

Simpson Thacher Defeats Neighbors' Attempt to Prevent Charter School From Opening in Justice Ginsburg's Childhood Synagogue

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Simpson Thacher recently blocked an attempt by Midwood, Brooklyn residents to prevent the Urban Dove Team Charter School from relocating to the East Midwood Jewish Center, paving the way for the school to open its doors to students without fear of eviction. Urban Dove's two charter schools are the only high schools in New York City designed specifically to support students who have failed the ninth grade in other school settings. Urban Dove has achieved high school graduation and college enrollment rates well above City averages for similarly situated students. Nearly all of Urban Dove's students are Black or Latinx. Despite support from EMJC for Urban Dove's move, several neighbors have coordinated a campaign opposing Urban Dove and its students relocating to the neighborhood.

On September 3, 2020, days before the start of the school year, two Midwood residents sought a restraining order that would have prohibited students from coming to school for in-person classes and forced Urban Dove to vacate the property. On September 17, 2020, Simpson Thacher persuaded the Kings County Supreme Court to deny the residents' application, allowing Urban Dove to open as planned. Simpson Thacher continues to represent Urban Dove in ongoing litigation brought by the dissenting residents over Urban Dove's lease with EMJC. The late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg attended EMJC's synagogue and day school as a child. In 1946, the 13-year-old Justice published an essay in EMJC's Bulletin decrying hate and prejudice.

The dispute has garnered significant press attention, including in the [Daily News](#), [NY1](#), [Bronx 12](#) and [Brooklyn Paper](#), among other publications.

Sarah Phillips argued the motion. The Simpson Thacher team includes Bryce Friedman, Sarah Phillips, Jonathan Kaplan, Jennifer Isaacman and Jeffrey Bohme.

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