



Printable Edition

Note: This resource includes all articles from the April 2013 Rural Policy Matters newsletter. For the latest content updates, please check the [issue index](#) for this edition.

Editor's note: Links are free and current at time of posting, but may require registration or expire over time.

Facts and Figures: States That Spend More Than \$7,000 on Instruction for Each Rural Student

Question: Which 10 states spend more than \$7,000 on instruction per rural student?

Answer: At \$10,300, Alaska spends more per rural student on instruction than any other state. Alaska is followed by New York (\$10,214), Wyoming (\$9,333), New Jersey (\$8,783), Vermont (\$8,651), Connecticut (\$8,604), Rhode Island (\$8,438), New Hampshire (\$7,899), Massachusetts (\$7,473), and Maryland (\$7,095).

(Why Rural Matters, 2011–12. Data source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data, Public School Universe, 2008–09.)

Student Leadership on Historic Clock is Community Catalyst

Give students genuine leadership for something meaningful to do and they will run with it.

That's just what students at Trimble High School in Trimble Township, Ohio are doing. Their work is centered on the refurbishment of the historic clock in Glouster, which along with the communities of Trimble and Jacksonville make up the Township. It is significant work, involving historical research, planning, and partnering with local adults. But the students' work on the clock is even more: it's a jumping off point for all kinds of activities that stretch the students *and* make life in the community better.

Amber Neel, one of the students in the sophomore English class that is leading the project, says that the work has been an interesting way to connect what they usually learn in books to things that have actually happened and can happen in the community. Student Terry Simerly, emphasizes that he sees the work making the community better and that makes him proud and motivated to do more.

The students' involvement in the clock project began as a partnership between the students and eight adult mentors, representing several community groups. Initially, the plan had been to develop an inter-generational leadership program as part of a federal Promise Neighborhood grant. But when the grant request was turned down, the community decided to forge ahead.

One of the community groups, the Glouster Project, has worked for many years on a variety of improvement projects, including the restoration of the train depot where the clock is located. In October, the clock was dismantled for restoration. Sandra Vaughan, President of the Glouster Project explains: "Part of our mission is to maintain relationships with youth, the school, and families. So we were excited to partner with students."

In January, the students were asked to come up with ideas and plans for how to further the clock project. Their teacher, Tim Ellifritz, helps tie their work to core academic standards required by the state. Ohio University professors Sharon Reynolds and Mike Hess partner with students, community mentors, Ellifritz, and school officials to develop the students' work as an example of the kind of place-based learning approaches that can be extended to other subjects and grade levels.

"It's important that the adults always stay focused on the students taking the leadership role," says Reynolds. "When students are driving the work, they feel valued and are invested."

Student leadership goes to promising and unexpected places

When presented with the challenge, students discussed what they wanted to do and met with their mentors, including representatives of Glouster Project and the Athens County Historical Society and Museum, and the groups Bridge Builders and Promise Trimble. Then they decided to organize themselves into four work groups. The groups meet with each other regularly to share what they are doing, build connections across their work, and spark ideas. They also work extensively in the community.



The 250-pound clock is lifted by crane for transportation to the workshop where it is being repaired. Photo by Donald E. Newell.

being repaired. Photo by Donald E. Newell.

The *History* group is researching the history of the clock. "We're doing historic document searches," explains Simerly. Just as importantly, the group is conducting interviews and collecting oral histories to document the experiences of local people in relation to the clock. The group has also created a logo for the project.

The *Celebration & Future of the Clock* group is planning an event to celebrate and dedicate the clock. "There will be a celebration when the clock comes back to the depot," says Adrianna Alfman. The students have already created formal invitations and are designing a t-shirt to be sold at the event. There will also be activities held in conjunction with Alumni Weekend in May.

In addition, the group is thinking about the future. "We want to understand what has happened [at the depot around the clock] and to think about what could happen, what the clock has meant in our community and how that connects to our future," says Tessa Fierce. The group is developing a plan to make sure the clock is taken care of, and they are working to create a plaque commemorating the clock and their work. They would love to see an annual community celebration of the clock springing from their efforts.

The *Navigational* group has as its charge thinking about how to connect the past and future. They are investigating the history of train depot in Glouster and collecting information and stories about who came through the town and how local people used the depot in their travels. They also see themselves in a position between the older adults whose memories and experiences they are collecting and the generations behind them who will be looking for ways to connect to the community's history.

The *Social Landscaping* group is working on how to use the space around the clock — at the depot and in the town square — to connect people within and across the community. "We want to re-condition the town square to make it a place where people want to go, to develop the social context of the square," says student Mike Williams. Students are considering the physical appearance of the area around the clock and inside the depot. They are re-landscaping the square and re-laying brick and have negotiated with the mayor and town officials. They are also researching nearby buildings and thinking about how the whole area around the clock can be used now and in the future.

The students have presented their work in public, to the school board, and to several community groups. And, of course, they are writing. They each keep a journal and they are working with poet Diane Fisher. They will fold much of what they have learned is into a book which will include their poems, artwork and reflections about the clock and the history of their community. "The book is a record of history for the next group of people down the line," says Fierce. It will be released in the community at the clock celebration in May.

Teacher Tim Ellifritz compliments the students' tenacity and their ability to ask good questions. "You can see a difference in the students," he says. "It's like a light bulb comes on when they realize they have responsibility. They take such an active part. Every day is a surprise. I'm loving every minute."

Youth leadership for community development

This kind of student leadership and enthusiasm is just what the community groups hoped for.

"All the students are talking at once, articulating ideas," says community mentor Donna Jensen Besaw of the group Promise Trimble.

"They have so much initiative," adds Hess. "They're making movies, taking photographs, creating PowerPoint presentations. And they are reaching out — to the school board, the newspaper, the entire community."

"It's amazing to use history as a basis for positive outlook from youth," says Lynne Newell of the Athens County Historical Society.

Glouster is an old coal mining town, and it has had some rough patches as it moves toward a new future. Its community groups understood they needed the engagement of young people.

"We work from asset-based community development theory," says Besaw. "And, we wanted to involve youth because kids understand the village. They can help us."

Vaughan reiterates the importance of youth involvement: "We wanted to create an intergenerational leadership project; it helps build community relations."

The approach is paying off. L.R. Faires, one of the community mentors, calls the students "amazing." He says, "I've stopped hearing bad things in the community. At ballgames and in the grocery store, I hear so many good things because of what the students are doing."

Claudia Guffey of Bridge Builders says it's been rewarding to see the students grow and adds, "you need someone other than your parents telling you that you're doing good. That pat on the back can mean a lot." The others agree. They also say they have been inspired by how much the students support each other.

The most surprising aspect of the collaboration has been the whole idea of social landscaping. "That idea is so interesting and connects so many things. To think that our kids are bringing that kind of thought to our community," says Faires.

There's something of a renaissance going on in Glouster. People are cleaning up. There's a town [blog](#).

Where the whole effort goes next is something everyone is excited to see. "It's very organic," says Newell. "We want to let it develop rather than try to determine what happens."

Everyone agrees that it's about collaboration. "It's not a one-person or one-organization show," adds Newell.

Making sense from a student perspective

For their part, the students say the work has been fun, something they want to do. "We've never done anything like this," says Mike Williams. "This is more hands-on and involved in the community," adds Fierce.

That community engagement keeps them going. "People are happy we are asking them things," says Simerly. "People smile and laugh; sometimes they sing songs for us. Especially the old people, it brings joy to the old people to know that we care."

That engagement is a two-way street. "People know a lot more than we think," adds Simerly. Neel reinforces that perspective adding that the project is a lot about showing respect for people in the community. "So much has happened here and people know so much," she says.

Alfman emphasizes the dawning of a more positive attitude in the community. "The more people who have a more positive outlook, the fewer problems we'll have," she says.

The students insist that in the end their work has not been so much about the clock as it has been "about putting pride in the community." They have gained a fresh appreciation for their own place, and they believe that people who live in the community as well as people in nearby towns see Glouster in a new way. "There's a lot of potential in this community for students and for everybody," says Fierce.

"We're good people, we're smart, and we're not afraid to take pride in our community," adds Simerly.

Pride + Contribution

The students' pride means a lot to the adults. Newell notes: "Their pride in the community. It's exciting." And Faires emphasizes, "All students have something to contribute and the pride that comes from that, the community pride, that's something to hold on to."

Vaughan says the Glouster Project is thrilled with the directions the students are taking and the way it's sparking ideas and hope across the community. "This work," she says, "It's really about who we're going to become."

[Click here](#) to see the students' PowerPoint presentation.



Students pose with Glouster's historic clock.

2013 Global Teacher Fellows Selected

The Rural Trust has announced the winners of the 2013 Global Teacher Fellowship travel awards.

The 33 recipients represent a wide variety of subjects and grade levels. They teach in rural communities in 14 states across the country.

The Fellowship supports teachers to travel to an international destination of their choice. Recipients research an area of interest, create a travel itinerary to explore their interest, and consider how their experiences might impact their approaches to teaching.

This year recipients will travel to Africa, Australia, Central America, the Middle East, New Zealand, Scandinavia, South America, Southeast Asia, and Western Europe. The teachers' interests are as varied as their journeys. They include explorations of differences in agricultural techniques, the roots of fairy tales, ways communities have coped with rapid social and economic change, arts and culture, civil rights and citizenship, and ancient history.

Look for more information about the adventures of the 2013 Global Fellows in upcoming issues of *Rural Policy Matters*.

Some Rural Schools Among First to Face Sequester Cuts

States and school districts have been asked to return \$17.9 million in funds already distributed through the Secure Rural Schools Act (SRSA). That law, passed in 2000, provides funding to support education, infrastructure, and emergency services in 770 mostly rural counties. The funding is intended to help offset the loss of revenue resulting from the presence of non-taxable federal lands in rural counties and to make up for lost revenues resulting from changes in federal activities, such as timber harvesting, on those lands. Nearly 4,500 schools receive funding through the program.

SRSA funds were released to states in January. As part of the 2013 budget, they are now subject to a 5.1% cut under sequester. In March, the U.S. Department of Agriculture sent letters to 41 governors detailing the amount the state must return and outlining options for repayment. The AASA has collected those letters [here](#). (Scroll through to find your state's letter.)

In late March, 30 members of Congress sent a letter to Tom Vilsack, Secretary of U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Jeffrey Zients, Acting Director of The Office of Management and Budget, asking to halt the action. The letter, which you can read [here](#), accuses the Obama administration of an "obvious attempt ... to make the sequester as painful as possible."

The organization [Education Votes](#) has established a webpage to collect stories of how these budget cuts are affecting rural schools. You can enter your stories [here](#).

Read more:

News coverage:

- <http://educationvotes.nea.org/2013/04/08/districts-on-near-federal-land-hit-early-by-sequester-cuts/>
- http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/rural_education/2013/04/rural_communities_fighting_fed_mandate_to_return_money_subject_to_sequester.html?qs=Secure+Rural+Schools+Act

Letters to states:

- http://aasa.org/uploadedFiles/Policy_and_Advocacy/files/SRS%20Governor%20Letters%20March%202013.pdf

Letter to Vilsack and Zients from members of Congress:

- <http://thompson.house.gov/sites/thompson.house.gov/files/Letter%20on%20SRS%20Sequestration.pdf>

Share your SRSA story at [Education Votes](#):

- <http://educationvotes.nea.org/2012/11/15/share-your-story-kids-not-cuts/>

White House Education Budget Unveiled

On April 10, 2013, the Obama administration unveiled its 2014 budget proposal, a 4.6% increase over current levels.

The proposal includes \$75 billion for an expansion of federal pre-school programs for low and moderate-income 4-year-olds. That program would be funded through a proposed hike in taxes on tobacco products.

The budget level funds most key formula grants, including the Title I program, which provides funding for very-low income students; IDEA, which provides funding for students with disabilities; and, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education program, which primarily serves high schools.

In addition, the budget proposal includes funding for a variety of competitive grant programs, including \$300 million for a new high school improvement program; an increase of \$125 million to support school turnaround; \$215 for Investing in Innovation (a \$66 million increase, primarily for a new research agency); \$300 million for Promise Neighborhoods, a small increase to \$1.3 billion for 21st Century Learning Centers; and \$40 million for Expanding Educational Options — to help finance charter schools.

The budget also proposes funding for a variety of additional initiatives including programs for mental health, school safety, and \$1 billion for a new Race to the Top program to help states improve college student outcomes.

Read more:

Education budget press release, with links to budget summary and requests:

- www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/obama-administration-2014-budget-prioritizes-key-education-investments-provide-o

Education budget overview:

- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget14/summary/14summary.pdf>

General White House press release on budget:

- www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2013/04/10/president-obama-sends-congress-his-fiscal-year-2014-budget

School Discipline Policy

Police in Schools Increase Arrests, According to Report on Discipline in Mississippi

In Mississippi, black students are three times as likely as white students to receive an out-of-school suspension, according to *Handcuffs on Success: The Extreme School Discipline Crisis in Mississippi Public Schools*, a report released in January about the school discipline crisis in the Magnolia State. In the most severe case in the report, one school district suspends 63.4 of every hundred students.

The report was released cooperatively by the Advancement Project, the American Civil Liberties Union of Mississippi, the Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP, and the Mississippi Coalition for the Prevention of Schoolhouse to Jailhouse.

According to the report, a number of Mississippi school districts are well above the national average for suspensions. Student advocates and organizations that have endorsed the report also blame law-enforcement-style discipline policies for pushing students out of school.

The report says that three key strategies adopted from criminal justice procedures are causing harsh discipline such as suspensions and expulsions. These include mandatory minimum sentencing, three-strikes laws, and "broken windows" policing, a law enforcement strategy of aggressively policing traditionally ignored minor offenses with the intended purpose of preventing more serious crimes.

These policing tactics are mimicked in local district discipline practices through zero-tolerance rules, policies that permit suspension and expulsion for an accumulation of minor infractions, and allowing the use of the harshest punishments for first-time, low-level offenses.

The disciplinary crisis in Mississippi has been widely reported. *Handcuffs on Success* recounts some of the most shocking cases, including one in which a kindergartener was placed in a squad car and driven home for not wearing all-black shoes to school. The child's mother had inked in black some of the trim on the shoes in order to comply with dress code.

The report points to increased law enforcement presence in schools as a factor in the school to prison pipeline. It specifically cites the following issues in the dynamic: a shift in basic responsibility for student discipline from teachers and administrators to police officers, criminalization of normal childhood and adolescent mild misbehavior, and school environments focused on punishment rather than on cultivating good behaviors.

The report has been noted for its stark contrast to calls to increase police presence and employ other security/law enforcement tactics in schools in response to the Sandy Hook shooting. Many supporters of the Mississippi report, along with other advocates, say that increasing police presence does not increase safety, but instead increases the likelihood that a student will be arrested for a minor incident of misbehavior.

The Obama Administration has proposed making funding available to states for schools that wish to hire police officers. There are also legislative proposals in several states that would mandate some sort of police presence in schools. In Mississippi for example, Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves has proposed providing matching grants of up to \$10,000 to school districts to help increase the number of certified, trained law enforcement officers in schools.

Judith Browne Dianis, co-director of the Advancement Project, is quoted in the [Washington Post](#) saying, "Young people would be more apt to be arrested with the added presence of law enforcement at schools." *Handcuffs on Success* also notes that students who have had negative experiences with officers in schools will be less likely to cooperate with and support law enforcement later, weakening the protective effect of police in communities.

The Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) responded to the report by pointing out that districts establish their own discipline policies and that the Department has provided training to districts on addressing discipline issues. Notably, there are no standards or guidelines for discipline policies set by the state.

Handcuffs on Success makes a number of recommendations, which include the following: requiring districts to report and MDE to review discipline data; requiring annual review and opportunity for community input on how well districts are reducing exclusionary discipline; and making resources available to support schools in the development of positive school climates. The report also calls for the development of cooperative agreements between community stakeholders, community organizations, parents, students, districts, the juvenile justice system, and law enforcement to work together to limit the number of school referrals to law enforcement and juvenile court, reduce the disproportionate contact students of color have with school discipline and the juvenile justice system, increase graduation rates, and decrease the use of state and local funds for juvenile justice interventions for minor misbehavior in school.

Read more:

Media coverage of the report:

- www.clarionledger.com/article/20130117/NEWS/301170043/ACLU-accuses-Mississippi-public-schools-using-excessively-harsh-discipline?ncklick_check=1
- www.hattiesburgamerican.com/viewart/20130117/NEWS01/130117008/Report-School-discipline-harsh-in-Mississippi-schools-
- www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/students-sent-from-classroom-to-courtroom-across-mississippi-report-says/2013/01/16/6b04f1ac-5ff9-11e2-b05a-605528f6b712_story.html

Response of the Mississippi Department of Education to the report:

- www.mde.k12.ms.us/mde-news/2013/01/17/mde-responds-to-the-aclu-report-on-school-discipline-policies

Read the full report here:

- www.advancementproject.org/resources/entry/handcuffs-on-success

U.S. Senate Subcommittee Holds Hearings On School-to-Prison Pipeline

In December, the U.S. Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights held a public hearing entitled "Ending the School-to-Prison Pipeline." Over 400 attendees packed the hearing and overflow rooms to hear public officials, national experts, a juvenile court judge, a student organizer, and others describe the policies and practices of schools that are using "discipline" measures to push students out of schools and into incarceration.

In announcing the hearing, Assistant Majority Leader Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chairman of the Subcommittee said, "For many young people, our schools are increasingly a gateway to the criminal justice system."

This first-ever Congressional hearing on the school-to-prison pipeline focused on the alarming rate at which young people are being pushed out of the classroom and into the courts for relatively minor, non-violent offenses.

The Subcommittee heard from two panels of experts. The first panel included Deborah Delisle, Assistant Education Secretary, and Melodee Hanes, acting administrator of the Justice Department's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. A second panel included Steven Teske, Chief Judge of the Juvenile Court in Clayton County, Georgia, whose efforts to reduce school referrals to his court have drawn national attention for significantly reducing arrests and increasing graduation rates. Another panelist, Edward Ward, of the organization Blocks Together, described his experiences in a Chicago high school dominated by a police presence that intimidated students, including those who had exhibited no discipline problems. Ward is now an honor student at DePaul University.

A number of grassroots organizations from around the country that are working to address the school to prison crisis and promote alternative approaches sent representatives, including youth members to testify or attend the hearing. Other national groups, including the Dignity in Schools Campaign, American Civil Liberties Union, GLSEN, Gay-Straight Alliance Network, and the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights under Law and state groups including Gwinnett STOPP (Georgia) and Citizens for a Better Greenville (Mississippi) submitted written testimony.

Wide-ranging recommendations for federal action included increasing collection of data on discipline incidents and school-based arrests; support for improved discipline practices like Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Justice; ending corporal punishment; and abolishing zero tolerance policies. Other recommendations included increasing funding for poverty reduction programs and improving investigations where there are alleged violations of special education laws.

The fact that the hearing was held has been credited to the efforts of community-led organizations to bring attention to the problem.

Read more:

Press coverage of the hearing:

- www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/school-to-prison-pipeline-hearing-puts-spotlight-on-student-discipline/2012/12/13/18503286-4524-11e2-9648-a2c323a991d6_story.html
- <http://durbin.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=7dcae2b-b40e-4199-bf20-557b4b1bc650>

Written testimony of panelists and a video recording of the hearing is available from this page:

- www.iudiciary.senate.gov/hearings/hearing.cfm?id=b61e5f08eadf22b2ec4ab964fc64ae9f

Written testimony from other organizations is compiled here:

- www.dignityinschools.org/document/written-testimonies-dsc-members-and-allies

Office of Civil Rights Has Increased Its Enforcement Activity

In late November, the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) released its activity report for the years 2009–2012, [Helping to Ensure Equal Access to Education](#). The report covers the period during which Assistant Secretary Russlyn Ali led the Department.

OCR has responsibility for ensuring equal access to education by enforcing related federal statutes, including: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex by entities receiving federal funding; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability by entities receiving federal funding; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities by state and local government agencies, regardless of whether they receive federal assistance.

Investigations of legal violations: special education

Upon taking the helm of the Department, Ali promised a “revitalized” agency more responsive to complaints and allegations of discrimination. OCR received 24% more complaints during this reporting period than the one previous. The most frequent complaints related to special education, followed by complaints of “retaliation.”

In one systemic statewide investigation, OCR studied whether children who rode school buses specifically for students with disabilities were inappropriately receiving a shorter school day and less instructional time compared to students without disabilities who did not ride special transport. To settle this case, the state agreed to implement new, statewide standards for ensuring that students with disabilities on these bus routes were not receiving a shortened school day because of a district’s transportation schedule; conduct audits of school districts’ transportation schedules and appoint a coordinator responsible for ensuring that districts take corrective steps; require districts to create tracking systems for buses; and monitor districts’ implementation of the tracking systems.

Ensuring school discipline is fair

OCR also investigates discrimination against students in school discipline procedures. This report focused on discipline of students with disabilities and on racial disparities in school disciplinary practice.

In the case of special education, student misconduct that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to interfere with the student’s ability to learn may trigger responsibilities under federal civil rights laws. Specifically, under Section 504 and Title II, students with disabilities may not be punished or disciplined for behavior that is caused by or is a manifestation of their disabilities. Further, students with disabilities must not be subjected to discriminatorily different treatment in discipline, and must not be disciplined more harshly or frequently than similarly situated students without disabilities for the same infractions. OCR received more than 1,000 complaints related to discipline of students with disabilities.

OCR launched 20 proactive investigations in schools with significant racial disparities in discipline. These investigations tended to confirm serious discrepancies. For example, one investigation detailed in the report described how school administrators used their discretionary authority to impose harsher punishments than the student code normally called for on African-American students as compared with similarly situated white students. The statistical analysis indicated that it was virtually impossible for that frequency to have occurred by chance. In one instance, an African-American kindergartner was given a five-day suspension for setting off a fire alarm, while a white ninth-grader in the same district was suspended for one day for the same offense.

Guidance for families, communities, and educational institutions on expanded range of issues

In addition to responding to complaints and opening its own investigations, OCR also issues policy guidance, often in the form of “Dear Colleague” letters, about the laws it enforces. The purpose is to increase the awareness of students and their families of their rights and to strengthen their capacity to identify and resolve civil rights and equity issues in their communities.

During the past four years, OCR worked on issues that the Office had never before addressed, even though those issues fall under the laws OCR enforces. One of the primary areas into which OCR expanded its work is sexual violence at the K–12 and postsecondary levels. In April 2011, OCR issued first-of-its-kind policy guidance to ensure that schools and colleges fully understand their Title IX obligations relating to sexual violence. The guidance advises institutions on how to prevent sexual violence and ensure sexual violence is identified and reported when it does occur. The guidance explains the responsibility of institutions to resolve complaints promptly and equitably and to respond to any incident of sexual violence swiftly and effectively.

The OCR also addressed for the first time bullying and harassment in schools and comparability of resources among schools.

The activity report contains an index and summary of all the policy guidance issued from 2009–2012.

Bullying and harassment prioritized

OCR also issues reports on key issues. The report *Cross-Cutting Issue: Combating School Harassment and Bullying* states: “Bullying and harassment are harmful to students and the learning environment, and are far too pervasive in our nation’s schools and colleges.”

In 2010, OCR issued a “Dear Colleague” letter to discuss harassment, including racial and national origin harassment, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, and harassment based on disability. The guidance explains that institutions must take immediate and effective action to eliminate any known or suspected student-on-student harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. Institutions are also required to take action to prevent its recurrence, and, where appropriate, address its effects on the harassed student and the school community.

The policy guidance provides examples of harassment and illustrates how a school should respond in each case. Notably, the agency specifically points out that harassment against students of a particular religion may violate the law. Although religious discrimination is not specifically prohibited under OCR authority, members of religious groups who are subject to harassment on the basis of their national origin, perceived ancestry, or ethnic characteristics are

authority, members of religious groups who are subject to harassment on the basis of their national origin, perceived ancestry, or ethnic characteristics are protected. For example, bullying of Muslim or Jewish students may be based not merely on religious bias, but also on bias relating to the students' perceived ethnic or national origin.

The 2010 guidance document also makes clear that schools may violate Title IX by failing to effectively respond to bullying or harassment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered (LGBT) students. Title IX does not cover discrimination based solely on sexual orientation, but harassment of LGBT students constitutes sex-based discrimination if it is based on the student's failure to conform to sex stereotypes. For example, a student, male or female, may be bullied because he or she does not act or dress according to his or her classmates' gender-based expectations.

In addition, the guidance states, "Title IX prohibits sexual harassment of all students, regardless of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. When harassment targets LGBT students, includes antigay comments, or is partly based on a target's actual or perceived sexual orientation, Title IX obligates the institution to investigate and remedy any overlapping sexual or gender-based harassment of those students."

Expansive data collection

The OCR also revamped its Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). The data, released in March of this year, includes never-before-available data on teacher experience and attendance; school finance; student retention; participation in SAT and ACT tests; discipline, including data on students with and without disabilities, data on in-school and out-of-school suspensions, referrals to law enforcement agencies, and school-related arrests; harassment and bullying; and restraint and seclusion. (*Editor's note: See previous RPM coverage of the CRDC [here](#), which includes a link to the data website.*)

The data was released in an easy-to-use format, and many agencies, nonprofits, and other organizations have used the information for policy recommendations, to monitor grants, and in research. States and local school districts have also introduced or changed policies, including zero tolerance policies, based on analysis of local data.

Read more:

Press coverage:

- www.examiner.com/article/office-of-civil-rights-issues-new-section-504-activity-report

Department of Education press release:

- www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-educations-office-civil-rights-releases-four-year-report-civil-rig

Read the full report here:

- www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-educations-office-civil-rights-releases-four-year-report-civil-rig

Rural School Funding News

Federal Commission Highlights Funding as a Major Cause of Inequity Among Schools

After two years of research, discussion, and input from stakeholders, the Education Equity Commission has released its final report on its findings. "For Each and Every Child" includes recommendations for action in five major education policy arenas: school finance, teacher/leader quality, early childhood education, mitigation of poverty, and accountability.

Rural School and Community Trust President Doris Terry Williams serves on the Commission, a diverse 27-member panel appointed by President Barack Obama. (*Editor's Note: See coverage of her nomination [here](#).)*

The Equity Commission was charged with the two-fold task of advising the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education on the disparities in educational opportunities, particularly in school finance, that create the achievement gap and recommending ways in which federal policies could address such disparities.

The Commission's members represent a wide range of organizations and highly divergent policy positions. For example, some school finance experts in the group have testified on behalf of plaintiff school districts in school funding lawsuits, while other members have defended state governments in funding cases. There are also six members representing the U.S. Department of Education.

School funding is a major focus of the report, which includes calls for the federal government to incentivize the creation of more equitable state funding systems. Federal education funding currently comprises less than 10% of education spending. "There is no constitutional barrier to a greater federal role in financing K-12 education," the report says. "It is, rather, a question of our nation's civic and political will; the modest federal contribution that today amounts to approximately 10% of national K-12 spending is a matter of custom, not a mandate." (*Editor's note: for a more complete discussion of this topic, see the RSFN Special Series: Financing Rural Schools [here](#).)*

The Commission met and held hearings in major U.S. cities. Transcripts of all meetings are available on the U.S. Department of Education website and make clear the divergence of ideas among members.

Diversity of opinion, positions staked

As the lone representative of rural schools, Williams was steadfast in insisting that the unique challenges of rural communities be included in the Commission's considerations.

"I believe this report and actions around it will impact rural places only to the extent that people can muster the political will to ensure equitable and adequate resources for every child," says Williams. "There is otherwise not much in the report narrative that will bring people who don't normally think about rural to reorient their thinking. We are still in a battle to bring attention to the unique challenges and opportunities for rural schools and communities."

Williams continues, "The report acknowledges the correlation between poverty and academic performance; however, we must be much more intentional in bringing about remedies that speak to both school and community issues that impact teaching and learning."

The report's recommendations reflect broad compromise among the group's members. Many individual Commissioners and groups of Commissioners also submitted essays. Most were calls for specific actions.

Williams' essay, "Rural Students and Communities," includes information on disparities for rural schools in Title I funding formulas, in competitive grant competitions, and teacher recruitment and retention. The essay recommends federal funding initiatives to address those disparities as a priority.

An essay on exclusionary school discipline and the school to prison pipeline as factors in increasing inequity was written by representatives of the NAACP, Urban League, and UNCF. It includes very specific recommendations for policy change at the local, stat, and federal levels.

The report also emphasizes increasing pre-kindergarten opportunities and making high quality pre-K available for every poor child within 10 years. Pre-K was also a highlight of President Obama's State of the Union address and many speculate that initial action on the report by the administration will likely occur on pre-kindergarten issues. According to the report, fewer than half of low-income children are considered school-ready when they enter kindergarten, compared with three-quarters of children from moderate and high-income families.

Five areas for action

The report addresses five areas for action:

- **Equitable School Finance.** The report emphasizes improving funding systems so that a child's critical opportunities are not a function of his or her zip code. One notable recommendation suggests the "federal government should consider expanding its authority to address longstanding and persistent issues of inequity in school finance, including new enforcement steps that stop short of withdrawing funding from students most in need."
- **Teachers, Principals and Curricula.** The report includes calls for supports for a corps of teachers effective enough to provide children with the opportunity to thrive in a changing world; it also recommends incentivizing states to improve teacher quality. The report notes that only 30% of U.S. educators come from the top third of the college pool. One of the recommendations in this area is that the federal government invests in high-quality residency programs that create a steady supply of highly effective recruits in high-need communities. This recommendation reflects the Rural Trust's call for a National Rural Teacher Corps.
- **Early Childhood Education.** The report calls for a focus on narrowing the disparities in readiness when children reach kindergarten.
- **Mitigating Poverty's Effects.** The report calls for access to a variety of supports, in addition to early childhood education, to mitigate the effects of poverty on children and to promote student success and family engagement in school. The recommendations specifically include effective measures to improve outcomes for student groups especially likely to be left behind—including English-language learners, children in Indian country or isolated rural areas, children with special education needs, and those involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. This section of the report includes both recommendations around increasing health services for students as well as improving preventative services to keep students out of disciplinary trouble.
- **Accountability and Governance.** As the Commission says, this section focuses on "reforms to make clearer who is responsible for what, attach consequences to performance, and ensure that national commitments to equity and excellence are reflected in results on the ground, not just in speeches during campaigns." Notably, this section calls on schools to be accountable for their responsiveness to parents and says "in communities with low levels of parental participation or low performance on a "parent engagement index," districts should be required to fully inform parents and guardians and engage them in school decisions, including in plans to improve educational outcomes and provide equitable access to needed inputs." This section also makes mention of charter schools and the need to more closely examine their impact on equity of all students.

The Equity Commission was first proposed and advanced by two Congressmen in 2009, Representative Michael Honda (D-CA) and Representative Chaka Fattah (D-PA). The Commission operates under a congressional appropriation written by Honda. In his introductory letter found in the report, he says, "After a year and a half of groundbreaking public dialogue and debate, of study and scrutiny, this report reflects the thinking of the nation's foremost educational experts, who worked arduously and collaboratively, despite our sometime-disparate ideas about educational reform." Similarly, Fattah says, "I look forward to working with my colleagues on Capitol Hill, and policymakers around the country, to make equity and excellence a reality for every American child and to strengthen America's future for generations to come."

The group is seeking foundation funding to continue its activities.

Read more:

Read the full report here:

- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/eec/equity-excellence-commission-report.pdf>

Read the compendium of member-submitted essays here, including Rural Students and Communities by Doris Terry Williams at page 45, here:

- <http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/eec/equity-excellence-commission-report-compendium.pdf>

Read media coverage of the Commission's report here:

- www.pewstates.org/projects/stateline/headlines/report-state-school-funding-unfair-85899452759
- www.csmonitor.com/USA/Education/2013/0219/Closing-education-achievement-gap-blue-ribbon-panel-offers-blueprint?nav=87-frontpage-entryNineItem
- www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/02/19/report-u-s-should-focus-on-equity-in-education/
- www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/19/equity-and-excellence-commission-report-schools_n_2720305.html

Louisiana Voucher Law Still in Courts

A federal judge in New Orleans has ruled that Act 2, Louisiana's new voucher law, prevents the Tangipahoa Parish school system from complying with its

desegregation order, but the state has appealed that decision.

Late last year, U.S. District Judge Ivan Lemelle held that the program results in a flow of funding out of the district that prevents it from maintaining magnet programs and other efforts to encourage diversity. (*Editor's note:* See previous RSFN coverage [here](#).)

A number of students, a majority of whom are white according to some reports, have used the vouchers for tuition at private and parochial schools. Last October the district asked the federal court to intervene, saying that the loss of funding was harming its desegregation efforts.

The voucher program does not compel districts to use local funding for the vouchers; doing so could run counter to the state's constitution. State officials had therefore argued that there was no loss of local funds that would harm the district's bottom line. However, Louisiana's finance program, the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP), is calculated by a set of formulas that take into account both the number of students in the district and local ability to raise funding, and the MFP makes a deduction for each voucher student from funds that the district receives; that amount includes the state's portion of funding and an amount roughly equal to the local portion for each voucher student.

Judge Lemelle disagreed with the state and held that the voucher program, regardless of whether the local portion reduction is technically local funds, results in the School Board having less local money to carry out the judge's order in the 47-year-old desegregation case. More than thirty Pelican State school districts are under federal desegregation orders.

In late March, the Louisiana Department of Education appealed Lemelle's decision, arguing that a federal court cannot interfere with a state's financial decisions and that Lemelle should have waited to learn the outcome of the challenge to the voucher program before ruling.

State ruling. Just a few days after the federal court decision was released, State District Judge Timothy E. Kelley of Baton Rouge ruled that the voucher program violates the state constitution because it diverts funds exclusively designated for public education elsewhere.

The state lawsuit was brought by Louisiana Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Association of Educators, the Louisiana School Boards Association, and 43 local school boards. The plaintiffs challenged the constitutionality of the law and the means by which it was passed. Judge Kelley struck down the law, but upheld the process. The state appealed to the Louisiana Supreme Court; the parties presented arguments in March.

The voucher program is still underway with applications being accepted for next year while a decision on the appeal is pending in the Louisiana Supreme Court. Across the state, some 5,000 public school students are receiving vouchers to pay their tuition to private and parochial schools. State news outlets report an increased interest in the program.

Read more:

Local coverage:

- www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2012/11/school_voucher_desegregation_r.html
- www.hammondstar.com/articles/2012/12/17/top_stories/education/5402.txt
- <http://theadvocate.com/news/5427670-123/state-asks-5th-circuit-to>

Background on other suits challenging Jindal voucher law:

- www.nola.com/opinions/index.ssf/2012/11/gov_jindals_landmark_education.html
- www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2012/11/louisiana_voucher_lawsuit_oral.html
- www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2012/11/jindal_voucher_overhaul_uncons.html

Kansas Court Rules State Violating Constitution in Education Funding Case

In a court order released in January the Sunflower State legislature was directed to fund public schools at \$4,492 per pupil, about \$600 higher per pupil than present levels, an amount that would require an additional \$442 million. The order also barred future cuts to per-pupil spending.

The ruling was made by a three-judge panel working from the Shawnee County District Court. Justices on the panel represented geographically diverse areas of the state. The panel forum was at the behest of the Legislature. The plaintiffs, known as Gannon, are a coalition of 54 school districts representing rural and urban areas along with thirty-two representative school children.

Kansas lawmakers have steadily decreased aid to students since the onset of the recession. In 2010, a coalition of districts filed suit saying that schools were unable to provide a constitutionally sufficient education with the diminished funding. The plaintiffs also alleged that the effect of funding cuts was harsher in districts with the most challenging student populations.

Since the start of the recession, Kansas has cut state education spending, the largest source of funding for local school districts, by \$745 per student, or more than 13 percent when adjusted for inflation.

Schools in the state have cut back on teachers, staff, and services to students, and some schools have been closed as funding steadily decreased.

Notably, the amount cited in the order was established by a finance study commissioned by the Legislature itself during the *Montoy v. Kansas* school finance case. The Kansas State Constitution requires the Legislature "to make suitable provision for finance of the educational interests of the state." In the 2005 *Montoy* ruling, the Kansas Supreme Court defined "suitable" funding to be the amount needed to cover the costs of providing all the educational services required by law.

The finance study guided a multi-year plan in which the Legislature agreed to raise base state aid per pupil to \$4,492 for the 2009–10 school year and beyond. The *Montoy* case was closed in 2006 following this agreement. However, lawmakers began cutting back on agreed-upon amounts in 2009.

Leaders in the state legislature blamed the recession for the reductions. But last year the legislature passed major tax cuts promoted by Governor Sam Brownback and simultaneously reduced school budgets.

This did not go unnoticed by the court, which said, "It seems completely illogical that the state can argue that a reduction in education funding was necessitated by the downturn in the economy and the state's diminishing resources and at the same time cut taxes further."

The state further defended its actions by pointing to student performance. Here again, the court disagreed, noting that students in some subgroups are lagging, a fact which it said is masked by reports that average achievement levels across all student groups.

The court also noted low ACT scores, low graduation rates, and other measures that suggest Kansas students are not doing especially well. The court said: "the state has effectively asserted that all Kansas K-12 students have reached their apparent maximum and will continue to do so with less money."

Governor Brownback called the decision "disappointing" and said: "Through today's ruling, the courts are drastically increasing the property tax burden on every Kansan." Under Brownback's proposed budget, schools would receive no increase in base state aid in the coming year and only a small increase in the year after that.

Some Republicans in the legislature are working to undo the effects of the ruling. Currently there are bills in both houses of the Kansas Legislature to achieve these ends. The Senate has passed an enabling law to place a constitutional amendment on state ballots. Senate Concurrent Resolution 1608 says that the financing of educational interests of the state is exclusively a legislative power, has passed the Senate and is moving to the House for a vote. Any such initiative must be adopted by two-thirds majorities in both chambers before being approved by a simple majority of voters in a statewide election to change the constitution.

A House bill attempts to define school finance adequacy independently of any judicial involvement, saying that it would be established when funding, including money spent on retirement benefits, is at least 50 percent of the state's appropriations for the year from its general fund

Attorneys for the school districts have criticized the bills as attempted end runs around the court ruling. There have also been allegations that the potential constitutional ballot language is misleading. The proposed explanatory statement reads: "A vote against this proposition would retain the current provision in the Kansas constitution, which has been interpreted by the Kansas Supreme Court as empowering that court to order the Kansas Legislature to fund public schools in whatever amounts that the Kansas Supreme court may determine necessary."

Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt asked the Kansas Supreme Court to appoint a mediator to resolve the case which would avoid a high court ruling. The state also asked that a July 1 implementation deadline be delayed.

Alan Rupe, attorney for Schools for Fair Funding, said in response to the request for mediation and the stay:

"We are opposed to any stay on the court's ruling and the court's orders to adequately fund public education for school kids in Kansas City, Kansas and throughout the state. Our public school kids have been trying to learn in a system that the court has ruled is inadequately funded and unconstitutional. We cannot afford to let any more time pass without stepping up to the plate and adequately funding education in Kansas. Our kids and the Constitution are too important and we have plenty of reason to move quickly to fund education. But if the governor and leadership in the legislature want to mediate this and live up to their constitutional obligations, the school children of Kansas and the plaintiffs in this lawsuit welcome the discussion and their action."

The state had already appealed the ruling. However, the plaintiff districts also filed a cross-appeal, asking the Kansas Supreme Court to find that the funding system violates due process and equal protection, something the lower court refused to do. The school districts are also asking the high court to increase the aid award because the lower court did not consider updates to the original costing out study or measures of inflation.

In March, the Kansas high court ordered mediation of the dispute and appointed two mediators to help work out a settlement between the parties. The decision is the first time an appellate-level case will be mediated, and, as plaintiff's attorneys noted, the case involves over half of the state's budget. Briefs will still be filed by the parties, and the case remains on the Kansas Supreme Court calendar for October pending any agreement.

(Editor's note: RPM has closely followed this case. See RSFN coverage [here](#).)

Read more:

Read local coverage here:

- <http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/jan/11/court-rules-plaintiffs-school-finance-case/>
- <http://cjonline.com/news/2013-01-11/court-state-must-increase-education-funding>
- http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/jan/14/court-ruling-casts-shadow-over-governors-state-sta/?kansas_legislature
- <http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/feb/22/plaintiffs-file-cross-appeal-school-finance-lawsui/>

Read the full decision here:

- www.robblaw.com/PDFs/990170%20Gannon%20Decision.pdf

Governor Sam Brownback's legislative proposal on school funding:

- http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/jan/16/base-state-aid-pupil-would-stay-same-next-year-und/?kansas_legislature

Coverage on legislative efforts around the decision:

- http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/jan/14/statehouse-live-republican-leaders-considering-con/?kansas_legislature
- http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/jan/31/gop-proposes-amendment-end-school-funding-lawsuit/?kansas_legislature
- www.dailyjournal.net/view/story/55028c83497d4536a34646c88023134f/KS-Focus--Kansas-School-Funding/
- http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/feb/13/supporters-amendment-say-legislature-should-be-sol/?kansas_legislature
- <http://cjonline.com/news/2013-02-19/bills-target-school-funding-lawsuits>

Read about the mediation here:

- www.kansascity.com/2013/02/07/4054368/kansas-seeks-mediation-to-settle.html
- www.wyandottedailynews.com/articles/governor-requests-mediation-of-school-finance-lawsuit/
- www.kansas.com/2013/03/01/2697812/kansas-supreme-court-orders-mediation.html
- http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2013/mar/04/mediation-order-first-its-kind-kansas/?kansas_legislature

Read about the districts' appeal here:

- www.kansas.com/2013/02/22/2013/02/22/2684144/school-districts-file-cross-appeal.html
- <http://www2.iworld.com/news/2013/feb/22/plaintiffs-file-cross-appeal-school-finance-lawsuit/>

Arizona Court Says Annual Inflationary Increase for Schools Are Not Optional

The Grand Canyon State education budget will increase by around \$80 million beginning next year as a result of an order saying the Legislature must make full annual increases for inflation. The Arizona State Court of Appeals has overturned a lower court's ruling in *Cave Creek School District v. Ducey and State of Arizona*. The earlier ruling had agreed with the state that lawmakers could choose to apply the inflationary increase only to some elements of education funding each year.

In 2000, voters approved Proposition 301, which requires the state to adjust funding for public schools upward each year by either two percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. The statutory language requires Arizona lawmakers to "increase the base level or other components of the revenue control limit." Proposition 301 also raised the state sales tax by 0.6 percent.

In 2010, the Legislature only applied the increase to transportation funding, not the base student cost. The Arizona Education Association and a number of school districts challenged that action in court. The case was filed in early 2011. (*Editor's note:* See previous RSFN coverage [here](#).)

A lower court had agreed with lawmakers and said that the word "or" in the law allowed them to decide which parts of the education budget to increase each year. But the Court of Appeals found that materials given to voters about the proposition and legislative history shows the intent of the law was to apply an annual inflationary increase to base funding, transportation costs, and other special funds for schools.

The state argued that the Proposition could not control legislators' future actions or budget priorities. But in *Cave Creek*, the court cited the state's Voter Protection Act, passed in 1998, which prohibits legislators from repealing or altering any measure approved by voters. "Taking such actions would directly contravene what the voters intended," according to the court's order.

The court acknowledged that the recession made the budgetary process difficult, but did not excuse noncompliance with the law: "Without question, the legislature faces substantial challenges in preparing the state's budget, particularly during difficult economic circumstances. But our constitution does not permit the legislature to change the meaning of voter-approved statutes by shifting funds to meet other budgeting priorities."

Tim Hogan, a long-time student and school advocate in Arizona, represented the plaintiff coalition in the case. On the ruling, he said, "It requires the Legislature to honor the vote of Arizonans when they approved this."

The legislature also chose not to adjust the base level for the 2011–12 or 2012–13 fiscal years. The court did not order repayment of the underfunding from the previous three school years. But some lawmakers have said that the ruling means they will not be able to fund other education priorities this year, including support for implementing Common Core standards and incentive payments for schools with high test scores.

Arizona, like many states, is expecting a budget surplus this year. Estimates of the surplus put that amount around \$700 million.

The Arizona attorney general's office said an appeal to the state Supreme Court is planned.

Read more:

Read local coverage here:

- www.eastvalleytribune.com/local/education/article_335e0542-5f5c-11e2-835d-0019bb2963f4.html
- www.azcentral.com/news/politics/articles/20130115court-ariz-education-spending-must-account-inflation.html

Read the ruling here:

- <http://azcourts.gov/Portals/0/OpinionFiles/Div1/2013/1%20CA-CV%2011-0256.pdf>

Arkansas Court Decision Jeopardizes *Lake View* Funding Reforms

In a ruling issued November 29th, the Arkansas Supreme Court held that school districts whose property tax revenues exceed state-mandated levels may keep the overage rather than remit it to the state.

The ruling in *Kimbrell v. McCleskey* currently affects fewer than five percent of all school districts in Arkansas. However, education policy experts, stakeholders, and political leaders, including Governor Mike Bebee, have expressed concern that the decision undermines the state's commitment to fair school funding and threatens many of the painstaking reforms developed in response to the *Lake View* school finance lawsuit.

The case was brought by the Fountain Lake and Eureka Springs school districts, two communities with large numbers of retired residents and high property values. It challenges a practice in place since 1996, when Amendment 74 was passed in response to the filing of the *Lake View* school funding lawsuit. Amendment 74 mandates a 25-mill property tax for schools, also known as the Uniform Rate of Tax (URT).

Revenue from the URT is submitted to the state for use in foundation formula funding for all districts. It has served as a mechanism for maintaining adequacy of school funding by helping to ensure a minimum funding floor for all schools. And it has also served to increase equity among districts by requiring a similar 25-mill local effort. State funding helps offset differences between high wealth districts where 25 mills yields significant revenue and low wealth districts where it does not.

(*Editor's note:* For a more in-depth discussion of adequacy and equity principals, click [here](#) to see Installment Seven of the ten-part RSFN Special Series "Financing Rural Schools: Characteristics of Strong Rural School Finance Systems.")

In a handful of districts, including Fountain Lake and Eureka Springs, the URT generates more local revenue than is required for the formula. That overage has always been remitted to the state, which the state argues prevents a statewide tax from disproportionately benefitting more affluent districts. The suit argued the high wealth districts should be able to keep overage.

Many people in Arkansas are concerned that the court's ruling, which allows districts to retain excess funding, will increase the inequity that results from significant differences in property values across districts. The fear is that Arkansas will lose many of the improvements in school funding that resulted from reforms driven by the *Lake View* litigation.

The majority ruling in the 4-3 decision held that the millage collection was not a state tax to be controlled solely by the state, but a special tax. "It is a one-of-a-kind tax, a school-district tax, approved by the voters of the state of Arkansas and levied, assessed, and collected by the counties for the sole use of the school districts," wrote Justice Paul Danielson in the majority opinion. The opinion further stated that the legislature had the authority to craft laws mandating that overage be turned over to the state for use in foundation funding for all districts if it wished to do so.

But Governor Beebe and others have responded that rewriting that provision would set a bad precedent and open the door to tinkering with the myriad school finance reforms that resulted from the *Lake View* case and could upset the adequacy and equity issues at the heart of Amendment 74.

In his dissent, Chief Justice Jim Hannah summed up the concerns of many who participated in and were impacted by the long-running *Lake View* school funding case: "The majority nullifies ten years of difficult and painstaking work diligently undertaken by the General Assembly, the Department of Education, the Attorney General, and the Governor, to provide this state with a constitutional school-funding system. The state's carefully crafted constitutional system of state-funded public education is obliterated by the majority's decision."

Beebe and Arkansas Attorney General Dustin McDaniel separately asked the court for a rehearing in the case, which was denied. Many in the state are concerned that if lawmakers file legislation designed to revert to the pre-*Lake View* funding system, as some have indicated they plan to do, the gains in adequacy of funding for schools made as a result of the case could be lost.

Read more:

Local coverage of the case:

- <http://arkansasnews.com/sections/news/arkansas/legislators-may-seek-trump-court-school-funding.html>
- <http://ap.thecabin.net/pstories/state/ar/20121129/1071236294.shtml>
- <http://arkansasnews.com/sections/news/arkansas/mcdaniel-beebe-seek-rehearing-school-funding-case.html>
- www.arktimes.com/ArkansasBlog/archives/2012/11/30/education-groups-offer-fiery-criticism-of-supreme-court-ruling

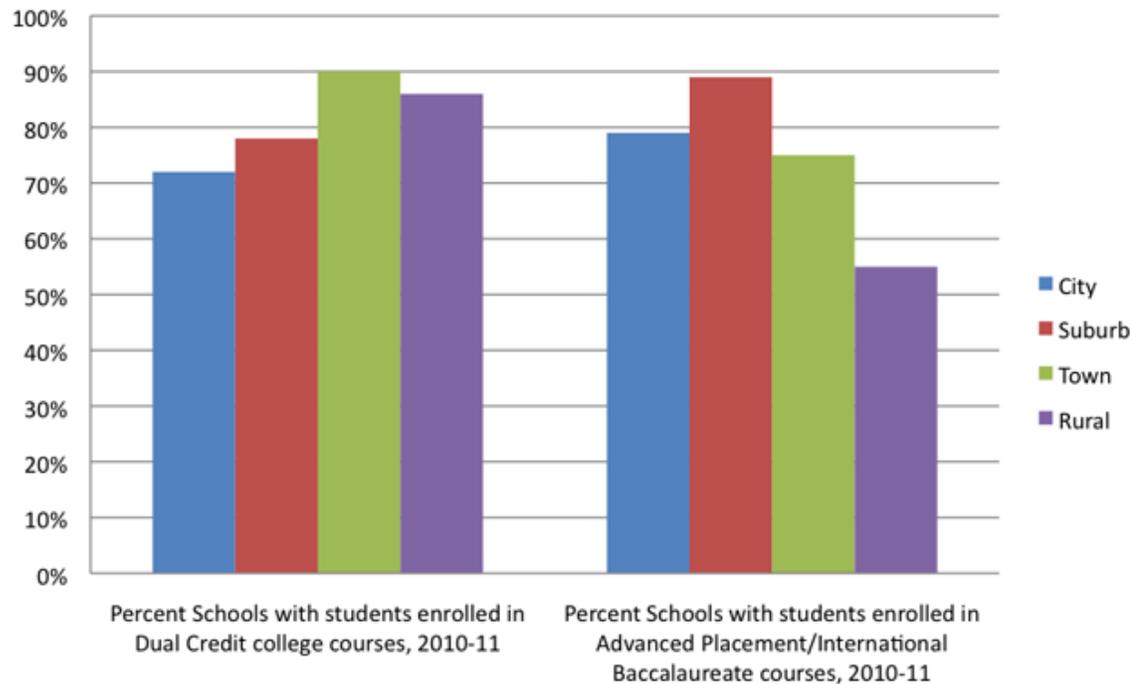
Read the court decision here:

- http://posting.arktimes.com/images/blogimages/2012/11/29/1354219627-kimbrell_majority_1_.pdf

Graph

Enrollment in Dual Credit or AP/IB Courses, by Locale (2010-11)

Enrollment in Dual Credit or AP/IB Courses, by Locale (2010-11)



Source: Thomas, N., Marken, S., Gray, L., and Lewis, L. (2013). Dual Credit and Exam-Based Courses in U.S. Public High Schools: 2010-11 (NCES 2013-001). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

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[RPM Special Edition on School
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