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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Teen Court begins second year

Kerrville, Texas (Sept. 17, 2025) – The City of Kerrville’s Kerrville Teen Court program kicked off its second year Tuesday at the Kerrville Municipal Court, with 34 local high school students signed up to participate.

What is teen court?

In 2023, the Texas Legislature mandated all municipal courts to adopt a diversion policy by Jan. 1, 2025. The goal of a diversion policy is to ensure that juveniles have an opportunity to enter adulthood without a criminal record that could impede their educational, employment and military opportunities. Teen Court is an approved option for the diversion policy.

Teen Court is real court. The teen defendants who appear before the Kerrville Teen Court have agreed to participate in the program and are defended, prosecuted and sentenced by teens. Guilt and innocence are not determined by the jury; punishment is the only thing addressed in teen court. The six-person juries are comprised of a mix of teen volunteers with the Kerrville Teen Court and prior defendants who have been sentenced to participate in a

certain number of jury panels as part of their punishment. If the teen defendant successfully completes the Teen Court Program, the charge is dismissed.

The Kerrville Municipal Judge presides over Teen Court and the City Marshal serves as the bailiff. Teen Court sessions are held on a Tuesday evening each month during the school year.

Eligibility of Teen Court

- Juveniles between the ages of 10-16; 17 and 18 years old if the defendant is still enrolled in a secondary school.
- Juveniles who have not participated in a teen court program within the previous 12 months of the violation date.
- Juveniles who have pled "Guilty" or "No Contest" to the Class C Misdemeanor.

Benefits of Teen Court

- Hold offenders responsible for their behavior;
- Provide teenage defendants with a positive experience in the judicial system, thereby reducing recidivism and helping deter the defendant from committing other crimes;
- Establish positive relationships between the community and its youth, which creates a better understanding;
- Promote a positive attitude of teenagers toward authority by treating all individuals with respect;
- Successful completion of Teen Court will result in dismissal.

Teens who are interested and would like to volunteer for the Teen Court Program can contact the court office at (830) 257-2388, or email the Teen Court Coordinator, Yesenia Luna, at yesenia.luna@kerrvilletx.gov.



The City of Kerrville's 2025-26 Teen Court volunteer members include: (Front row, from left) Bellah Flores, Hailey Van Nostrand, Brayson Preece, Mallory Marlow, Xochtil Alcaraz, Maya Sosa; (Second row) Brayden Boone, Enzo Gomez, Jackson Rivenburgh, Claire Pogue, Hannah Lara, Summer Anderson, Marlee Forester; (Back row) Noble Porter, Kyle Schroeder, William Sumner, Ethan Farhoudi.

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