



We have the legal right of way.

SPECIAL EDUCATION: *Doe v. State of Ohio* Class Action Lawsuit

What is *Doe v. State of Ohio*?

Doe v. State of Ohio is a class action lawsuit that was filed in federal court in 1993 as part of another lawsuit about funding and providing education in the State of Ohio. Disability Rights Ohio (formerly Ohio Legal Rights Service) became involved in the lawsuit on behalf of students with disabilities. Disability Rights Ohio's claims on behalf of students with disabilities are still in court.

What is a class action?

A class action is a type of lawsuit in court where there are so many people harmed that it does not make sense for each person to file a separate lawsuit. One lawsuit is filed on behalf of everyone who was or may have been harmed. This group of people is called "the class" and each individual person is called a "class member." A few class members are selected to represent the entire class. Those people are called "representative plaintiffs." The entity that is sued is called the "defendant."

Why is *Doe* a class action lawsuit?

There are more than 250,000 school-age students and more than 20,000 pre-school students across the State of Ohio who have disabilities and receive special education services. All of these students are affected by how the State of Ohio provides resources for special education to public schools.

What is the purpose of *Doe*?

The goal of this lawsuit is to ensure that all Ohio public schools have sufficient resources to provide students with disabilities appropriate special education and related services.

Who is part of the *Doe* class?

Your child is a part of the *Doe* class if he or she is between the ages of 3 and 21, is enrolled or seeking enrollment in Ohio's public school system, AND has a disability

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that makes him or her eligible to receive special education services. If your child meets this definition, then he or she is automatically part of the class. You do not have to do anything to be part of the class.

Who did *Doe* sue?

The lawsuit is only against the State of Ohio (defendant), which includes those offices responsible for special education funding in Ohio's public schools: the Governor, General Assembly, State Superintendent, Ohio State Board of Education, and Ohio Department of Education. No school districts or individual schools are defendants in this lawsuit.

Why does Disability Rights Ohio want to talk to parents?

We want to know how the lack of funding or resources is actually affecting students who need special education services. If you would like to help, the best way for Disability Rights Ohio to learn about these issues is to talk with parents about their experiences, struggles and observations in trying to get special education services for their children from their public schools.

If you agree to talk to Disability Rights Ohio, how will your information be used?

The information that you provide to Disability Rights Ohio will be used for background purposes. In other words, it will help us understand what is happening in schools across Ohio. This will help Disability Rights Ohio to present a better, more complete picture to the court of the actual problems faced by students who need special education services. Disability Rights Ohio will keep your and your child's identity, and the information you provide, confidential. Disability Rights Ohio will only release this information with your permission, or if the court specifically orders it to be released to the State of Ohio. If the information is released to the State of Ohio, the State of Ohio will not be able to share the information with anyone else outside of this lawsuit. It is very unlikely that any public school district will get this information.