



DOCUMENTS

After *Mendez v. Westminster*

California School Segregation Law (1947)

The *Mendez* case also had repercussions in Sacramento. It focused attention on school segregation and on the California laws allowing such practices. In January 1947, four assembly members introduced a law to repeal the remaining school segregation laws. It passed and on June 14, 1947 (two months after the final *Mendez* decision), Governor Earl Warren signed the repeal into law.

Source: Excerpted from “*Mendez v. Westminster: Race, Nationality, and Segregation in California Schools.*” Charles Wollenberg, a professor and historian, published this research article in 1974.

Gonzales v. Sheely (1951)

In 1951 Porfirio Gonzales, his four children, and 300 children of Mexican or Latin ancestry sued the Board of Trustees and the principal of the Tolleson Elementary School District. Their lawsuit followed the same ideas in *Mendez*: Because Arizona’s Education Code did not mandate the segregation of Mexican-descent pupils, the rights of the Mexican American students were being violated...The judge ruled in favor of the Gonzales because segregating Mexican-descent children in separate schools was a violation of the law.

Source: Richard Valencia, a professor of education, published this research article in 2005. Excerpt from “The Mexican American Struggle for Equal Educational Opportunity in *Mendez v. Westminster.*”

Cisneros v. Corpus Christi (1970)

The “other White” strategy (the legal argument that Mexican Americans were white) would be used in Mexican American desegregation cases for more than four decades. It was finally abandoned in *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi* (1970). Mexican American students—because they were legally White—were paired with Blacks in desegregation plans so districts could integrate. This trick was challenged in the *Cisneros* case. The Cisnero’s attorneys argued that Mexican Americans were a minority group, so they should have the same protection that Blacks gained in *Brown v. Board*. (Valencia)

Source: Richard Valencia, a professor of education, published this research article in 2005.

Excerpt from “The Mexican American Struggle for Equal Educational Opportunity in *Mendez v. Westminster.*”

It is clear to this court that Mexican-Americans are an ethnic minority in the United States, and especially so in the Southwest, in Texas and in Corpus Christi... Placing Negroes and Mexican-Americans in the same school does not achieve integration. This can be achieved by integration of Negroes and Mexican Americans with the remaining student.

Source: *Cisneros v. Corpus Christi* court decision.