

The Enterprise



Chief Probation Officer Brandon McClennan is demonstrating one of probation's tools of the trade to students of North Middle School participating in the Choices4Teens mentoring program (Photo courtesy of Coria Holland)

By Enterprise staff

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McClennan last Thursday at the Brockton superior courthouse.

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Tracye Hillman, president and founder of the Brockton-based after school program for middle school students, said Choices4Teens uses a proactive drug, gang and violence prevention model.

Kelley, the judge, introduced the 7th and 8th grade students to the court process, explaining how setting bail and sentencing works, as well as what her role is as a judge.

McClennan, the probation chief, talked about the work of probation officers in the courts and community and demonstrated various tools used by the department, included GPS equipment and SCRAM Remote Breath, a portable breath alcohol device with facial recognition software.

“Opening the courthouse doors to non-traditional court users, by inviting students and the public in is critical to demystifying how justice is achieved in the courts,” Kelley said. “Judges going into the community and engaging in public outreach is essential to preserve the rule of law.”

Kelley said during March, known as National Judicial Outreach Month, the Massachusetts judiciary participated in 204 such visits, a record amount.

“I believe it is important for probation departments to work with mentoring groups so that the communities we serve have a better idea of what the probation department does every day,” McClennan said. “Probation officers work tirelessly in the communities with offenders and the populations they serve.”

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