

Bond Case Briefs

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SCHOOLS - FLORIDA

Citizens for Strong Schools, Inc. v. Florida State Board of Education

Supreme Court of Florida - January 4, 2019 - So.3d - 2019 WL 98253

Public school students, parents, and citizen organizations brought action against State Board of Education and various state officials for declaratory judgment that Board violated its paramount duty to provide uniform, efficient, and high quality system of free public schools, as required by Florida Constitution.

Following bench trial, the Circuit Court ruled in favor of defendants. Plaintiffs appealed. The District Court of Appeal affirmed. Plaintiffs' application for review was granted.

The Supreme Court of Florida held that challenge to adequacy of entire K-12 system failed to present any manageable standard by which to avoid judicial intrusion into legislature's powers.

Blanket constitutional challenge to adequacy of entire K-12 system failed to present any manageable standard by which to avoid judicial intrusion into legislature's powers in suit alleging low achievement and wide disparities, particularly for children experiencing poverty or attending school in poorer districts; term "high quality" in constitutional amendment requiring adequate provision for "high quality education" lacked straightforward content and could reasonably be viewed as "puffing," and basing measurement of "high quality" solely on assessment results for legislature's core content standards would constitutionalize those standards, could have perverse effect of weakening curriculum standards, and ignored legislative revision of standards.