

# 1954

"It is so ordered."

# "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

## Supreme Court Decision *Brown v. Board of Education*

### SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

Nos. 1, 2, 4 AND 10.—OCTOBER TERM, 1953.

Oliver Brown, et al.,  
Appellants,  
1 v.  
Board of Education of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas, et al.

On Appeal From the United States District Court for the District of Kansas.

Harry Briggs, Jr., et al.,  
Appellants,  
2 v.  
R. W. Elliott, et al.

On Appeal From the United States District Court for the Eastern District of South Carolina.

Dorothy E. Davis, et al.,  
Appellants,  
4 v.  
County School Board of Prince Edward County, Virginia, et al.

On Appeal From the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

Francis B. Gebhart, et al.,  
Petitioners,  
10 v.  
Ethel Louise Belton, et al.

On Writ of Certiorari to the Supreme Court of Delaware.

[May 17, 1954.]

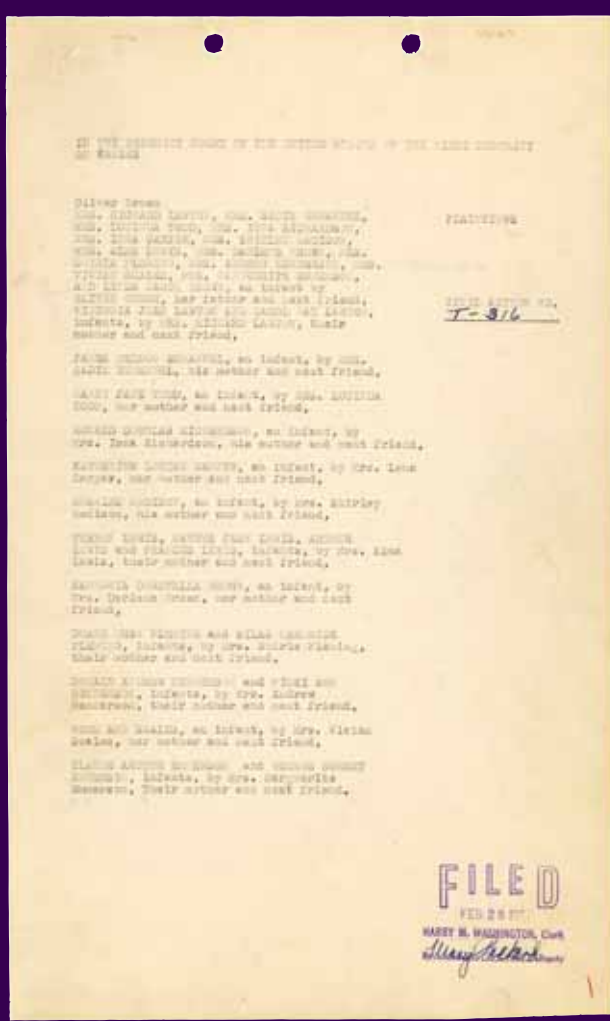
MR. CHIEF JUSTICE WARREN delivered the opinion of the Court.

These cases come to us from the States of Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware. They are premised on different facts and different local conditions,

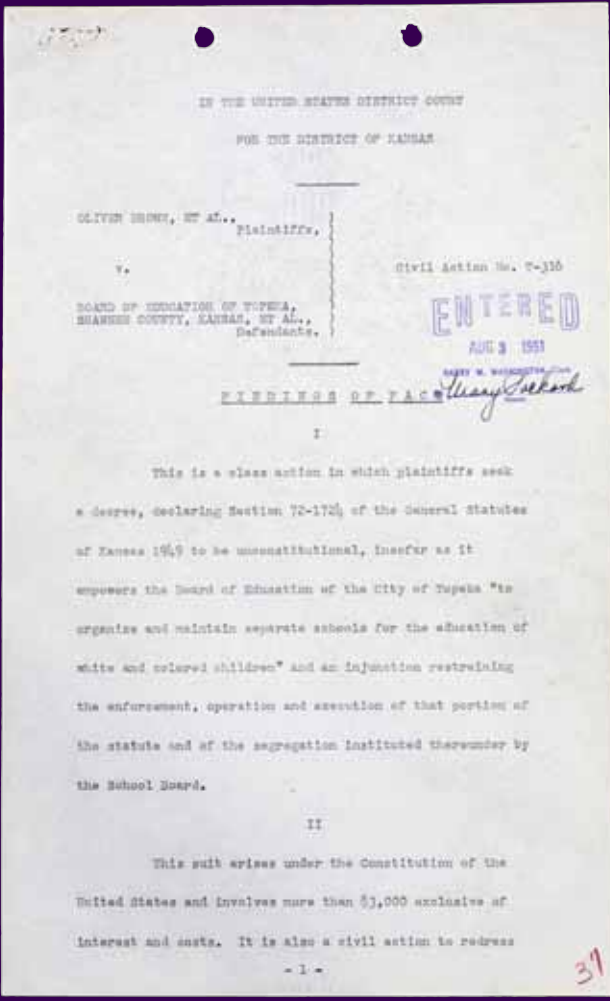
RACIALLY segregated public schools were the norm throughout most of United States history. Not until the early 1950s were they challenged successfully in court.

During the early 1950s, African Americans in many communities, with the support of civil rights organizations, filed suits in local courts demanding the end to separate "white" and "colored" schools. Notable among these cases was *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. In 1951, the Kansas court found against Brown and the 12 other families who were the plaintiffs in the class action against the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas.

The Brown case and three other cases, from Delaware, South Carolina, and Virginia, were combined and heard on appeal by the Supreme Court of the United States. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal" and that segregated schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. The Court's ruling was a milestone in a movement for civil rights that continues to this day.



List of plaintiffs, *Oliver Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, Civil Action No. T-316, U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas, 1951.  
Records of the District Courts of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) - Central Plains Region (Kansas City)



Findings of Fact, *Oliver Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, Civil Action No. T-316, U.S. District Court for the District of Kansas, 1951.  
Records of the District Courts of the United States, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) - Central Plains Region (Kansas City)

Supreme Court Decision, *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) page 1 of 12.  
Records of the Supreme Court of the United States, National Archives

Topeka State Journal, May 17, 1954.  
Courtesy Topeka State Journal



The first African American attends a previously all-white junior high school in Huntsville, Alabama, 1963.  
Records of the U.S. Information Agency, National Archives



Demonstrators in St. Louis, 1963.  
Records of the U.S. Information Agency, National Archives



Demonstrators in front of Englewood, New Jersey, school, 1962.  
Records of the U.S. Information Agency, National Archives



Soldiers escort African American students to classes at formerly all-white Central High School, Little Rock, Arkansas, 1957.  
Records of the U.S. Information Agency, National Archives

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