

Identification of the Case: Rose v. Council for Better Education, Inc., 790 S.W. 2d 186 (Kentucky, 1989)

Action Sought: Compliance

Facts of the Case: This case was appealing whether the Kentucky General Assembly is compliant with the constitutional mandate that states there must be efficient system of common schools statewide.

Question to be Answered by the Court: Is the Kentucky General Assembly under compliance of the constitutional mandate in providing an efficient school system across the state?

Answer(s) Given by the Court(s): Lower Court - no. Appellate Court -no. Supreme Court - no.

Reasons: (1) The Kentucky General Assembly was noncompliant with the constitutional mandate. (2) The Kentucky General Assembly did not fit what the court and expert testimonies deemed to be “efficient”. (3) Schools are ridden with inequalities throughout the district.

Significance of the Case [for schools]:

This case was on the appeal of whether the Kentucky General Assembly is compliant with the constitutional mandate, wherein there must be an efficient system of common schools throughout the state as emphasized in section 183 of the U.S. Constitution. At the pinnacle of the appeal process was the dispute over what elements are necessary for a general assembly to be deemed “efficient”. One of the appellees (local school superintendent) argued that to be considered efficient is to do your best with what you have. With their counter arguments, several appellants stated that the Kentucky General Assembly was not efficient due to their lack of financial equality across the district. Funds were being dispersed unevenly throughout the schools, which mean the General Assembly was not in compliance with the constitutional mandate. After numerous testimonies from experts the court found that the Kentucky General Assembly was not providing an efficient system of common schools throughout their state. Upon deeming the entire system as unconstitutional, the court mandated that the Kentucky General Assembly must reestablish a new system of commonwealth.

In this case, I think both sides of the argument are at fault. The appellees failed to allocate funds across the district equally, which in return, offset the efficiency of schools within the same district. I am sure it is tasking to oversee a district where you know there is imbalance, but wouldn't you strive to do everything in your power to bring back that equality? Unequally dispersing resources throughout the district would only worsen the current issue.

The appellants seemed to very easily share their critiques about the efficiency, or lack thereof, in the Kentucky General Assembly. After stating that there is clear evidence that the district is unfunded and inadequate, they follow up with advisement on what needs to be done, but not exactly how to do it. When I think about how organizational change is brought about, I immediately think about the process of setting expectations, monitoring them and evaluating.

I thought the final verdict was obvious; this school district was clearly not providing an equal or efficient opportunity for education throughout. Although, there seems to be a lack of follow through on the behalf of the court system and appellees.

When operating a district of schools, I think one of the most important elements would be consistency and balance. If I were a superintendent, I would want a student or parent to know that any school they choose in our district will provide the same opportunity of a quality education. This case was an example of a district that is not in compliance with that mandate. This mandate sets a standard for districts, so that this consistency of efficiency is found not only at one school, but at every school within that district.