

# ***CCJEF v Rell***

## **SUPREME COURT APPEAL CLIPPINGS**

### **PRINT**

#### **AP: Yale students go to bat for public schools at Conn. court**

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP, April 22) — After years of preparation, two products of Yale Law School — a pricey, powerhouse program — stood before the Connecticut Supreme Court on Tuesday, arguing on behalf of the poorest public school students in one of the country's richest states.

Plaintiffs' legal fees for the case brought the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding would have cost an estimated \$5 million to \$7 million if handled by private lawyers. Yale law students Neil Weare and David Noah and a dozen classmates spent thousands of hours interviewing plaintiffs, conducting research, drafting briefs and developing oral arguments, for free.

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-04-22-yale\\_N.htm?csp=34#uslPageReturn](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-04-22-yale_N.htm?csp=34#uslPageReturn)

[Note: This story, written by the AP's Hartford capitol reporter Susan Haigh, was picked up by newspapers across Connecticut and the nation — e.g., by the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Washington Post*, *Education Week*, *Tuscaloosa News*, *Kansas City Star*, *Las Cruces Sun-News*, *Idaho Statesman*, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Lexington Herald-Leader*, *Miami Herald*, *Sacramento Bee*, and a host of hot websites like Salon.com, Forbes.com, Lycos.com, ABCNews, and a plethora of tv/radio websites like The Ray & Diane Show, WTIC. The story even made it into the *International Herald Tribune*!]

#### **Hartford Courant: Connecticut Court Considers What Is A Good Education?**

(April 23, 2008) — Simon Bernstein sat in the front row of the courtroom Tuesday as state Supreme Court justices, an assistant attorney general and two law students grappled over the meaning of his words.

Back in 1965, Bernstein had been largely responsible for crafting an article added to the state constitution guaranteeing "free public elementary and secondary schools." A former Hartford alderman and Bloomfield school board member, Bernstein's experience with local school funding debates had convinced him of the need to make education a fundamental right.

<http://www.courant.com/news/education/hc-ctequalified0423.artapr23,0,1154634.story>

[Also ran online, Education Commission of the States/ECS Clips]

#### **New Haven Register: High court to hear arguments on legality of school funding**

(April 22) HARTFORD — Yale law students will argue before the state Supreme Court today against what they claim to be a state educational funding system that unconstitutionally denies students in poorer municipalities "suitable and substantially equal educational opportunities."

On Nov. 22, 2005, 15 Connecticut families and the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding filed suit against numerous state parties, including Gov. M. Jodi Rell and the state Board of Education, asking the court to declare the current education funding system unconstitutional.

[http://www.nhregister.com/WebApp/appmanager/JRC/BigDaily?nfpb=true&\\_pageLabel=pg\\_article&r21.pgpath=%2FNHR%2FNews%2FConnecticut&r21.content=%2FNHR%2FNews%2FConnecticut%2FTopStoryList Story\\_1929923](http://www.nhregister.com/WebApp/appmanager/JRC/BigDaily?nfpb=true&_pageLabel=pg_article&r21.pgpath=%2FNHR%2FNews%2FConnecticut&r21.content=%2FNHR%2FNews%2FConnecticut%2FTopStoryList Story_1929923)

## **AP: Yale students to argue schools case before state high court**

(April 21) HARTFORD, Conn. — A group of Yale Law School students will ask the state Supreme Court on Tuesday to agree that every Connecticut child is entitled to an adequate education.

The students, representing the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding and student plaintiffs from across the state, said the state's constitution guarantees an education for all students, but does not guarantee its quality.

The current education funding system, the Yale students say, provides an unequal chance for those students to learn.

[http://www.boston.com/news/local/connecticut/articles/2008/04/21/yale\\_students\\_to\\_argue\\_schools\\_case\\_before\\_state\\_high\\_court/?rss\\_id=Boston.com+--+Connecticut+news](http://www.boston.com/news/local/connecticut/articles/2008/04/21/yale_students_to_argue_schools_case_before_state_high_court/?rss_id=Boston.com+--+Connecticut+news)

## **Yale Daily News: Law students to advocate for schools**

(April 21) — Two Yale Law School students will advocate for more than 600,000 Connecticut schoolchildren before the state Supreme Court in Hartford today.

For the two students in Yale's Education Adequacy Clinic, David Noah LAW '09 and Neil Weare LAW '08, more than a year of work will culminate today as they present their oral argument in a case that will decide whether Connecticut's constitution, which has guaranteed the right to an education since 1965, entails some baseline quality of education. The students will argue it does, on behalf of the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding, the lead plaintiff in the suit.

<http://www.yaledailynews.com/articles/view/24613>

## **Connecticut Law Tribune: Group Fights For More School Spending**

(April 21) — A nonprofit advocacy group will go before the state Supreme Court this week to push its claim that the state's failure to adequately fund public schools has irreparably harmed thousands of schoolchildren.

Two Yale Law School students, Neil Weare and David Noah, from the school's Education Adequacy Clinic, will argue Tuesday on behalf of the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF).

"I went to public schools growing up," Weare said. "I want to ensure the opportunity I was able to have in public school are available to all students, no matter where they are."

<http://www.ctlawtribune.com/getarticle.aspx?ID=30026>

## **Danbury News-Times: Education funding gets day in court**

(April 20) DANBURY — A coalition of town leaders will take a big step in a lawsuit against the state to garner more education funding with an appeal of a lower court ruling Tuesday before the Connecticut Supreme Court.

The ruling decided that students don't have a right to an adequate education, according to the state constitution.

Appellate courts in more than 20 states, including those from New Jersey, New York and Massachusetts, have recognized the existence of such a right.

[http://www.newstimes.com/ci\\_8992861](http://www.newstimes.com/ci_8992861)

## **Connecticut Post: 'Quality' education focus of lawsuit**

(April 22) HARTFORD — Thousands of Connecticut children are receiving inferior educations that are failing to adequately prepare them for later life, Yale Law School students charged Tuesday before the state Supreme Court.

Poor educational quality is holding children back in cities such as Bridgeport, while other school systems, especially in the wealthier suburbs, are preparing their children to join the 21st century's global economy, they said.

[http://www.connpst.com/localnews/ci\\_9020007](http://www.connpst.com/localnews/ci_9020007)

### **Education Week: The School Law Blog, Friday Roundup**

(April 25) — The Connecticut Supreme Court this week considered a lawsuit challenging the way the state funds public education. The Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding has a Web page devoted to its case, which is seeking to overturn a lower-court ruling that the state constitution does not mandate a minimum standard of quality for public education.

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/school\\_law/2008/04/friday\\_roundup\\_1.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/school_law/2008/04/friday_roundup_1.html)

## **ONLINE**

### **New Haven Independent: Yale Law Students Argue Education Case to Connecticut Supreme Court**

(April 24) — Seven months ago Superior Court Judge Joseph Shortall gutted a lawsuit aimed at fixing the badly broken education cost sharing (ECS) formula the state uses to fund its public schools. This week two Yale Law School students asked the justices of the Supreme Court to restore the full lawsuit, saying the trial court "prematurely decided the case."

The law students, David Noah and Neil Weare, are members of the Yale Law Education Adequacy Project, a clinic type class that brought the lawsuit in 2005 on behalf of Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF). Several major cities and towns have joined the lawsuit.

[http://www.newhavenindependent.org/archives/2008/04/yale\\_law\\_studen.php](http://www.newhavenindependent.org/archives/2008/04/yale_law_studen.php); also at

[http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/courts/yale\\_law\\_students\\_argue\\_educat.php](http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/courts/yale_law_students_argue_educat.php)

### **CTNewsJunkie.com: Do CT Students Have a Right to an "Adequate Education"?**

(April 21) — The Connecticut Supreme Court will be asked Tuesday to determine if Connecticut schoolchildren have a right to an adequate education.

Yale Law students filed the case against the state more than two years ago on behalf of 15 students and their families that feel the quality of education is falling far short of its intended goal. The Attorney General's office is expected to argue on behalf of the state.

[http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/courts/do\\_ct\\_students\\_deserve\\_an\\_adeq.php](http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/courts/do_ct_students_deserve_an_adeq.php)

## **RADIO**

### **Connecticut Public Radio (WNPR): School Finance Lawsuit**

(April 22) — Connecticut's Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a special appeal Tuesday — part of the school finance case brought by the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding.

In 2005 a coalition of municipalities, boards of ed, parents and teachers known as CCJEF filed a lawsuit, charging that Connecticut's public financing system violates students' constitutional right to an equitable and adequate education. Last year, a Superior court judge dismissed the "adequacy" part of the lawsuit.; CCJEF appealed — straight to the Connecticut Supreme Court.

Much of the hearing centered around - how to define an “adequate” or “suitable” education. Two Yale Law School students argued on behalf of the plaintiffs. They pointed to underperforming schools in Bridgeport and Meriden and said the state’s constitution gives these students the right to be prepared for a world beyond high school.

<http://www.cpb.org/school-finance-lawsuit>

## **Connecticut Public Radio (WNPR): Suit Calls for "Adequate" Education**

(April 21) — The Connecticut Supreme Court will hear oral arguments Tuesday in the case brought by the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding. Members of the coalition were in Hartford on Monday in advance of the hearing.

CCJEF is made up of a bi-partisan group of municipalities, local boards of education, parents and others. The coalition argues that under Connecticut’s constitution, the state must provide students with an equitable and “adequate” education –one that ensures that kids are prepared to meet proficiency goals on standardized tests, are ready for higher education and to become effective citizens.

## **TV**

### **Connecticut Network (CT-N): Supreme Court Oral Argument: CT Coalition for Justice in Education Funding et al. v. Governor M. Jodi Rell et al.**

(April 22) — On-demand (online viewing) link to CT-N’s broadcast of the 1 hour 50 minute oral arguments before the Connecticut Supreme Court.

<http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/ondemand.asp?ID=3511>

### **Connecticut Network News (CTN): Capitol News Briefing on the CT Coalition for Justice in Education Funding v. Rell Lawsuit**

(April 21) -- Capitol News Briefing to explain the background of the *CCJEF v. Rell* lawsuit. Link to the 21- minute legal briefing.

<http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/ondemand.asp?ID=3494>

### **NBC 30: Yale Brings Education to Court**

(April 22) — Yale University law students are hopeful Supreme Court will decide in their favor. Link to the broadcast.

<http://video.nbc30.com/player/?id=243328>

### **NBC 30: Law Students Argue for ‘Adequate’ Education**

(April 22) HARTFORD, Conn. — Two Yale Law School students are hoping they have successfully persuaded Connecticut's highest court that the state constitution gives every student the right to an adequate education.

Representing the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding, the students appeared before the state Supreme Court on Tuesday and argued that students should expect public schooling that prepares them for a life of work and higher education.

<http://www.nbc30.com/news/15957842/detail.html>