

# MSBA HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL PROGRAM DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN

## **HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MISSION**

To support and promote recruiting efforts of attorneys and judges to participate in the regional and state tournaments; select the case to be used for the upcoming year and determine clarifications; resolve disputes regarding competition rules and to update rules as needed; resolve disputes regarding ranking and scoring when MSBA staff is not present; to secure additional funding for the Mock Trial program through fundraising efforts with outside organizations and the Amicus Society; help promote the Mock Trial program to schools, and assist with securing CLE credit for training for attorneys and judges involved in judging/and or coaching in the Mock Trial program.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Minnesota High School Mock Trial Program is an exciting law-related education program that introduces students to the American legal system and provides a challenging opportunity for personal growth and achievement. Students exercise their critical thinking and teamwork skills, as well as basic skills learned in the classroom.

The MSBA High School Mock Trial Program understands that diversity and inclusion is an important part of the success of the program. Volunteer lawyers from diverse backgrounds serve as important mentors for the students.

The High School Mock Trial program works with high schools, courthouses, and volunteer lawyers to include all students regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status and other types of diversity.

## **PRINCIPAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION GOAL**

The High School Mock Trial program has the following principal diversity and inclusion strategic goals:

1. To purposefully attract, include, and involve legal professionals from all backgrounds.
2. To attract and promote high school students and teacher coaches from all backgrounds to participate in the program, with a focus on schools with a highly diverse student population.
3. To identify any specific barriers affecting specific backgrounds and work towards eliminating those barriers to ensure individuals from all backgrounds are welcomed and continue to stay involved with the program.
4. To implement non-binary language in the competition case materials and to continue to promote this change nationally with other State High School Mock Trial programs.

## **IMPLEMENTATION STEPS**

### **Goal Number One: To purposefully attract, include, and involve legal professionals from all backgrounds.**

1. Reach out to MSBA Section members to volunteer as a coach or competition judge, addressing the need to promote diversity which aligns with their goals.
2. Reach out to Affinity Bar members to solicit volunteer coaches or competition judges, addressing the need to promote diversity.

### **Goal Number Two: To attract and promote high school students and teacher coaches from all backgrounds to participate in the program, with a focus on schools with a highly diverse student population.**

1. Identify high schools that do not participate.
2. Contact Activities Director or Principal to set up an introduction meeting.
3. Work with interested high schools to promote program with the students.
4. Reach out to lawyer membership to find a volunteer attorney coach.

### **Goal Number Three: To identify any specific barriers affecting specific backgrounds and work towards eliminating those barriers to ensure individuals from all backgrounds are welcomed and continue to stay involved with the program.**

1. Survey participants and ask if there are barriers. Review results.
2. Identify high schools that do not participate and work with them to see if there are barriers that prohibit participation.

**Goal Number Four: To implement binary identification in the competition case materials and to continue to promote this change nationally with other State High School Mock Trial programs.**

1. Make the needed changes to ensure all identities are included in case materials.
2. Advertise the changes to the teams nationally and encourage they make the change in their case materials.
3. Contact the National Board and encourage them to make changes in their materials and adopt this change with all participants.

### **TIMELINE FOR EXECUTION**

This plan is designed to be in effect for the three (3) years coinciding with the MSBA's current three (3)-year strategic plan, with the understanding that there may be periodic revisions as each bar year begins.

### **APPROVED BY HIGH SCHOOL MOCK TRIAL PROGRAM**

Date:

July 1, 2018

Signed:

Kim Barty

Title:

Mock Trial Director