

Chief Justice Tani G. Cantil-Sakauye and State Superintendent Tom Torlakson Announce a New Civic Learning Award For California Public High Schools

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Civic Learning Award? The Civic Learning Award is designed to celebrate successful civic education efforts by California public high schools and identify replicable models. The Award has three levels: Awards of Excellence, Distinction, and Merit. Award of Excellence winners will receive a visit by the Chief Justice; Award of Distinction and Merit will receive a visit by Appellate or Superior Court judicial officer volunteers. All schools will also receive a plaque. Members of the Leadership Group on Civic Education and Public Outreach will invite judicial officers to volunteer to make presentations if there are winners in their jurisdiction, and group members will be poised and ready to make the presentation themselves if volunteers are not available.

How will the winners be selected? A selection committee of volunteer education leaders and judicial officers will judge the applications based on the depth and breadth of the schools' implementation of research based proven practices in civic learning, as described in the [Guardian of Democracy: Civic Mission of Schools](#) report and outlined in the award application.

Where can I find the award application? The application is available on-line at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/civiclearningaward.asp> and <http://www.courts.ca.gov/programs-lawrelated.htm>

What can Superior and Appellate Courts do? Superior and Appellate Courts are invited to post the links to the award on their website, and/or announce the award to local schools, as appropriate. Superior and Appellate Court judicial officers may be invited to volunteer to present an Award of Distinction or Merit to a school within their jurisdiction in the spring.

What authorization do courts have for doing outreach? Judicial Administration of Justice Standard 10.5., on the role of the judiciary in the community, states in part: "Judicial participation in community outreach activities should be considered an official judicial function" and California Rule of Court 10.603. states in part that the authority and duties of a presiding judge are to "support and encourage the judges to actively engage in community outreach."

Who is organizing this award? The award is being organized under the auspices of the Leadership Group on Civic Education and Public Outreach. The group was established by the Judicial Council to implement Commission for Impartial Courts (CIC) final report recommendations related to civic education and outreach.

How is the award program funded? A cost/benefit analysis determined that the Judicial Branch can fulfill civic education related recommendations of the CIC report in part, with an award program, without expending judicial branch funds. The State Bar Foundation will provide funding for judicial travel and the plaques.

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