

Bond Case Briefs

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SCHOOL FUNDING - OKLAHOMA

Independent School District #52 of Oklahoma County v. Walters

Supreme Court of Oklahoma - April 2, 2024 - P.3d - 2024 WL 1399463 - 2024 OK 23

School districts brought action for writs of mandamus against defendants including Department of Education, alleging that districts received insufficient state aid payments for certain years. Other school districts intervened, and case was consolidated with a separate action that had been filed with another school district.

The District Court granted summary judgment to intervening districts, finding no requirement for defendants to seek repayment of excessive state aid payments made to certain schools until an audit was performed by auditors approved by the State Auditor and Inspector.

Plaintiff districts appealed. The Supreme Court affirmed in part, reversed in part, and remanded for District Court to adjudicate whether school districts had standing to bring claims. On remand, the District Court granted defendants' summary judgment motion, and denied plaintiffs cross-motion for summary judgment. Plaintiffs appealed.

The Supreme Court held that:

- State aid funds were general revenue funds that had lapsed within 30 months of their appropriation;
- State Board of Education's statutory mechanism for recoupment of state aid funds did not confer standing on school districts to seek to recover funds from lapsed past appropriations of state aid through mandamus action;
- State aid funds sought by school districts were not ad valorem revenue;
- Tolling exception did not apply; and
- Date to determine whether state aid appropriations sought by school districts had lapsed was the date school districts commenced action in District Court.