

KeyCite Yellow Flag - Negative Treatment
Not Followed on State Law Grounds [Norville v. Anne Arundel County Bd. of Educ.](#), Md.App., December 6, 2004

524 F.2d 928
United States Court of Appeals,
Fifth Circuit.

Kenneth W. ADAMS et al., Plaintiffs-Appellants,
United States of America, Amicus Curiae,

v.

RANKIN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION et
al., Defendants-Appellees.

No. 75-1991.

|
Dec. 1, 1975.

After remand of a school desegregation case, [485 F.2d 324](#), the United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi, Dan M. Russell, Jr., Chief Judge, rendered judgment which, inter alia, failed to order reinstatement of three teachers who were dismissed during time when a unitary school system was being implemented, but ordered that teachers who were reinstated were entitled to back pay awards against the local school system. Local school system appealed. The Court of Appeals held that there was substantial evidence to support the district court's finding that three teachers who were not reinstated were not dismissed because of racial discrimination but because of their incompetence; and that in view of the fact that under Mississippi law, county school system was a locally controlled institution which was supported largely by local revenues, the Eleventh Amendment did not bar the award of back pay to those teachers who were reinstated.

Affirmed and remanded with instructions.

West Headnotes (2)

- [1] **Education**
🔑 [Desegregation and consequent adverse action](#)
Public Employment
🔑 [Grounds for and Propriety of Adverse Action](#)

In school desegregation case, there was substantial evidence to support district court's finding that three teachers were not dismissed as

result of racial discrimination, but rather were dismissed for their incompetence.

[2 Cases that cite this headnote](#)

- [2] **Federal Courts**
🔑 [School boards; school districts](#)

In view of fact that under Mississippi law, county school system was locally controlled institution which was supported largely by local revenues, Eleventh Amendment did not bar award of back pay to teachers unlawfully discharged on basis of racial discrimination, since suit was in reality not against state itself, but against what was primarily a local institution. [U.S.C.A.Const. Amend. 11](#); [Code Miss. 1972, §§ 37-19-15, 37-57-1 et seq.](#)

[21 Cases that cite this headnote](#)

Attorneys and Law Firms

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi.

Before BROWN, Chief Judge, MORGAN and GEE, Circuit Judges.

Opinion

PER CURIAM:

In conformance with our opinion in [Adams v. Rankin County Board of Education](#), 5 Cir., 1973, 485 F.2d 324 which *929 ordered the implementation of a unitary school system in Rankin County, Mississippi, the District Court, upon remand, made a detailed report to the Fifth Circuit on July 10, 1974¹ which was supplemented by a report on December 23, 1974.² By its order entered February 3, 1975³ the District Court adopted these reports as its final judgment and this decree resolved all issues except the following: (i) whether the District Court erred in not reinstating three teachers who were dismissed during the time when the unitary system was being implemented, (ii) whether the District Court erred in not reinstating six nonprofessional staff members who were dismissed but later reemployed, and (iii) whether those teachers who were reinstated pursuant to the District Court's order upon remand from this Court were entitled to back pay awards against the local school system.

^[1] Dealing with these issues seriatim, we find that the District Court had ample basis upon which to conclude that the teachers were properly discharged. There was no showing that the dismissals were the result of racial discrimination, [United States v. Jefferson County Board of Education](#), 5 Cir., 1967, 380 F.2d 385, 394, and on the contrary there was substantial evidence from which the District Judge could conclude that the teachers were incompetent. See District Court's report to the Fifth Circuit at p. 10, App. at 71.

Footnotes

¹ This report is set out in the Appendix on appeal at 62-77.

² See App. at 84-86.

³ See App. at 112.

⁴ The county school systems in Mississippi are primarily funded by local ad valorem taxes and the funds obtained thereby are only supplemented by the state if insufficient to accomplish the educational needs of the county. See [Miss.Code Ann. s 37-19-15 \(1972\)](#). In addition, the statutes provide for a flexible tax structure which continues to tap local resources when increases in educational expenses are necessary to accomplish local educational goals. See [Miss.Code Ann. s 37-57-1 et seq. \(1972\)](#). Thus, it is apparent that any award of back pay would come primarily from local funds rather than out of the state treasury.

Concerning the nonprofessional employees, in light of the District Court's finding that all of these employees had been re-employed we deem this issue to be moot.

^[2] Finally, relying on our recent decision in [Hander v. San Jacinto Junior College](#), 5 Cir., 1975, 519 F.2d 273, 279-80, we find that under the applicable Mississippi statutes the Rankin County School system is a locally controlled institution which is supported largely by local revenues⁴ and accordingly the Eleventh Amendment does not bar the award of back pay to those teachers who were reinstated since the suit is in reality not against the state itself but against what is primarily a local institution. Accordingly, we remand this case to the District Court with the instructions that it calculate and award back pay to those teachers who were reinstated in accordance with the stipulation of the parties concerning this subject which was filed April 12, 1974 and which is set out on pages 40-58 of the appendix on appeal.

Affirmed and remanded with instructions.

All Citations

524 F.2d 928, 13 Fair Empl.Prac.Cas. (BNA) 1250, 11 Empl. Prac. Dec. P 10,612, 12 Empl. Prac. Dec. P 11,263