



PIKESVILLE MOCK TRIAL

Pikesville's Mock Trial team competes in the program sponsored by the Maryland State Bar Association's Citizenship Law Related Education Program (CLREP; www.clrep.org). We compete in the Third Judicial Circuit against public and private high schools from Baltimore and Harford Counties. Our cases are heard at the Circuit Court in Towson. Pikesville is one of only three schools to have won the state championship three times.

We receive a case and related materials in mid to late November. We then assign roles to our team members and begin our practices. Practices are usually an hour and a half for four days a week from December 1st until the season ends. We have a couple of preliminary matches in late January and the single-elimination tournament begins in early February. The season could be over then, or continue through to the district championship in early March and beyond. (The state championship matches are in mid-April.)

There are two types of roles for team members to play and, therefore, two types of students that we need for our team. One role is to be a lawyer. There are three lawyers on each side of the case (Prosecution vs. Defense or Plaintiff vs. Defense). Lawyers need to learn acceptable and effective means of questioning witnesses. They need to be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of their case and to analyze the legal and factual issues involved. They usually enjoy argument, debate, and public speaking. Two of the lawyers will be selected to present opening and closing arguments in the case.

We also need witnesses. There are three witnesses for each side of the case, usually a mix of fact and expert witnesses. Effective witnesses often have a theatrical background. They are playing a part and they need to play it convincingly. At the same time, they need to memorize the affidavit that describes their backgrounds and knowledge about the case so that they can't be tripped up on cross-examination.

Interested students should listen for announcements about tryouts in October. For questions, or to indicate interest, contact Mr. Dresner: jdresner@bcps.org