
SCHOOL FINANCE - OHIO

State ex rel. Horizon Science Academy of Lorain, Inc. v. Ohio Department of Education

Supreme Court of Ohio - May 19, 2021 - N.E.3d - 2021 WL 1992212 - 2021-Ohio-1681

Community schools that were operated by a foreign corporation filed petition for writ of mandamus directing Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the governor, and other state officials to approve schools' applications for Quality Community School Support (QCSS) program grants and accordingly award each school $1,750 for each economically disadvantaged student and $1,000 for other students enrolled for the fiscal year.

The Supreme Court held that:

- As a matter of first impression, the definition of "good standing," as criteria for QCSS grant, related to solely to the operator's standing as a qualified and effective operator of community schools, and
- Schools were entitled to writ of mandamus directing the ODE to approve their grant applications and award them QCSS-grant funding.

Definition of "good standing" for community-school operators under Quality Community School Support (QCSS) program, which provided grant funding of $1,750 or $1,000 per student to a school designated as a "Community School of Quality" depending on whether the student was economically disadvantaged, related solely to the operator's standing as a qualified and effective operator of community schools, not corporate registration with the Secretary of State.

Community schools established that they had clear legal right to Quality Community School Support (QCSS) program funding grants and a clear legal duty on the part of the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to provide them, and therefore, schools were entitled to writ of mandamus ordering ODE to approve their grant applications and award them QCSS-grant funding, where schools' operator satisfied each of the good-standing criteria pertaining to operators.

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