

# SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

## State ex rel. Siebold v. Columbus City Schools Bd. of Edn.

2025 Ohio 5245 · No. 2024-1263 · Decided November 25, 2025

### SUMMARY

The Supreme Court of Ohio dismissed as moot a mandamus action brought by Marrisa Siebold seeking to compel the Columbus City Schools Board of Education to provide interim transportation for her child under R.C. 3327.02(E)(2). The court held that the board had begun providing the requested transportation, and rejected application of the voluntary-cessation exception because mandamus seeks to compel performance of a legally required act rather than prohibit conduct. The court also granted certain motions to file revised evidence, denied leave to file another exhibit, and overruled evidentiary objections as moot.

### CASE DETAILS

|                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COURT                 | Supreme Court of Ohio                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| WRITING FOR THE COURT | Per Curiam; Chief Justice Kennedy; Justice Fischer; Justice DeWine; Justice Brunner; Justice Deters; Justice Hawkins; Justice Shanahan                                                                                    |
| JURISDICTION          | Supreme Court of Ohio                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| DECIDED               | November 25, 2025                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| DOCKET                | 2024-1263                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| DISPOSITION           | dismissed                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| PROCEDURAL POSTURE    | Original mandamus action seeking to compel a public school board to provide interim transportation for the relator's child while a transportation dispute proceeded through mediation and possible administrative review. |
| STANDARD OF REVIEW    | The relator had to establish entitlement to mandamus by clear and convincing evidence; mootness was determined from the undisputed evidence that the requested transportation had been provided.                          |
| PRECEDENTIAL VALUE    | Published Ohio Supreme Court opinion                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| PARTIES               | Marrisa Siebold v. Columbus City Schools Board of Education                                                                                                                                                               |

### TOPICS

- mootness
- writ of certiorari
- appellate procedure
- remedies
- administrative law

## PRACTICE AREAS

Education law

Mandamus

Appellate procedure

Mootness

Administrative law

## QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the mandamus action became moot after the school board began providing the interim transportation sought by Siebold.
2. Whether the voluntary-cessation exception to mootness applied because the school board might again fail to provide interim transportation.
3. Whether the possibility of damages or attorney fees prevented dismissal of the mandamus action as moot.

## HOLDINGS

1. The mandamus action was moot because the school board had performed the act Siebold sought to compel—providing interim transportation to her child pending mediation.
2. The voluntary-cessation exception did not apply because this was a mandamus action seeking to compel performance of a legally required act, not an action seeking to stop challenged conduct, and the requested act had already been performed.
3. Potential damages and attorney fees did not prevent dismissal because Siebold did not request them in her complaint, and damages under R.C. 2731.11 are recoverable only when a writ of mandamus is granted.

## KEY QUOTATIONS

“A writ of mandamus will not issue to compel an act already performed.” (§ 21)

“Rather than seeking to stop a defendant from engaging in certain conduct, the relator in a mandamus case seeks an order compelling the respondent to perform an act that the law requires.” (§ 25)

“But ‘a writ of mandamus will not issue to compel the general observance of laws in the future.’” (§ 26)

## FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Columbus City Schools Board of Education adopted impracticality determinations affecting students attending private and charter schools after the statutory deadline and initially did not provide interim transportation to Siebold's child during the required mediation process. Siebold rejected payment in lieu of transportation, requested mediation, and filed a mandamus action seeking transportation pending resolution of the dispute. The board began providing transportation in October 2024, and Siebold did not dispute that her child thereafter received transportation, although she challenged its quality and reliability.

## PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Siebold filed the mandamus action after the school board failed to provide interim transportation required during the mediation process under R.C. 3327.02(E)(2). The Supreme Court of Ohio denied the board's motion to dismiss and granted an alternative writ. While the action was pending, the board began providing transportation

to Siebold's child, so the court dismissed the case as moot, granted most motions to file revised evidence, denied a motion concerning Exhibit G, and overruled the board's evidentiary objections as moot.

## DISPOSITION

dismissed

## CASES CITED

- 2024-Ohio-5522
- State ex rel. Slager v. Trelka, 2024-Ohio-5125, ¶ 13
- State ex rel. Love v. O'Donnell, 2017-Ohio-5659, ¶ 3
- State ex rel. Kirk v. Burcham, 1998-Ohio-224, ¶¶ 7, 10
- State ex rel. Law Office of the Montgomery Cty. Pub. Defender v. Rosencrans, 2006-Ohio-5793, ¶ 15
- Highland Tavern, L.L.C. v. DeWine, 2023-Ohio-2577, ¶¶ 24, 29, 34
- Friends of the Earth, Inc. v. Laidlaw Environmental Servs., 528 U.S. 167, 190 (2000)
- Knox v. Serv. Emps. Internatl. Union, Local 1000, 567 U.S. 298, 307-308 (2012)
- United States v. Concentrated Phosphate Export Assn., 393 U.S. 199, 200-204 (1968)
- State ex rel. Madsen v. Jones, 2005-Ohio-4381, ¶ 11
- State ex rel. Duncan v. Chambers-Smith, 2025-Ohio-978, ¶ 17

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