

Press Advisory - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Accreditation transfer ruling provides some answers, but questions remain

KANSAS CITY, MO. – A judge today provided some answers regarding the accreditation transfer process that will allow the Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) to protect important resources needed to raise achievement, but further questions remain to be settled through the courts.

Jackson County Circuit Court Judge W. Brent Powell ruled today that laws governing the transfer of students from unaccredited school districts to school districts in Lee's Summit, Independence, and North Kansas City are unconstitutional as unfunded mandates. Conversely, Judge Powell ruled those laws are constitutional as applied to schools districts in Blue Springs and Raytown.

The immediate impact is KCPS will not be forced to pay large sums of taxpayer dollars above state funding to neighboring school districts as tuition for students seeking transfers to Lee's Summit, Independence, and North Kansas City. Transfers could be requested to Blue Springs and Raytown but even this portion of the ruling is likely to be challenged in the courts after the judge also ruled that KCPS' tuition transfer policy does not violate the statute.

"The judge's ruling today protects the educational resources of more than 16,000 students and avoids a tragedy," said KCPS Superintendent R. Stephen Green. "Our students have a right to high-quality resources, and this ruling prevents these resources from leaving KCPS, its students, and its teachers. We look forward to continuing our march toward reaccreditation."

"Today's ruling helps clear up some gray areas regarding accreditation transfers, but it also leaves a cloudy path as KCPS moves forward," said Green. "We anticipate legal challenges to Judge Powell's ruling that will provide further clarity on this issue. In the meantime, we will continue to focus on reaccreditation and student achievement."

The Kansas City Public Schools is dedicated to graduating students that are college, career, and workforce ready. This mission is supported by innovative classroom instruction, engaging programs, highly-qualified employees, and an engaged and well-informed community. To learn more about the ways our community of schools supports students and the community-at-large, please visit www.kcpublicschools.org, KCMO School District on Facebook, or KCMOSchools on Twitter.