

district for its failures in special education. The district set forth a plan of improvement, but conditions remain poor. After years of negotiation, the Rochester City School District has entered an agreement outlining specific consequences if it does not fix its special education department in three years.

Here are a sampling of recent education lawsuits around the country that allege different states are failing to honor students' rights to an adequate or equitable education.

New York

NYSER v. State of New York : This lawsuit was filed in 2014, charging that New York state is neglecting its constitutional obligation to provide enough education funding to provide all students with meaningful educational opportunity. It is built upon the legal basis established by the *CFE v. New York* case, which says that the state constitution entitles all students to the opportunity for a sound basic education, including a meaningful high school education that prepares them to be capable citizens and competitive workers. The parties are preparing for trial.

Maisto v. State of New York: In January, Justice Kimberly O'Connor dismissed a lawsuit from several New York school districts that challenged the adequacy of the state's education funding system. O'Connor wrote that the educational outcomes in the district are "undeniably inadequate." However she said that plaintiffs focused on the need for additional resources to help students overcome challenges outside the classroom, including poverty, breakdown of family structure and absence of parental guidance. "It is not the core mission of the educational system to repair these outside social concerns and problems," her decision stated. The plaintiffs are likely to appeal.

Arizona

Glendale Elementary School District v. State of Arizona: In 2017, four school districts sued the state of Arizona, saying that it had failed to provide adequate funding for school maintenance. The districts contend that the lack of funding for maintenance of buildings, buses and materials forced the schools to divert money away from needed classroom resources, thus harming student's ability to learn.

California

Peter P., et al. v. Compton Unified School District: Five students in the Compton Unified School District filed a

Iowa

Woods et al. v. State: In 2017, a judge dismissed a lawsuit from former and current students of the Davenport Community School District that alleged that the state's funding formula created inequities and was unconstitutional. The plaintiff's claim was rejected in part because "whether there is a fundamental right to education remains an open question in Iowa." Plaintiffs are expected to appeal.

Michigan

Gary B v. Snyder: A group of students from Detroit's five worst public schools sued the state in federal court in 2016. They argued that they had a constitutional right to access to basic literacy, which the schools were not providing. The state argued that literacy is a privilege rather than a right. U.S. District Court in Detroit sided with the state, saying children had no fundamental right to learn to read and write. An appeal is planned.

Minnesota

Cruz-Guzman v. State of Minnesota: A class action suit filed by parents in Minnesota argues that the state has enabled racially segregated schools in St. Paul and Minneapolis that fail to provide an adequate education to children of color. The Minnesota Constitution mandates a "general and uniform system of public schools." The plaintiffs argue that desegregation will create more equal learning opportunities.

New Mexico

Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico: A state judge ruled in 2018 that New Mexico was violating the constitutional rights of its students by failing to provide them with an adequate education. The court gave the state until April 15, 2019, to provide a remedy for the fact that the state is not providing enough resources to schools that serve low-income students, English language learners, students with special needs and Native American students.

Pennsylvania

William Penn et al. v. PA Dept. of Ed: Six families and six school districts filed a lawsuit that charges that state funding for education is inadequate and not equitable. Trial is set to begin in 2020.

Rhode Island

federal class action lawsuit saying that students who have experienced traumatic events ought to be entitled to the kinds of accommodations and resources provided to students under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Connecticut

Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding v. Vell: Several school districts and municipalities filed a lawsuit against the state saying that the funding system was not equitable. A judge ruled that total education funding was adequate, but that it was distributed in such a way that poor students were not being equitably educated. The state Supreme Court overturned this ruling, saying that the

Cook v. Raimondo: Public school families are suing the state of Rhode Island for providing an education that is so poor it prevents people from exercising their constitutional rights. A person without basic literacy and civics competency cannot vote, for example, a right guaranteed by the 15th Amendment.

Vermont

Brigham v. State of Vermont: A lawsuit challenges the constitutionality of Vermont's education funding, saying that it violates the Constitution's clauses on common benefits, proportional contribution and education.

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