

From: Foundation for Excellence in Education <info=excelined.org@mail3.atl31.mcdlv.net>
To: Soura, ChristianChristianSoura@gov.sc.gov
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Contact: Press Office
850-391-4090
PressShop@ExcelinEd.org

Statement by Jeb Bush: Students Win in California

Court Upholds Students' Right to an Effective Classroom Teacher

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Today, Jeb Bush, former governor of Florida and chairman of the Foundation for Excellence in Education (ExcelinEd) released the following statement on the court's decision to uphold students' constitutional right to effective classroom teachers in the case known as *Vergara v. California*.

"Judge Rolf Treu made a historic decision that will reverberate well beyond California. Morally we know that all children deserve a chance to learn in the classroom. Now a series of indefensible laws denying them that right have been struck down thanks to the efforts of nine very brave public school students and their excellent legal team.

"Judge Treu listened to the plaintiffs and analyzed the overwhelming evidence their lawyers presented showing that teachers matter. This ruling on the constitutional rights of disadvantaged students to an equal education and equal access to effective teachers was being watched across the nation, and its impact will be felt well beyond California.

"Sixty years after the Brown v. Board of Education decision, the fight for equal access to a quality education for all students continues. Today's decision is one more victory for this cause."

The court decision strikes down a series of laws that "disproportionally affect poor and/or minority students" by violating their state constitutional guarantees of an adequate public education. In the decision the court stated:

- "All sides agree that grossly ineffective teachers substantially undermine the ability of that child to succeed in school."
- "The evidence is compelling. Indeed, it shocks the conscience... There is also no dispute that there are a significant number of grossly ineffective teacher currently active in California classrooms."
- "This court finds that both students and teachers are unfairly, unnecessarily, and for no legally cognizable reason (let alone a compelling one), disadvantaged by the current Permanent Employment Statute."

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Contact Us

P.O. Box 10691
Tallahassee, Florida 32302
850-391-4090
info@excelined.org

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