

LEGAL NOTICE:

IF YOU ARE THE PARENT OF A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY IN NEW ORLEANS, THIS NOTICE MAY AFFECT YOUR RIGHTS.

If you are a parent of a present or future student with a disability, regardless of whether your student has been identified as a student with a disability, who resides in New Orleans, you may be affected by a proposed settlement of a lawsuit. If you are a member of the public who does not fit this description, you should read through to the end of this notice.

What is this case about?

The lawsuit is *P.B., et al. v. John White, et al.*, Case 2:12-cv-04049 in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana. The lawsuit was filed against the Louisiana State Superintendent of Education, the Louisiana Department of Education, and the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (collectively, "State Defendants") in October 2010 by ten children, through their parents or guardians, on behalf of all present and future New Orleans students with disabilities. The lawsuit alleges that the State Defendants failed to effectively coordinate, monitor, and oversee the delivery of special education services across over 60 distinct local educational agencies operating in New Orleans. The lawsuit also claims that, as a result of these alleged failures, students with disabilities are subject to discrimination or otherwise excluded from schools; mandatory evaluations for special education eligibility are not conducted; students with disabilities are disciplined without the procedural safeguards required by law; and students with disabilities are denied the free appropriate public education and related services to which they are entitled. The lawsuit sought to remedy these violations on behalf of the ten plaintiffs and on behalf of all students with disabilities in New Orleans. It is a "proposed class action." After the initiation of this case, the Orleans Parish School Board ("OPSB") intervened as a Defendant.

The Plaintiffs, State Defendants, and OPSB have agreed to a detailed settlement of the lawsuit that requires changes to the coordination, monitoring, and oversight of the provision of special education services to students with disabilities in New Orleans. The parties have also agreed to a settlement class. If the Court approves the class agreement, and the settlement, and you are a member of the class, this settlement will affect your rights.

You will not get any money as a result of this case.

The Plaintiffs did not seek money or compensatory education in this case. They only sought to change the State Defendants' practices with regard to the delivery of special education services for students with disabilities in New Orleans' schools. Any individual claims for money damages or compensatory education are not affected by this lawsuit.

How can I see the whole settlement?

If you want to review the proposed settlement, you can find it online at www.louisianabelieves.com. A copy is also available for inspection in the Office of the Clerk of Court, 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70130.

What if I am a class member and I wish to object or otherwise comment?

If you are a class member (a parent of a present or future student with a disability), you have a right to object to the proposed settlement. You can tell the Judge why you think the settlement should or should not be entered. If you want to object or otherwise comment, your letter must be postmarked by February 2, 2015. You can write to the Court at: Clerk, Attn. P.B., et al. v. John White, et al., 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70130. It is important to let the Court know if you are a class member because class members are entitled to rights not available to the general public.

On February 9, 2015 at 5:00 pm, Judge Jay Zainey will hold a hearing to decide whether the proposed settlement is fair, adequate, and reasonable. The Court may also, at or before that hearing, issue an order finding that class certification is appropriate. You may attend that hearing at the courthouse located at 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70130.

What if I am *not* a class member, but I still wish to comment?

The proposed class action settlement is in the form of a proposed consent judgment. You may review it through the process described above. Any member of the public may submit written comments to the Court at: Clerk, Attn. P.B., et al. v. John White, et al., 500 Poydras Street, New Orleans, LA 70130 no later than February 2, 2015. You may also attend the hearing scheduled for February 9, 2015.

January 9, 2015