
PTA joins in historic lawsuit

California's broken school finance system is unconstitutional

This morning, a historic lawsuit was filed against the state of California declaring that the current education finance system is broken and unconstitutional. As a result, students are being denied the opportunity to master the educational programs the state requires.

Maya Robles-Wong v. the State of California was filed in Alameda by the California State PTA, the California School Boards Association and the Association of California School Administrators. Plaintiffs include nine school districts, as well as individual students and their families. Plaintiff Maya Robles-Wong is a 16-year-old 11th-grader at Alameda High School.

"We must have a school finance system that allows schools to deliver a high-quality education for all children - in good times and in tough times," said Jo A.S. Loss, president of California State PTA.

About the lawsuit

California's constitution requires a school system that prepares students to become informed citizens and productive members of society. The state has set clear requirements for what schools must teach and what students must learn. The state has an obligation to provide the resources necessary to meet the required standards, but the state has failed to do so.

This lawsuit seeks to remedy the broken school finance system by (1) declaring that it is unconstitutional and (2) requiring state lawmakers to uphold their constitutional duty to design and implement a school finance system that provides all students equal access to the required educational program.

The lawsuit declares that the "unsound, unstable and insufficient school finance system is neither aligned with required educational programs nor with student needs."

Filing this lawsuit was a last resort for California State PTA and the other plaintiffs. The Governor and lawmakers have known for some time that the current school finance system is harming students, and they have done nothing to remedy the crisis.

For more information on the lawsuit and to read the complete complaint, please visit www.fixschoolfinance.org.

We recognize the need to keep our membership informed as the case progresses.

Important note

The Board of Directors and Board of Managers weighed this decision to participate in the lawsuit very carefully. The unprecedented step of initiating legal action is necessary given the serious deficiencies of the current school funding system, and the utter lack of meaningful action taken by the Legislature and Governor to address it.

All of the legal representation for California State PTA's involvement in this case will be provided at no cost to our association. A number of prominent law firms and legal experts are involved in the case, some volunteering their time. Absolutely no member dues or any other of our revenues will be spent on legal costs for this case.
