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March 11, 2010

KC Schools, A Case Study in Liberal Stupidity

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The [AP reports](#) that the Kansas City school system is closing 29 of its 61 schools due to budget problems -- a \$50 million shortfall. The AP quotes KC Councilwoman Sharon Sanders Brooks on the background of the story.

"The urban core has suffered white flight post-the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Brown v. the Board of Education*, blockbusting by the real estate industry, redlining by banks and other financial institutions, retail and grocery store abandonment."

There might be another explanation, one that the AP barely mentions.

The court decision that brought about KC schools' demise was not the 1954 decision, but a 1985 one. The case was summarized by the [Cato Institute](#) in 1998.

"In 1985 a federal district judge took partial control over the troubled Kansas City, Missouri, School District (KCMSD) on the grounds that it was an unconstitutionally segregated district with dilapidated facilities and students who performed poorly. In an effort to bring the district into compliance with his liberal interpretation of federal law, the judge ordered the state and district to spend nearly \$2 billion over the next 12 years to build new schools, integrate classrooms, and bring student test scores up to national norms."

The judicial branch ordered the legislative branch to spend money, and told it exactly how to do it.

"Kansas City spent as much as \$11,700 per pupil -- more money per pupil, on a cost of living adjusted basis, than any other of the 280 largest districts in the country. The money bought higher teachers' salaries, 15 new schools, and such amenities as an Olympic-sized swimming pool with an underwater viewing room, television and animation studios, a robotics lab, a 25-acre wildlife sanctuary, a zoo, a model United Nations with simultaneous translation capability, and field trips to Mexico and Senegal. The student-teacher ratio was 12 or 13 to 1, the lowest of any major school district in the country."

How did that turn out?

"The results were dismal. Test scores did not rise; the black-white gap did not diminish; and there was less, not greater, integration."

That was in 1998. But that's not all. In 2000, the [Los Angeles Times](#) reported a Reuters story.

"Kansas City's public school district has become the first in the nation to lose its accredited status by failing all Missouri's performance standards, and could be abolished unless it improves, officials said Wednesday."

And now the KC school system is broke and has to close down half its schools. This, after a court-ordered \$2 billion injection.

I would call that \$2 billion quite a *stimulus* for the KC system. See how well it turned out?

Page Printed from: http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2010/03/kc_schools_a_case_study_in_lib.html at March 11, 2010 - 11:24:39 AM CST