The Perkins County courthouse hosted the first mock trial competitions for Region 3 on Wednesday, Oct. 10.

The PCHS Black Team of attorneys Colton White, Michi Prante, and Brady Mailand, along with defense witnesses Rachel Patrick, Callie Meyer and Shelby Johnson competed against Maywood in the first trial of the day.

This year's case involves a high school teacher (Dakota Thundercloud) who has been accused by her student (Joe Davis) of coercing students to vote her way on a county environmental issue in addition to using public property (a school van) in an additonal attempt to favor voting on the issue. Thundercloud is supported by her principal (Dawn Truba) and a devoted student (Alary
Hanswurst).

The prosecution is led by student Davis, school newspaper reporter (Rae Castle), and a concerned, county business owner (Jesse James). PCHS Black defeated Maywood in this opening round of competition.

PCHS Red faced off against last year's state qualifiers from Region 3, Dundy County. The three first-time attorneys of Rachel Carrig, Jakelynn Broeder, and Kaleb Gaar, along with newcomer witnesses Amanda Reichert and Christian White, supported by returning witness Tayler Walter rendered a strong and competitive performance, but were defeated by the veteran Dundy County team.

During the course of the season, each team will present both the prosecution and defensive sides of the case. In theory, the next round of competition should allow performances from PCHS Black Team witnesses Lacey Jensen, Caleb Breazeale, and Rachel Patrick, as well as time on the stand for Red Team witnesses Lila Konecky, Hannah Beck and Tayler Walter.

Mock Trial rules require that one witness from each team play a role on both the prosecution and defensive side of the case. Rachel Patrick and Tayler Walter are the PCHS competitors who fulfill this requirement.

Alternates for the teams are Emily Kemling and Sam Rowley. Alyssa Young is the timer, Dalton McCormick the filmer, and Chase Anderson the student manager. Attorney coaches are Lori Zeilinger, George Zeilinger and Tawna Holmstedt.

Former PCHS head coach Don Harris is volunteering his time for the third consecutive year to help current coach Diana Tate.

Because trials are scheduled around the activity programs of all schools involved, and because after the third round teams are in single elimination competitive brackets, providing a definitive schedule is somewhat difficult.

Additionally, because Region 3 includes Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Gosper, Hayes, Hitchcock, Perkins and Red Willow counties, the site of competitions has to be arranged according to the availability of the district's courthouses.

The date for the next round of trials has been set for Thursday, Nov. 1, but no site has been announced at this time.