
SEPARATE IS NOT EQUAL

BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Timeline

- 1849** *Roberts v. the City of Boston*, 59 Mass. 198 (1849): The Massachusetts Supreme Court rules that the City of Boston has the right to establish segregated schools, and that they do not violate the state constitutional guarantee of equal rights to black people.
- 1857** *Dred Scott v. Sanford*, 60 U.S. 393 (1857): The U.S. Supreme Court rules that slaveholders have the right to carry their human property anywhere in the Union, and that African Americans have no citizenship rights under the U.S. Constitution.
- 1863** Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all slaves in the areas of rebellion
- 1866** Passage of the 13th Amendment, abolishing slavery in the United States
- 1868** Passage of the 14th Amendment, extending “equal protection of the laws” to all citizens
- 1870** Passage of the 15th Amendment, guaranteeing that the right to vote cannot be denied on account of race
- 1896** *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (1896): U.S. Supreme Court rules, in a case concerning railroad passenger cars, that laws requiring segregated facilities do not violate the Constitution.
- 1909** Founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- 1927** *Gong Lum v. Rice*, 275 U.S. 78 (1927): U.S. Supreme Court rules that a state has the right to segregate Chinese Americans in public schools
- 1929** Charles Hamilton Houston is appointed vice dean of Howard University School of Law.
- 1936** *Pearson v. Murray*, 182 A. 590 (Md. 1936): The Maryland Supreme Court rules that the University of Maryland must admit African Americans to its law school if there is no other law school available to them.
- 1937** Thurgood Marshall takes over the NAACP legal team from Houston.

- 1938** *Missouri ex rel Gaines v. Canada*, 305 U.S. 337 (1938): U.S. Supreme Court rules that Missouri must educate African American law students within its state borders; out-of-state tuition is not equal.
- 1940** NAACP Legal and Educational Defense Fund established
- 1946** *Méndez v. Westminster* (S.D. Cal 1946): The California State Supreme Court rules against the segregation of Latino children in an Orange County school.
- 1947** Jackie Robinson is the first African American to play Major League baseball.
- 1948** President Harry Truman orders desegregation of the U.S. armed forces.
- 1948** *Sipuel v. Board of Regents of Oklahoma*, 332 U.S. 631 (1948): U.S. Supreme Court rules that if a state does not have a law school for black people, it must admit them to its white law school.
- 1950** *McLaurin v. Board of Regents of Oklahoma*, 339 U.S. 637 (1950): U.S. Supreme Court rules that students in graduate schools of education must be treated equally, and separate seating cannot be assigned in classrooms, libraries, or other facilities.
- 1950** *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (1950): U.S. Supreme Court rules that a legal education must be “substantially equal.” Because the separate law school of the University of Texas does not meet this standard, African Americans must be admitted to the white law school.
- 1952** *Brown v. Board of Education* is first filed with the U.S. Supreme Court.
- 1954** *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954): U.S. Supreme Court overturns *Plessy v. Ferguson*, ruling that the doctrine of separate but equal violates the 14th Amendment guarantee of equal protection.
- 1955** *Brown v. Board of Education*, 349 U.S. 294 (1955), also known as *Brown II*; The Court rules that in implementing the first *Brown* decision, desegregation is to proceed with “all deliberate speed,” and each local school district can set its own timetable.
- 1963** Civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama
- 1963** March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
- 1964** Passage of Civil Rights Act establishing the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and increasing the power of the federal government to intervene in civil rights violations

- 1967** Thurgood Marshall is the first African American appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- 1973** *San Antonio Independent School District vs. Rodriguez*, 411 U.S. 1 (1973): U.S. Supreme Court rules that education is not a fundamental right under the Constitution and that the Constitution does not require egalitarian funding of schools by the state across local school district lines.
- 1974** On June 21, Judge W. Arthur Garrity Jr. orders the desegregation of Boston public schools by means of court-ordered busing of students. Violent incidents occur at many of the newly integrated schools.
- 1978** *Bakke v. Regents of the University of California*, 483 U.S. 265 (1978): U.S. Supreme Court rules that schools can take race into account in admissions, but cannot use quotas.
- 1991** Death of Thurgood Marshall
- 1991** Clarence Thomas is the second African American appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court.
- 1991** *Board of Education of Oklahoma City v. Dowell*, 489 U.S. 237: U.S. Supreme Court rules that school districts can stop busing when they become resegregated because of private housing choices and when all practical steps have been taken to eliminate segregation.
- 2000** U.S. Census shows that Latinos are the fastest growing U.S. ethnic group.
- 2003** *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 123 S.Ct. 2325 (2003): U.S. Supreme Court upholds University of Michigan Law School affirmative action program based on race as part of overall purpose of obtaining a diverse student body and where selection is individualized but takes race into account.