

Name: _____ th Period Teacher _____

Name: _____ th Period Teacher _____

Trial Date _____

Trial Verdict: _____

Sentence, If applicable _____

Probation Officer(s) assigned to case: _____

Other Comments: _____

Submit this Form to _____ Form # 1-SC

Student Request For _____ Student Court

Adjudication / Administration Referral

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date _____

_____ Period. Teacher _____ Room: _____

Description of Accusation: _____

Date(s) of Incident: _____
Individuals Involved: _____

Reason(s) for requesting to appear before the Student Court:

Signature of Student

Date

Administrator: _____

Comments: _____

Signature of Administrator

Date

Return on copy of signed form to: _____
within 2 School Days.

Student: _____ Date: _____

Alleged Offense: _____

Dear Parent of Guardian of the above mentioned Student:

_____ High School has established a Student Court. This program is directed and staffed by students participating in the _____ class. A Student facing disciplinary action by the School's Administration may agree to have the matter turned over to the Student Court.

The Student Court operates under the same premise a court does within our nation's Judicial System. The proceedings are in an adversarial form and the facts of the case are brought before a jury of the Student's peers. Participants in the Court receive instructions on the various responsibilities of the Student Court.

In order for the Student Court to begin processing your child's case, you and your child must sign this form indicating acceptance of the Student Court's jurisdiction to adjudicate this matter.

The Court maintains the belief that rehabilitative measures are more effective in correcting student problems than punitive actions. However, punitive actions may be necessary. The Court's goal is to hopefully redirect the Student's attention back to the real reason for being at _____ High School; **to learn!**

Please return this form signed by you and your child with 2 School days in order that Student Court may promptly begin processing the case. An extra copy is enclosed for your record. If this signed form is not received by _____ in Room _____ within the 2 day period, the case will be returned to the office for disciplinary action.

Signature of Student

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

(Do not write below this line)

Date Received _____ Received by _____
Assigned Case # _____

To be filed with Student Court

STUDENT AFFIDAVIT OF CASE FACTS

Name of Student Defendant: _____ Case # _____

Date of Offense: _____

Persons involved in Alleged Incident(s):

In your own words, write a detailed description of the Alleged Incident.

TRUTH OF TESTIMONY AFFIDAVIT

I, _____, hereby pledge to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
nothing by the truth while appearing before the
_____ High School Student Court.

Signature of Student

Date

NOTICE OF ARRAIGNMENT

Student: _____ Date: _____

Case #: _____

You are hereby summoned to appear before Judge _____
of the Student Court for formal arraignment on _____ in
Date
Room _____ at _____ Period.

Inform your _____ Period teacher of this summons by the end of
the day. *You* are totally responsible for all work that is missed in this class while
attending this arraignment hearing. Bring this summons with you as your Hall Pass.

*Failure to appear on the above assigned date will disqualify your case for
Student Court adjudication, unless absence is excused.*

Judge, Student Court

Program Director

Filed by Clerk only if Plea Bargain is a Factor

STUDENT COURT JUDGEMENT / GUILTY PLEA

Defendant: _____

Date: _____

Student Advocate: _____

Judge: _____

Offense: _____

**Guilty Plea Entered at Arraignment*

Sentence: _____

Special Court Provisions; if applicable: _____

Signature of Court Clerk

Program Director

Signature of Judge

NOTICE OF TRIAL DATE

Student: _____ Date: _____

Case #: _____

You are hereby summoned to appear before Judge _____
of the Student Court for trial on _____ in Room _____
(Date)
at _____ Period.

Inform your _____ Period teacher of this summons by the end of the day.
You are totally responsible for all work that is missed in this class while attending this trial. Bring this summons with you as your Hall Pass.

Failure to appear on the above assigned date will disqualify your case for Student Court adjudication, unless absence is excused.

Judge, Student Court

Program Director

Bring this form to court as your hall pass.

Inform your _____ Period teacher of your court date.

STUDENT COURT SUBPOENA

The _____ class of _____ High School

requires that _____ appears before the Student Court on
(Name)

_____ during _____ period. We request your
(Date)

presence to testify on a matter concerning _____
(defendant)

Judicial Advocate (School/Student)
Circle one

Date

Presiding Judge

Program Director

To be filed with Student Court

WITNESS TRUTH OF TESTIMONY AFFIDAVIT

Case #: _____

I, _____, hereby pledge to tell the
truth, and nothing but the truth while appearing before the Student Court.

Witness Signature

Date

Judge

Return to _____ ASAP.

STAFF AFFIDAVIT OF TESTIMONY

* This form is submitted in lieu of appearing before the court. You are welcome to testify in person the day of the trial if you are available at _____ period. Your cooperation in our collection of evidence is greatly appreciated.

Name: _____

Case # _____

Defendant: _____

Position: _____

Date of Violation/Offense: _____

Persons involved in incident: _____

In your own words, write a detailed description of the incident.

Signature of Witness

Date

NOTICE OF VERDICT / SENTENCING HEARING

Defendant: _____ Case #: _____

Presiding Judge: _____

_____ is summoned to appear before the Student Court
(Defendant)

in Room # _____ on _____ at _____ Period.
(Date)

Failure to appear on the above assigned date will disqualify your case for Student Court adjudication, unless absence is excused.

You are to show this summons to your _____ Period teacher and use this as your hall pass. You are totally responsible for all work missed while attending this hearing.

Judge, Student Court

Program Director

Date

To be completed by each Juror after deliberating verdict.

JUROR VERDICT JUSTIFICATION

Defendant: _____ Case #: _____

Personal Verdict: Guilty _____ Not Guilty: _____

Explanation of why I chose my verdict:

Signature of Juror

Date

To be given to Defendant, and copy filed with court.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VERDICT/SENTENCE

Defendant: _____ Case: _____

Verdict: _____ Guilty: _____ Not Guilty: _____

Sentence: _____

Date to begin sentence will be worked out with Probation Officer and defendant.

*Student may appeal court's decision to Principal.

Witnessed by:

Presiding Judge

Signature of Defendant

Date

Date

Return this form signed to Student Court within 2 days

**ADMINISTRATION APPROVAL OF STUDENT COURT
SENTENCE**

Defendant: _____

Case#: _____

Offense: _____

Date: _____

Jury's Verdict: The above mentioned student has been found to be *guilty* by the Student Court of the above mentioned offense. Case file materials are enclosed for your review.

Sentence: _____

Approved: _____ Rejected: _____
(Please indicate reasons)

Comments: _____

Received from Administration

Signature of Principal

Date

Date

Return this form signed to Student Court within 2 days

ADMINISTRATION APPROVAL OF STUDENT COURT ACQUITTAL

Defendant: _____ Case#: _____

Date: _____

Offense: _____

Jury's Verdict: The above mentioned student has been found to be not guilty by the Student court of the above mentioned offense. Case file transcripts, and Jury Verdict Justifications - Form # 13-SC are enclosed as justification for acquittal in this case. *If the Principal would like to meet with the Student Court to formally explain their not guilty finding, please accept the Court's invitation.

Approved: _____

Rejected: _____
(please indicate reasons)

Comments: _____

Received from Administration

Signature of Principal

Date

Date

To be completed by Probation Officer and filed with Court

PROBATION OFFICERS' REPORT

Officer: _____

Convicted Student: _____

Date of Sentencing: _____

Court Sentence: _____

Date of Review: _____

Officer Review: _____

Date of Next Review: _____

Probation Officer

To be completed by Student Defendant

Send to _____, Room _____

EVALUATION OF STUDENT COURT

Student Defendant: _____ Case: _____

- 1) Do you feel that your case was tried fairly? If not, why?
- 2) Did your Student Advocate explain the court process to you?
Yes _____ No _____
- 3) In your opinion, was the Student Advocate adequately knowledgeable about your case?
- 4) Has your experience with the Student Court process been "rehabilitative"?
Explain.
- 5) If you get in trouble again, will you choose to have your case heard by the Student Court? If no, why?

Student signature

Date

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HONEST EVALUATION

JOHNSTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT (Grades 4 - 12)



The Johnston County Board of Education requires the maintenance of good order in the schools. All students shall comply with the Code of Student Conduct, state and federal laws, school board policies, and local school rules governing student behavior and conduct. The code applies to any student who is on school property, including school vehicles, who is in attendance at any school-sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or place has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline or protecting the safety and welfare of students or staff in the schools. Principals are authorized to enlist the aid of law enforcement in the event of serious violations and are required to involve law enforcement officials when the violation may be considered a felony in this state.

LEVEL ONE VIOLATIONS - The following conduct is prohibited as outlined below:

1. **Dress** - No student's appearance or clothing will be accepted if it is deemed disruptive, provocative, indecent, vulgar, or obscene, or if it endangers the health or safety of the student or others.
2. **Gambling** - No student may participate in any unauthorized event, action or statement which relies on chances for the monetary advantage of one participant at the expense of others.
3. **Verbal Abuse/Disrespect** - No student may participate in serious or persistent verbal action that prevents an orderly and peaceful learning environment. Cursing, using vulgar, obscene, or abusive language including slurs or insults intended to mock a person's race, religion, sex, national origin, disability or intellectual ability or using sexually offensive or degrading language, are specifically prohibited.
4. **Peer Relations** - No student shall engage in behavior which is immoral, indecent, overly affectionate, or of a sexual nature in the school setting. Also, no student shall engage in sexually harassing behavior toward another student.
5. **Integrity** - No student may engage in or attempt to engage in cheating, plagiarism, falsification, violation of software copyright laws, or violation of computer access. Students are subject to disciplinary action and/or academic penalty.
6. **Disruption** - No student shall, by use of passive resistance, noise, threat, fear, intimidation, coercion, force, violence, or any other form of conduct cause the disruption of any lawful function, mission, or process of the school, nor shall any student urge any other student to engage in such conduct.
7. **Threats** - No student shall direct toward any person within the school context any language, sign, or act which constitutes a threat of force or violence.
8. **Hazing** - No student shall participate in hazing. No group or individual shall require a student to wear abnormal dress, play abusive or ridiculous tricks on him/her, frighten, scold, swear, harass, or subject him/her to personal indignity.
9. **Fire Alarms** - No student shall set off, attempt to set off, or aid and abet anyone in giving a false fire alarm. No student shall interfere with or damage any part of a fire alarm, fire detection, smoke detection or fire extinguishing system.
10. **Intimidation** - No student shall attempt to extort money, personal property, or personal services.
11. **Protests** - No student on or off any school campus shall engage in any protest, march, picket, sit-in, or similar activity which has as its purpose the disruption of any lawful function, mission, or process of the school.
12. **Boycotts** - No student shall participate in any boycott or walk-out of any lawful school function at which attendance is required.
13. **Disruptive or Obscene Literature and Illustrations** - No student shall possess or distribute literature or illustrations that are obscene or that significantly disrupt the educational process.
14. **Fighting** - No student shall hit, shove, scratch, bite, block the passage of, or throw objects at another person. No student shall take any action or make comments or written messages which might reasonably be expected to result in a fight.
15. **Theft** - No student shall steal, attempt to steal, or knowingly be in possession of stolen property.
16. **Damage to Property** - No student may intentionally damage or attempt to damage or deface school or private property while under school jurisdiction.
17. **Smoking** - No student in grades K-8 shall use any tobacco product in any school building or school bus at any time or on the school premises during the school day. Students sixteen years of age and older and those under sixteen with parent's permission in grades nine through twelve may use tobacco products on school premises according to the time, place, and conditions approved by the local school administration, in accordance with state laws.
18. **Trespassing** - No student shall be on campus of any school except the one to which the student is assigned during the school day without the knowledge and consent of the officials of that school. Students who loiter at any school after the close of the school day without special need or the proper supervision are trespassers and may be prosecuted if they do not leave when instructed to do so. A student under suspension from school is trespassing if he/she appears on the property of any school during the suspension period without the express permission of the principal.

(OVER)

19. **Conduct on the School Bus** - No student, while riding a school bus or other school vehicle, shall fail to follow the directives of the school bus driver and the rules and regulations of school bus safety as well as the rules of the Code of Student Conduct. Violation of these rules may result in temporary or permanent suspension from the privilege of school transportation services as well as from school.

Penalty - The first violation of any of the Level One offenses may result in *short-term suspension* from the Johnston County Public School system for up to ten (10) days. A second violation of Level One offenses during a school year may result in *long-term suspension* from the Johnston County Public School System for the remainder of the school year or in some cases the option of placement in the alternative school for a period of not less than nine (9) weeks.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

By Daniel de Vise

Court is in Session: Lindbergh Middle School Students Strike a Gavel for Justice

LONG BEACH, Calif. — Regina Chaney never liked the idea of sending errant students to the principal's office.

It was a routine that seldom satisfied teachers or administrators at Lindbergh Middle School, and it rarely caused students to change their behaviors. Mostly it created stacks of paperwork and piles of resentment.

"A lot of the referrals were for things like tardies and detention," she said. "And the administrators weren't being freed up to handle things like fights, vandalism, weapons on campus."

So, two years ago, Chaney decided to take justice into her own hands. And then she just as quickly passed the power on to her students.

Using concepts that she was already teaching in her English and history classes, Chaney created Student Court, a model of the American juvenile justice system in which students become jurists and settle real adolescent disputes.

"You can't make a child do anything. Middle school administrators need to realize that," Chaney said. "What Student Court does is it puts the responsibility of learning discipline back on the student."

Chaney conducts Student

Court training during several class sessions each year, including lessons in basic courtroom procedures, legal terminology and sentencing. She doesn't limit Student Court participation to honors students. Jurists can come from any grade in the school, whose diverse student population consists primarily of Hispanic, African-American and Asian students.

"It's that average kid that you want to target," she said. "It's the kid sitting at the back of the class."

Chaney conducts Student Court on an occasional basis throughout the school year. Cases usually come from teachers who have filed complaints with the principal. Student grievances are handled by a separate panel of students and teachers who comprise the Conflict Management Team.

Chaney's Student Court team handles six types of complaints: attendance problems; disruptive classroom behavior; defiance of authority; malicious mischief, including graffiti and other minor property damage; sexual harassment; and obscene or vulgar acts. Student Court won't resolve fights, weapons or drug charges, or other violent confrontations. Those cases go straight to school administrators or, in some instances, to the Long Beach Police Department.

With the exception of suspension and expulsion, Student Court jurists may choose nearly any punishment permitted in the school's discipline code including detention, Saturday school and a team conference, which brings together the student's teachers, parents and an administrator to discuss the child's record.

A Student Court officer is assigned to monitor every case. Students who don't complete their sentences must appear before the court again and receive a more severe punishment. Only four students have ever defied the court's ruling, Chaney said.

Initial results of the program seem promising. Of the 215 cases that went before Student Court in the 1993-94 school year, only five involved repeat

offenders. No student broke the same rule twice.

In addition, Chaney



Left: Regina Chaney a teacher at Lindbergh Middle School in Long Beach, who developed the Student Court, poses a question. Below: LaTendra McDuffie, who was referred to the court by her teacher because of her bad attitude and lack of preparation for class, sits on a stool while students ask questions.



believes Student Court has helped her students focus more on their studies. Her eighth-grade students have consistently scored among the highest in the school on achievement tests, which she attributes to the intensive writing assignments required of Student Court participants.

Chaney has developed a manual for Student Court and copyrighted it for use by other teachers. Four other Lindbergh teachers are studying the manual and hope to use it with their classes. Teachers from other Long Beach schools have observed Student Court sessions.

Adelmo Martinez, Lindbergh's principal, said Student Court has helped improve student conduct schoolwide and freed up school administrators to concentrate on academic issues.

"I've been an educator for 21 years, and I've not seen such a positive school climate anywhere," he said.

When a Student Court session begins, Chaney dispatches student bailiffs with summonses to fetch the alleged offenders from class.

One case involved Chris Coleman and Norma Castillo, sixth-graders who were accused of disrupting class with their constant bickering. A student court officer escorted Norma to the court room. A second officer brought in Chris, who walked in an exaggerated circle around Norma and pushed his stool away from hers before sitting down.

"Why do you guys bicker with each other?" one student jurist asked. "There has to be a reason."

Chris offered hesitant testimony: "Most of the time she sits up there and talks to all her friends and says, 'Chris is a little punk, and he's got chicken legs,'" he said. "Later on, I say something back."

Norma shook her head as Chris spoke but added nothing.

After hearing all the testimony, the jurists went to work, discussing the case in groups. The verdict: one work detention each — 45 minutes of clean-up detail after school.

During another session, student bailiffs brought seventh-

grader LaTendra McDuffie to Student Court. The charge: failing to bring appropriate materials to class and mouthing off to her teacher.

The court commissioner read the charges, and then the questioning began.

"Why are you so defiant when the teacher asks you to do something," one jurist asked.

"Because I'm not going to stand in the corner if I didn't do anything," LaTendra answered.

"Do you think it would help if you could talk to her and tell her it's not fair," the jurist asked.

"Yeah," LaTendra acknowledged.

"How come you don't turn in your homework?" another jurist asked.

LaTendra said her mother works a lot, and often isn't available to help her with homework. And when she asks for guidance in class, LaTendra said her teacher typically responds: "I don't have time right now."

During their deliberations, the Student Court officers discussed ways to improve communications between LaTendra, her mother and her teacher. They decided to schedule a team conference.

A bailiff brought LaTendra back to the court room to hear the verdict. She grimaced, but otherwise accepted her fate calmly.

Before LaTendra left, a Student Court officer went to a supply closet and got some new folders, pencils and pens for LaTendra to use in class. Other officers opened their own school binders and, one by one, handed her sheets of blank paper.

Justice served. ■

Daniel de Vise is an education reporter at the Long Beach Press-Telegram.