

How the Case Moved Through the Court System

Supreme Court of the United States

The Court reverses the decision of the Court of Appeals, saying that the students' First Amendment rights were not violated. The newspaper is not a public forum and "educators do not offend the First Amendment by exercising editorial control over the style and content of student speech in school-sponsored expressive activities so long as their actions are reasonably related to legitimate pedagogical concerns."

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier (1988)



U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit

The students appeal the decision of the lower court. The appeals court reverses the decision of the lower court, saying that students' First Amendment rights were violated. The newspaper is a "public forum," so school officials can censor its contents only when "necessary to avoid material and substantial interference with school work or discipline . . . or the rights of others." There is no evidence that such a disruption would have occurred.

Kuhlmeier v. Hazelwood School District (1986)



U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Missouri

Students seek relief, claiming that their First Amendment rights were violated when Principal Reynolds deleted two pages from their newspaper prior to its publication. They ask for an injunction and monetary relief. The court denies it, saying that the students' rights were not violated. The court clarifies by saying when activities are "an integral part of the school's educational function," which the production of the newspaper is, officials may impose restraints on students' speech as long as their decision has a "substantial and reasonable basis."

Kuhlmeier v. Hazelwood School District (1985)