

Louisiana Supreme Court Issues Groundbreaking Decision on Public Education Funding, Handing a Major Victory to Students, Parents, and State School Board

December 31, 2020

Where we started: The Louisiana Constitution grants the legislature the power to pass laws to supervise, manage, and take over failing schools. The Louisiana legislature passed comprehensive laws defining failing schools and stating how they were to be handled. This resulted in the transfer of more than 100 schools in New Orleans to state control. Teachers in the closed failing schools and others fought the takeover and sought hundreds of millions of dollars in damages. The State of Louisiana and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education reached out to us to represent them in high-stakes, high-profile litigation.

Our strategy – plus more: Ten different law firms representing various coalitions of plaintiffs were arrayed against our clients. Our team knew at the outset that this case would be a tough battle in the lower court and would be decided on appeal, regardless of the trial judge's ruling. With a group of outstanding and very experienced attorneys, we crafted a trial strategy presenting the proper evidence that would create a record in which any adverse rulings in the lower court ultimately could not be sustained. Our lawyers worked virtually around the clock leading up to and during the grueling six-week trial, and the litigation from start to finish dragged on for more than five years.

Upshot: Ultimately, the Louisiana Supreme Court agreed with our position set forth in briefs and intense oral argument and overturned adverse judgments rendered by the trial court and the intermediate appellate court. The legislation was vindicated and the Louisiana public education system triumphed.