

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
AND  
PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

CAMPAIGN TO ELIMINATE POVERTY  
AMONG RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN  
v.  
SOUTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL  
COMMITTEE

DECISION

Held: Need for a Federal Breakfast  
Program not proven.

Date: April 19, 1995

The record in this case establishes that South Kingstown has a policy of providing breakfast to individual students who, for whatever reason, come to school hungry. This is an informal program which functions on an ad hoc basis and is one which the school committee believes meets the needs of the school children of the district. The petitioners, however, contend that the school committee should be ordered to participate in the federal school breakfast program. This program would require South Kingstown schools to offer a complete breakfast program to all students. The school committee's response to this demand is contained in survey reports commissioned by the district to determine the need for a full scale federal breakfast program in South Kingstown. These surveys do not indicate a need for such a program. South Kingstown also presented evidence to the effect that the establishment of a full scale federal breakfast program in South Kingstown would not necessarily mean that more children would eat breakfast. The district also argues that a complete federal breakfast program could cause problems with the transportation schedule and with the scheduling of the school day.

We have decided a number of cases on this breakfast issue which provide us with precedent to decide this case. R.I. Campaign to Eliminate Childhood Poverty vs. Newport School Committee, 1993 and R.I. Parents for Progress vs. Pawtucket, 1992. We find that the survey done by the school committee suffices to show that there is no need for a full scale federal breakfast program in the South Kingstown school system. We also find that South Kingstown's informal policy of providing , on an ad hoc basis, a breakfast to students who come to school hungry, adequately protects the district's interest in seeing that children are able to learn.

#### Conclusion

Petitioners' appeal is denied and dismissed.

*Forrest L. Avila*

Forrest L. Avila, Hearing Officer

Approved:

*Peter McWalters*

Peter McWalters, Commissioner

April 19, 1995

Date