
Our Children/Our Schools

ABBOTT LITIGATION 2008

ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE SUBMITTED *AMICUS* BRIEFS IN SUPPORT OF EDUCATION LAW CENTER'S POSITION:

1. **11 Abbott districts** (Bridgeton, Burlington, East Orange, Elizabeth, Gloucester, Keansburg, Paterson, Pemberton Township, Perth Amboy, Phillipsburg, Trenton) filing together

Main theme of brief: The State has not demonstrated that the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 (SFRA) satisfies the NJ Supreme Court's Abbott mandates, and that they will be forced to cut programs and staff if it is enacted.

2. **Camden, Millville, Newark and Vineland Public Schools** (filing separately)

Main theme of brief: As above; certifications from district superintendents detail cuts to existing programs and staff as a result of SFRA.

3. **Association for Children of New Jersey**

Main theme of brief: Supreme Court must continue its jurisdiction over Abbott districts because of the high concentration of poverty and the extraordinary needs of children in Abbott districts and to ensure continuation of the Abbott preschool program.

4. **New Jersey Black Issues Convention**

Main theme of brief: Brief provides the Supreme Court "with accurate statistical information on the continued poverty and isolation of African American and Latino students in the thirty-one Abbott districts," in contrast to the State's "deceptive data regarding the current racial demographics within the Abbott school districts."

5. **Hispanic Directors Association of New Jersey**

Signed onto NJBIC brief, see above.

6. NJEA

Main theme of brief: State has failed to provide a sufficient legal or factual basis to assert that the Abbott remedial measures, particularly supplemental programs, are no longer required.

7. Coalition of Special Education Advocates

Main theme of brief: Challenging elements of SFRA – census-based funding formula for special education, establishment of the “excess cost” of special education, and the commingling of special education funds with regular education funds and funds for “at-risk” and limited English proficient programs.

8. The New Jersey Urban Mayors Association

Main theme of brief: “Abbott districts continue to experience conditions that contribute to municipal overburden: they collect less tax revenue, and must spend disproportionately more on essential services, rendering them incapable of meaningfully increasing local education spending.”

9. Dollar\$ & Sense (a coalition of 35 suburban school districts)

Main theme of brief: To “advance sensible school funding policies that both further the constitutional principles articulated in the Abbott decisions and maintain the ability of its members to provide high quality education to their public school students.” They argue that if SFRA is found constitutional, the formula will lead to a “leveling-down” of education in the member districts – a result that would affect the quality of education not only in poor districts, but districts statewide.