The Girls and Boys of Belchertown: A Social History of the Belchertown State School for the Feeble-Minded

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*Ricci et al v. Greenblatt et al*, Civil Action No. 72-469-T, (D. Mass. 1972) (class action on behalf of residents of Belchertown State School, seeking injunctive and declaratory relief to redress the state’s alleged failure to provide adequate facilities and care at the state school in violation of federal law and the U.S. Constitution). The complaint is reproduced in Benjamin Ricci, *Crimes Against Humanity: A Historical Record* (New York: iUniverse, 2004), 56–87. The case was settled by consent decree dated November 12, 1973, reproduced in ibid., 336–343. It was later consolidated with similar actions on behalf of residents of other state schools and the consolidated cases were settled by consent decrees dated July 25, 1977; the 1973 Belchertown State School decree was replaced by one of the 1977 decrees. The 1977 consent decrees were supplemented by a further consent decree on personnel dated July 10, 1978. The name of the defendant in the consolidated cases was changed from time to time to reflect changes in the names of the state officials responsible for the state schools.

*Ricci v Callahan*, 97 F.R.D. 737 (D. Mass. 1983) (joining Dept. of Health and Human Services as a necessary party to the class action cases regarding Belchertown State School and other institutions)

*Ricci v Callahan*, 576 F.Supp. 416 (D. Mass. 1983) (authorizing Secretary of Human Services to confront issues of decertification and to withhold matching federal funds from Belchertown State School and other institutions due to non-compliance with Title XIX and the terms of the 1977 consent decrees)

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establishing Office of Quality Assurance to provide independent quality assurance oversight)

_Ricci v Okin_, 537 F.Supp. 817 (D. Mass. 1982) (holding that certain proposed staff cuts at Belchertown State School and other state schools would contravene the consent decrees and Title XIX and limiting reductions at BSS to 9)


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Case of Chartier, 19 Mass.App.Ct. 7 (Hampden Co. 1984) (affirming lower court judgment that former Belchertown State School employee’s salary at BSS should not be taken into account for purposes of calculating amount of workman’s compensation due as a result of an accident at another job that occurred after employee terminated his employment at BSS)

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Com. of Mass. v. Daniels, 366 Mass. 601 (1975) (setting aside murder conviction against former Belchertown State School resident and ordering new trial because of State’s failure to present evidence to aid trial court to evaluate the impact of custodial interrogation on ability of mentally retarded defendant to understand his rights during an interrogation in which he confessed to the crime).

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