



Minnesota Judicial Branch Transition and Transformation

June 28, 2018

Minnesota Judicial Branch

- 319 Judges
- 2500 Employees
- 106 Locations
- 1.3 Million Cases
- \$345.5 Million Annual Budget

Organizational Structure

Supreme Court – 7 Justices

Hears appeals from Court of Appeals, Tax Court, Workers Compensation Court of Appeals
Has original jurisdiction for first degree murder conviction appeals, legislative election contests,
judicial and attorney discipline, and regulation of the practice of law.

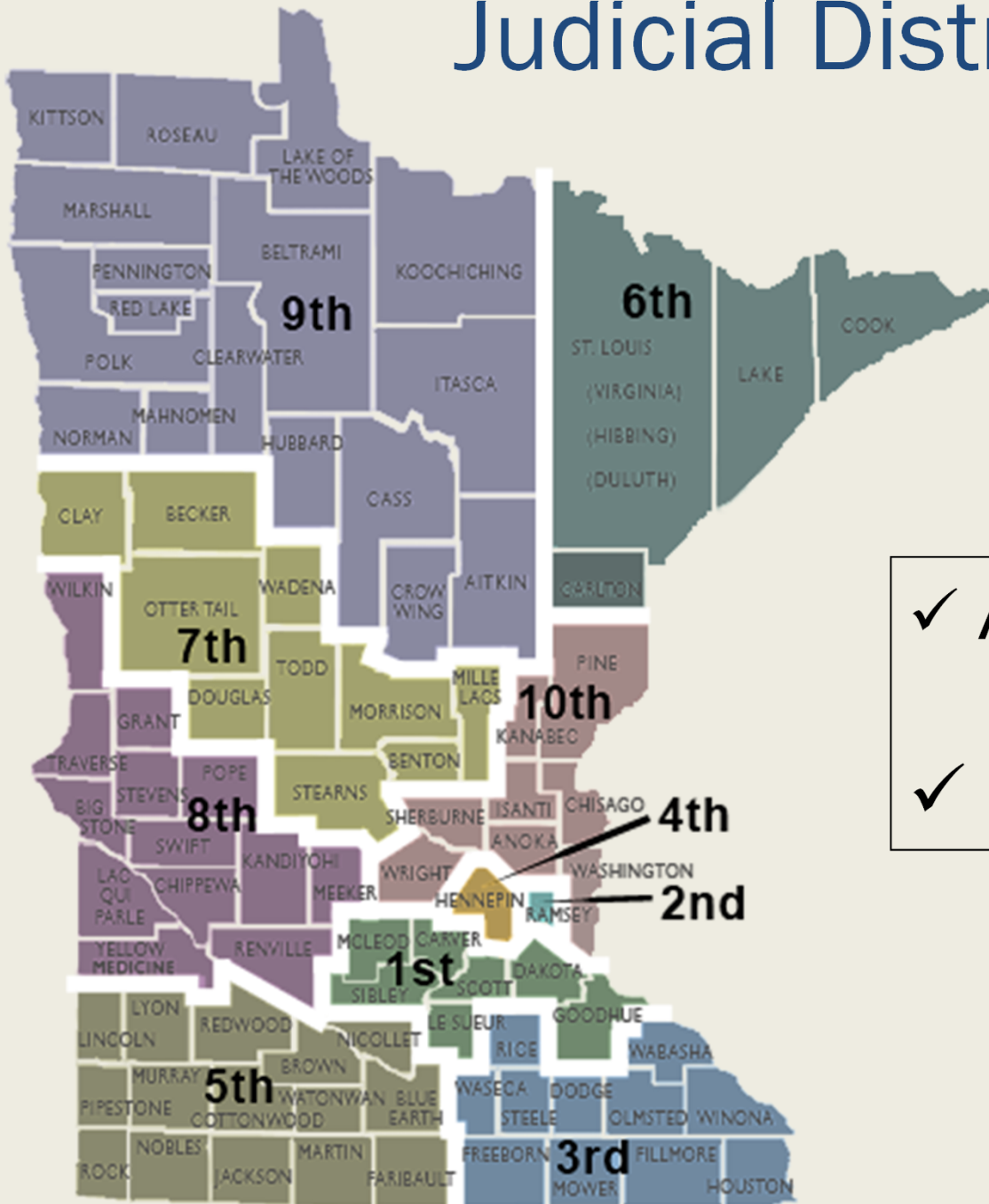
Court of Appeals – 19 Judges

Hears appeals from trial courts, Commissioner of Economic Security,
and administrative agency decisions

District Court – 293 Judges

Original jurisdiction to hear criminal, civil, juvenile, probate, mental health, family, conciliation,
and traffic cases.

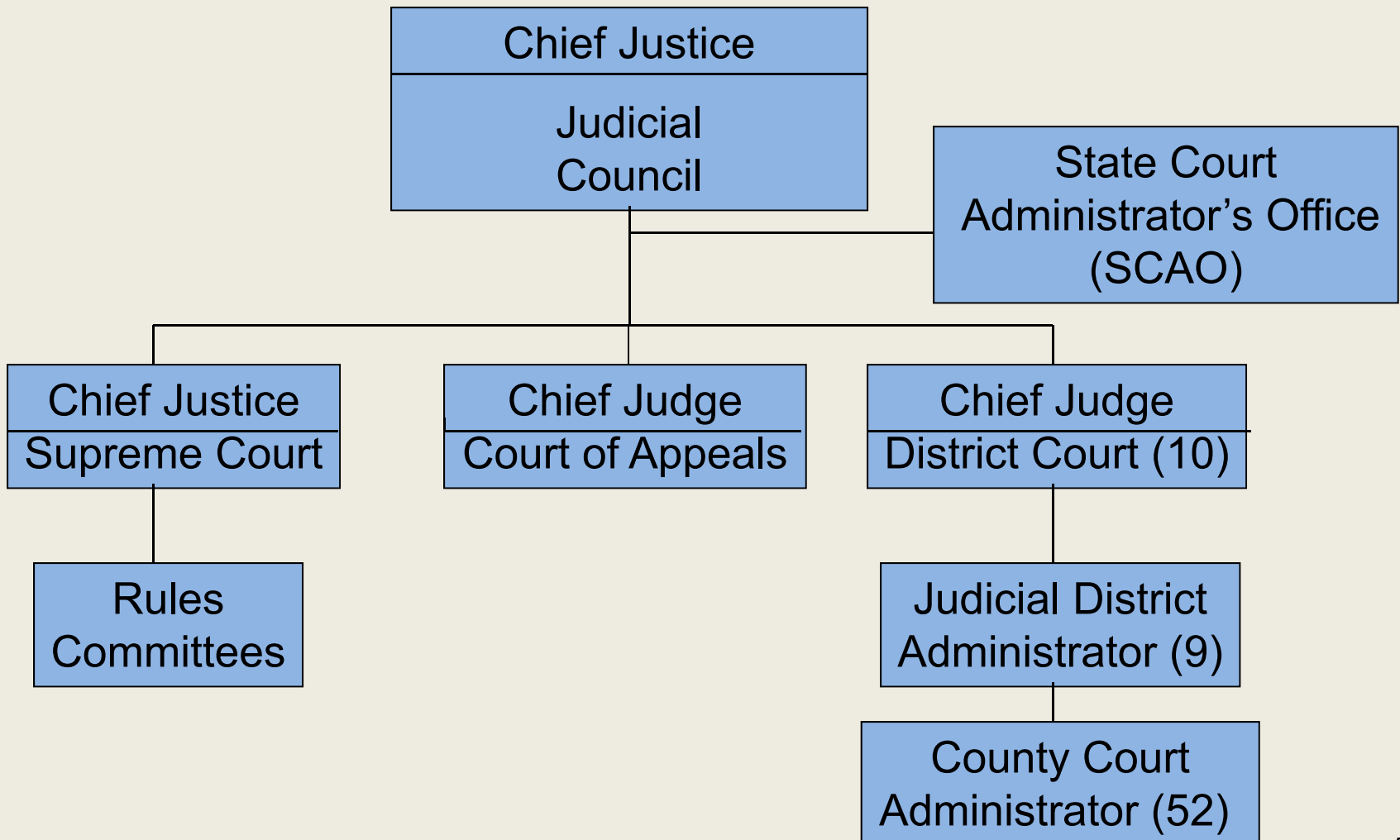
Judicial Districts



✓ Administration

✓ Election

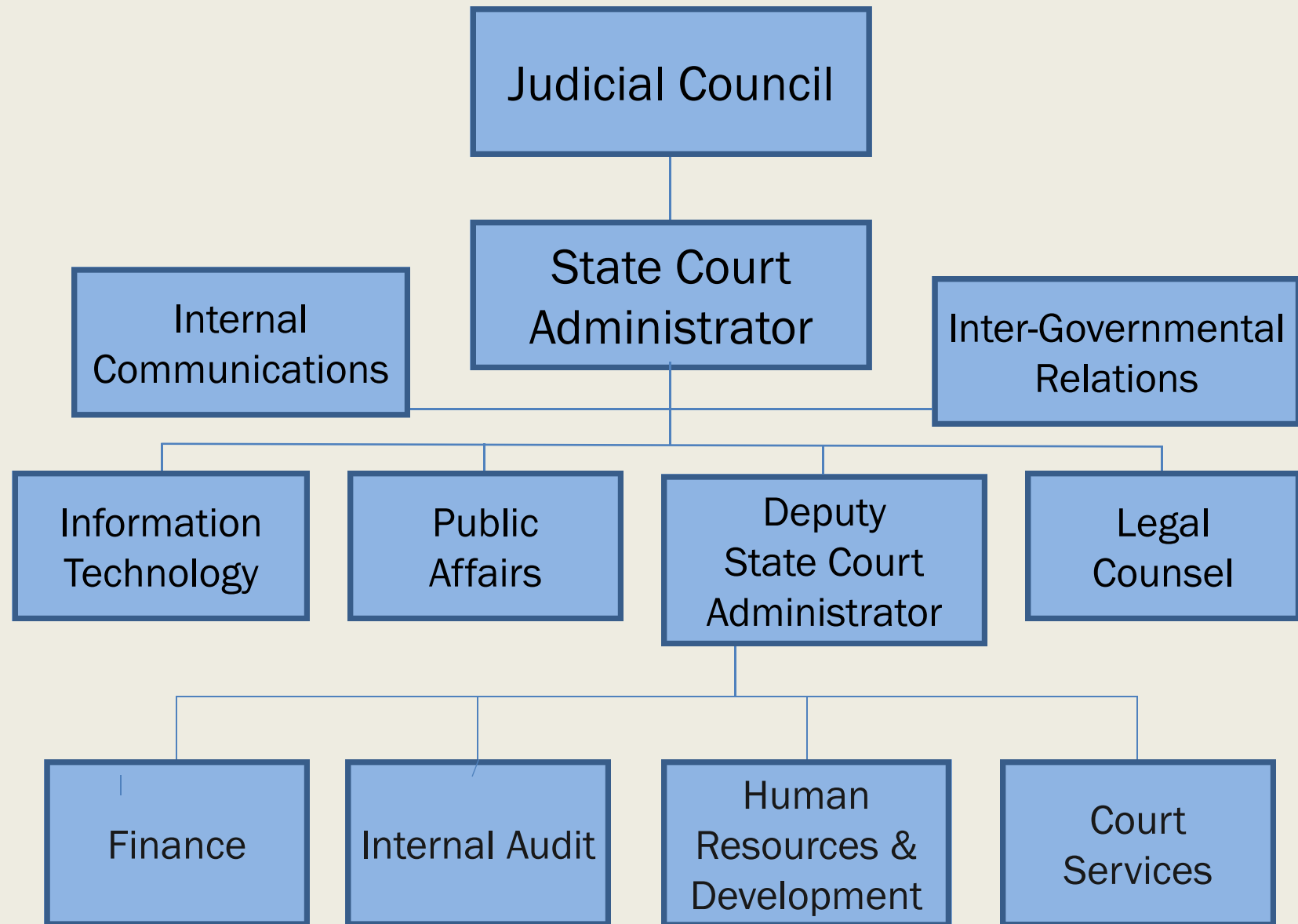
Administrative Structure



Judicial Council

- Single statewide policy-making body
- Chief Justice serves as chair
- 25 members
 - *19 judges*
 - *6 administrators*

State Court Administrator's Office



Transition and Transformation

2005

State funding completed

Governance structure in place



1999

Commitment to full state funding.



1989

State funding begins



1970s & 80s

Structure and process improvements



Court Reform Milestones

- 1972 – Consolidation of municipal, probate and justice of the peace courts into limited jurisdiction county court.
- 1974 – Elected clerks of district court became appointed.
- 1978 – Court Reform Act
- 1982 – Creation of Court of Appeals
- 1987 – County court merged into district court.

Strained Relationships

- Counties forced to pay for district and state mandates and priorities.
- Confusion over who controlled local court staff.
- Unequal delivery of service
- Fragmented fiscal oversight
- Severance of policy decisions from the funding decisions.
- Constitutionally mandated services outside the courts control.
- Dependence of the 3rd Branch of Government on the uncoordinated decisions of 87 counties and the state.

1989 Task Force

Alternative Funding Mechanisms Considered:

1. County based – Preserve property tax as appropriate funding source and county as responsible political unit.
2. State Based – Establish state level funding source and State Judicial Branch as responsible political unit.

Guiding Principles

- Equitable levels of judicial services statewide
- Budgetary accountability and co-location of policy-making and funding responsibilities
- Administrative unity
- Cost efficiency and effectiveness
- Property tax relief

1989 Actions

Approval of first of several phased in transfers to the state:

- Salaries and operating expenses of district administration employees, referees, court reporters, law clerks;
- Local trial court information system expenses;
- Jury costs; and
- 8th Judicial District – pilot project

1999 Actions

- Permanent funding for:
 - 8th District pilot project
 - Court administration functions in 5th, 7th, 9th
 - Transcript costs statewide
 - Constitutionally mandated services programs
 - Guardians ad litem
 - Interpreter
 - Psychological Examinations
 - In forma pauperis costs
- Instructed Supreme Court to return with plan for remaining 6 districts

2001 Actions

- Phased Transfer of remaining 6 districts:
 - 2 and 4 - July 1, 2003
 - 1 and 3 – July 1, 2004
 - 6 and 10 – July 1, 2005

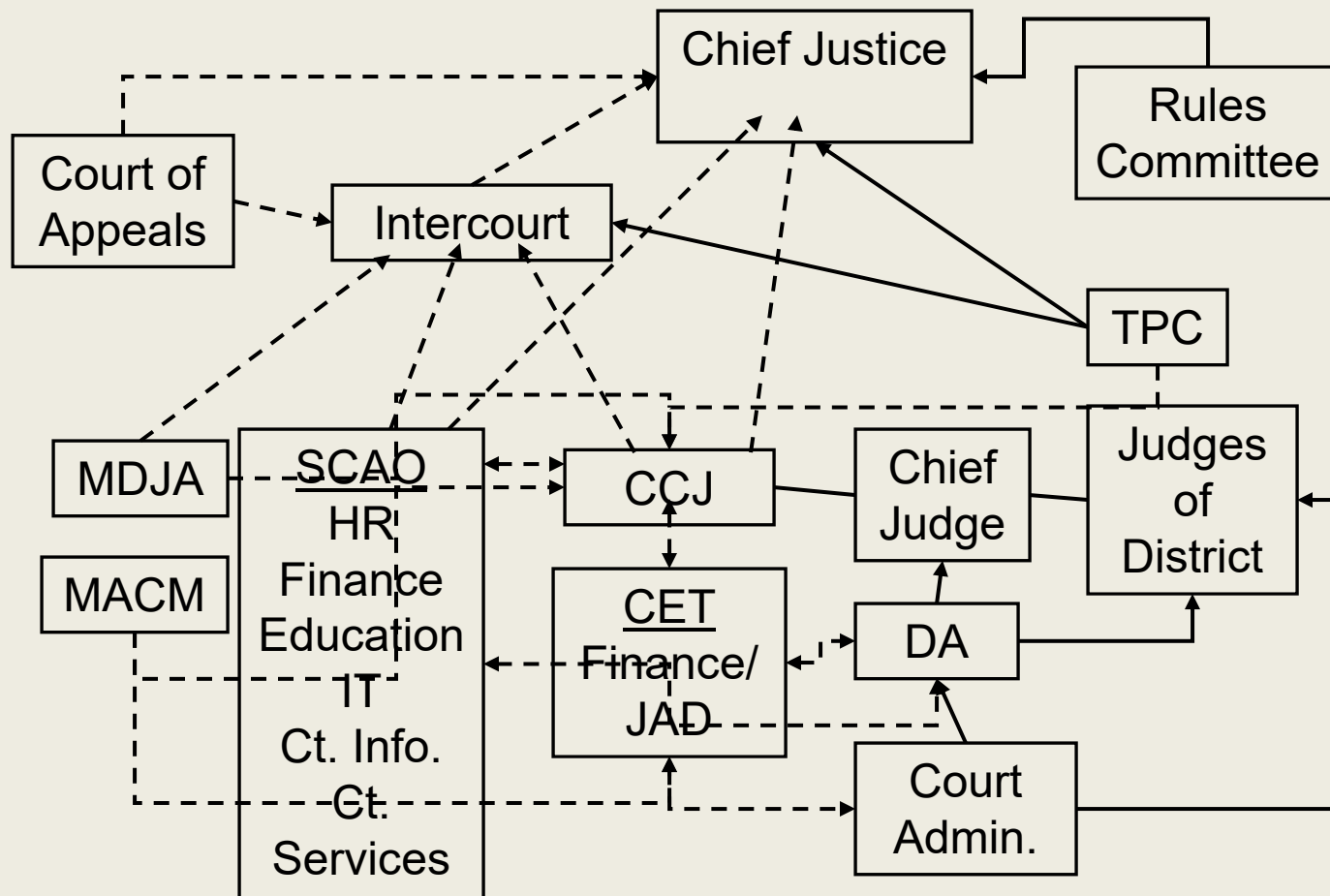
Funding

- Reductions of state aid to county government
- Transfer of court share of fine revenue to state
- Legislatively mandated annual increase in county court budget of 6% for 2001 and 2002 and 8% for 2003 and 2004
- Funding for expansion of HR, and finance functions performed by State Court Administration

Other Issues

- Reservations of counties with healthy local budget
- Unions
- Lack of Infrastructure
- Governance

Governance



Chief Justice Blatz Order

Transformation Workgroup

Current
Administrative
Structure

Decision-
making
Processes

Internal
Operations

Minnesota Judicial Council

- Single statewide administrative policy-making authority
- Administrative Authority delegated by the Chief Justice
- Provide clear and consistent direction
- Consider the needs of the state as a whole

Governance Philosophy

- High-level policy perspective, delegating management and implementation responsibility
- Pro-active, ends-focused approach
- Primary consideration of the needs of the judiciary as a whole, balanced with recognition of particular needs of individual district and courts
- Collaborative governance, rather than representative

“Deliberate in many voices and govern in one.”

Primary Responsibilities:

- Statewide administrative policy-making
- Budget and resource allocation
- Court performance and accountability
- Strategic planning cycle
- Outreach and stakeholder communications
- Evaluation of State Court Administrator

Did We Achieve Goals?

- More equitable levels of judicial services
- Budgetary accountability established
- Administrative unity
- Cost efficiency and effectiveness
- Property tax relief delivered