

Arguments heard on students’ right to sue for better education

BY MCKENNA HORSLEY
KENTUCKY LANTERN

FRANKFORT — Questions around the right of Kentucky students to sue for a better public education system were heard in court Tuesday. It’s one of the first steps in what could be a multi-year lawsuit against state officials that harkens back to a landmark decision rendered decades ago.

Franklin Circuit Court Judge Phillip Shepherd heard arguments from both sides for nearly two hours. Attorneys for the students, some of whom are members of the Kentucky Student Voice Team, said the students are entitled to benefit from high-quality public education and have a right to pursue the case. Meanwhile, Republican Attorney General Russell Coleman’s office argued that the students are making claims about a “metaphysical” injury and lack standing to sue.

Now, Shepherd must consider whether to accept the attorney general’s motion to dismiss the case or allow the students’ claim to proceed. He also must consider a motion to dismiss by House Speaker David Osborne and Senate President Robert Stivers, the top Republicans in the General Assembly and defendants in the suit.

The Kentucky Student Voice Team (KSVT), which has about 100 members across the state, is a nonprofit organization and a spinoff of the Prichard Committee,



Members of the Kentucky Student Voice Team address reporters after a court hearing in Frankfort on Tuesday.

a statewide group that in the 1980s organized grassroots support for school reform in Kentucky. KSVT’s position relies heavily on the Kentucky Supreme Court ruling in *Rose v. Council for Better Education*, often cited as the *Rose* decision, which was a 1989 landmark decision that prompted widespread changes to Kentucky’s public education system.

After that decision, the General Assembly in 1990 passed a penny increase

in the sales tax to fund the Kentucky Education Reform Act. At the time, the Supreme Court said that Kentucky students “must be provided with an equal opportunity to have an adequate education.” The *Rose* decision also provided the basis for similar lawsuits to be filed in other states.

The students filed their lawsuit against the state and General Assembly in January. They allege that the state government has “failed to maintain the

level of commitment to education required” by Kentucky’s Constitution and past court decisions and “failed to meet their obligation to monitor the efficiency of the education system.” The students also claim the Kentucky Board of Education and Department of Education “have failed to ensure the state’s educational system is constitutionally compliant.”

Attorney General Coleman’s office represents the state in the case. Coleman filed a motion to dismiss KSVT’s complaint in February. He argued that the students are asking Shepherd to “do what the *Rose* court was unwilling to do: supplant the role of the General Assembly in deciding what constitutes ‘appropriate legislation’ to provide for an efficient school system.”

“The relief the Plaintiffs seek is not of the kind this Court can grant — and even if it could, the Plaintiffs have not demonstrated standing and have

McKenna Horsley/Kentucky Lantern

Breaking barriers in brain health: Sanders-Brown’s 40-year legacy of Alzheimer’s research

BY HILLARY SMITH
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

LEXINGTON — For the past four decades, the University of Kentucky’s Sanders-Brown Center on Aging has been at the forefront of Alzheimer’s disease research, making groundbreaking discoveries that have shaped our understanding of this complex condition.

As one of the nation’s elite Alzheimer’s Disease Research Centers, SBCoA has played a crucial role in advancing scientific knowledge, improving patient care and fostering hope for millions of families affected by dementia.

Center Director Linda Van Eldik and others recently described the impact of the ADRC’s 40 years in an article published in *Alzheimer’s & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer’s Association*.

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP AND DISCOVERY

Established in 1979, SBCoA quickly became a leader in aging research, earning a prestigious designation as an ADRC from the National Institute on Aging in 1985 — one of the first 10 in the country. This recognition placed the center among a select group of institutions dedicated to unraveling the mysteries of Alzheimer’s disease.

Since its inception, Sanders-Brown researchers have contributed significantly to understanding the biological processes underlying Alzheimer’s. Early studies from the center helped characterize the roles of amyloid plaques and tau tangles in disease progression, forming the foundation for much of today’s research. Addi-



UK Libraries

Col. Harland Sanders; Gov. John Y. Brown Jr.; John Y. Brown Sr.; UK VP Ray Hornback; and Medical Center Chancellor Peter Bosomworth at the building dedication. Wade Hall Collection of American Letters, UK Libraries Special Collections Research Center.

tionally, SBCoA has been instrumental in identifying how genetic risk factors, such as the APOE 4 allele, contribute to an individual’s susceptibility to developing the disease.

“The UK-ADRC has been at the heart of Alzheimer’s research for 40 years, making discoveries that have changed how we diagnose, treat and even think about this disease,” said Van Eldik. “Our goal has always been to turn research into real-world solutions that improve lives.”

ADVANCING EARLY DETECTION AND DIAGNOSIS

One of the center’s most significant contributions has been its research on early detection. Researchers at SBCoA have developed innovative diagnostic tools, including advanced brain imaging techniques and biomarker studies, to identify Alzheimer’s disease at its earliest stages — often before symptoms even appear. These efforts have helped pave the way for earlier interventions and more effective treatment strategies.

One of the hallmarks of

Sanders-Brown’s research is its long-term observational studies, tracking aging adults over many years to understand the earliest changes associated with cognitive decline. These studies have provided critical insights into how the disease develops, leading to breakthroughs in early detection methods, including blood-based biomarkers, cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) analysis, and MRI and other imaging techniques.

“The ability to detect Alzheimer’s earlier means we can intervene sooner, potentially slowing its progression and giving individuals and families more time and better outcomes,” Van Eldik said. “Every step forward in early diagnosis brings us closer to effective prevention strategies.”

TRANSFORMING CLINICAL CARE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

Beyond research, SBCoA has been deeply committed to patient care and community engagement. The center provides comprehensive clinical services for individuals with Alzheimer’s and other neurodegenerative diseases,

offering diagnostic evaluations, treatment plans and support for caregivers.

SBCoA’s outreach initiatives have had a profound impact on public awareness and education. Through partnerships with local organizations, the center conducts workshops, support groups and educational programs that empower families and health care providers with the latest information about Alzheimer’s.

Additionally, SBCoA has worked tirelessly to address health challenges in Kentucky, ensuring that individuals at high risk for dementia have access to high-quality dementia care and research opportunities.

“At Sanders-Brown, we believe research should not stay in the lab — it should reach the people who need it most,” said Van Eldik. “Our commitment to community engagement ensures that families across Kentucky and beyond have access to the best information and care available.”

LEADING THE CHARGE IN CLINICAL TRIALS

SBCoA has also been instrumental in advancing clinical trials for Alzheimer’s treatments. Over the years, the center has played a key role in testing promising new drugs aimed at slowing or even preventing the progression of the disease. Researchers at Sanders-Brown have contributed to major trials evaluating the efficacy of monoclonal antibodies targeting amyloid and tau proteins, including recent FDA-approved treatments such as lecanemab and donanemab.

Lawsuit challenging vape law dropped

BY CADIZ RECORD STAFF

A federal lawsuit challenging Kentucky’s 2024 vaping law has been voluntarily dismissed by the plaintiffs, effectively ending their effort to overturn the legislation, Attorney General Russell Coleman’s office announced Tuesday.

The law, House Bill 11, restricts the sale of vapor products to only those authorized under federal regulations and prohibits their sale to individuals under 21. It went into effect on Jan. 1, 2025, after being passed by the General Assembly in April 2024.

After a U.S. district court in Kentucky dismissed the initial legal challenge to the law, the plaintiffs appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in February. The Attorney General’s office opposed the appeal, arguing the plaintiffs were attempting to continue selling products that are not legal under federal law.

The Sixth Circuit denied the plaintiffs’ motion, and the challengers subsequently dropped the case, according to a news release from Coleman’s office.

“Our office will continue to fight to uphold (Kentucky’s) laws in court and deliver more positive outcomes like this,” Coleman said in the statement.

The state’s defense before the Sixth Circuit was led by Solicitor General Matt Kuhn and Principal Deputy Solicitor General Jack Heyburn.

A separate state-court challenge to the law remains pending before the Kentucky Court of Appeals after a Franklin Circuit Court ruling in favor of the state last year.

Kentucky joins a number of states enacting stricter regulations on vaping products, particularly to curb youth access amid ongoing public health concerns.



LEGAL NOTICE

INVITATION TO BID
TRIGG COUNTY HOSPITAL

Trigg County Hospital is accepting bids from general/licensed electrical contractors for installation of nine new 30' light poles, concrete bases, and hookup for front parking lot and side street located at 254 Main Street, Cadiz, KY 42211. This includes running wire from EMS building to lights, wiring the lights, setting the poles in 2' by 5' round pillars, and extensive electrical knowledge. Trigg County Hospital will supply the lights, poles, and kits.

Complete bid packets and specifications are available from project coordinator Amy Edmonson, 270-522-3215 ext. 3516.

Bids should be delivered or mailed to Trigg County Hospital Attn: Amy Edmonson, 254 Main St., Cadiz, KY 42211 or by email aedmonson@trigghospital.org. Bids will be accepted until 2 p.m., May 30th, 2025, and will be reviewed by a hospital committee. The successful candidate will be notified.

Trigg County Hospital reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and to waive any technicality or informality in bidding or bids received, where such acceptance, rejection, or waiver is considered to be in the best interest of the hospital.

Trigg County Hospital is an Equal Opportunity Employer.