**Mile Markers in Education**

**1779** Thomas Jefferson proposes a two-track educational system for “the laboring and the learned.”

**1805** New York Public School Society formed by wealthy businessmen to provide education for poor children.

**1848** Massachusetts Reform School at Westboro opens, for children who have refused to attend public schools, beginning a long tradition of “reform schools” that combine education and juvenile justice systems.

**1851** State of Massachusetts passes first compulsory education law with the goal of ensuring children of poor immigrants are “civilized,” learn obedience and restraint, and become good workers who do not contribute to social upheaval.

**1905** The U.S. Supreme Court requires California to extend public education to children of Chinese immigrants.

**1930-1950** NAACP brings a series of suits over unequal teachers’ pay for Blacks and whites in southern states. At the same time, southern states realize they are losing African American labor to the northern cities. These two sources of pressure resulted in some increase of spending on Black schools in the South.


**1964** Title VI of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in schools based on race, color, or national origin.

**1965** Title I of ESEA creates a funding source to assist local schools educating socio-economically disadvantaged children.

**1972** Title IX of the Education Amendments Act prohibits public schools from discriminating based on sex.

**1972** The Indian Education Act becomes law and establishes “a comprehensive approach to meeting the unique needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students.”

**1972** The Marland Report to Congress on gifted and talented education is issued, recommending a broader definition of giftedness.

**1973** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination based on disability in public schools.

**1974** The Equal Educational Opportunities Act is passed, prohibiting discrimination and requiring schools to take action to overcome barriers that prevent equal protection, particularly students with limited English proficiency.

**1974** U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Milliken v. Bradley that outside suburbs were not responsible for segregation within the Detroit city schools, and the District Court could not “redraw the lines . . . to achieve racial balance.” Thus, busing of students from Detroit to suburban schools was not required by law.

**1975** The Education for All Handicapped Children Act requires public schools to provide a free, appropriate education to students with disabilities.

**1982** U.S. Supreme Court rules in Plyler v. Doe, in a 5-4 decision, that Texas law denying access to public education for undocumented school-age children violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment and that school districts cannot charge tuition fees for the education of these children.

**1982** U.S. Supreme court rules in Board of Education v. Pico that books cannot be removed from a school library because school administrators deemed their content to be offensive.

**Continued**
1983 The report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk*, calls for sweeping reforms in public education and teacher training and recommendation expanding high school requirements to include the study of computer science.

1985 U.S. Supreme Court finds in *Wallace v. Jaffree* that Alabama statutes authorizing silent prayer and teacher-led voluntary prayer in public schools violate the First Amendment.

1985 U.S. Supreme Court rules in *New Jersey v. TLO* that reasonable searches of students on school grounds do not violate their Fourth Amendment rights.

1988 U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Honig v. Doe* that the state of California could not indefinitely suspend a student for behavior that was related to his/her disability.

1990 Public Law 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), renames and amends Public Law 94-142, changing terminology from handicap to disability, mandating transition services, and adding autism and traumatic brain injury to the eligibility list.

1990 The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) becomes law prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities in all areas, including education.

1991 Minnesota passes the first “charter school” law.

1992 City Academy High School, the nation’s first charter school, opens in St. Paul, Minnesota.

1994 Proposition 187 passed in California, making it illegal for children of undocumented immigrants to attend public school.

1994 The Improving America’s Schools Act (IASA) is signed into law as reauthorization of ESEA of 1965 and includes reforms for Title I; increases funding for bilingual and immigrant education; and makes provisions for public charter schools, drop-out prevention, and educational technology.

1999 Two Columbine High School students go on a killing spree that leaves 15 dead and 23 wounded at the Littleton, Colorado school, making it the nations’ deadliest school shooting incident.

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2001 Reauthorization of ESEA as No Child Left Behind or NCLB ushers in standards-based testing reforms and sanctions against schools not meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals and replaces the Bilingual Education Act of 1968.

2004 H.R. 1350, The Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEA 2004), reauthorizes and modifies IDEA, including changes to IEP process and procedural safeguards, increases in authority for school personnel in special education placement decisions, and alignments of IDEA with the NCLB. Also allows school districts to use the Response to Intervention (RTI) approach as a means for the early identification of students at risk for specific learning disabilities.

2009 The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act earmarks more than $90 billion for education, including the Race to the Top initiative aimed at spurring K-12 education reform and funds for local school districts for layoff prevention and school modernization and repair.

2009 The Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association launches the Common Core State Standards Initiative.
2010 With the U.S. economy mired in the “great recession” and unemployment remaining high, states have massive budget deficits. Many teachers face layoffs.

2011 Alabama becomes the first state “to require public schools to check the immigration status” of students. Although the law does not require schools to prohibit the enrollment nor report the names of undocumented children, opponents contend it is unconstitutional based on the Plyler v. Doe ruling.

2012 A 20-year old man kills his mother and then enters Sandy Hook Elementary School where he kills 20 children and six adults, making this the second deadliest mass shooting by a single person in U.S. history.

2013 A high school senior enters Arapohoe High School (Centennial, Colorado) armed with a shotgun, machete, and Molotov Cocktails.

2013 A 13-year-old student arrives on the campus of Sparks, Nevada middle school armed with a handgun where he wounds two 12-year old boys and kills a teacher who was trying to protect other students.

2014 The Civil Rights Project report, Brown at 60: Great Progress, a Long Retreat, and an Uncertain Future, is published, showing what many teachers already know: a decline in non-Hispanic Caucasian students, a large increase in Latino students, and the growth of segregation, both by race and poverty, particularly among Latinos in central cities and suburbs of the largest metropolitan areas.

2014 The Minnesota State High School League adopts a policy allowing transgender students to join female sports teams. Minnesota is the 33rd state to have a formal transgender student policy.

2015 President Obama reauthorizes ESEA as Every Student Succeeds Act, or ESSA, replacing No Child Left Behind with a new focus on assessing student achievement by multiple measures and allowing more state control in judging school quality.

2015 President Obama joins the “too-much-testing” movement as his new plan calls for limiting “standardized testing to no more than 2% of class time.”

2016 The federal government tells school districts “to allow transgender students to use the bathroom that matches their gender identity;” although the directive is not a law, districts that do not comply could face lawsuits or lose federal aid.

2016 President-elect Donald Trump names school-choice advocate Betsy DeVos Secretary of Education.

2017 U.S. Supreme Court unanimously rules in Endrew F v. Douglas County School District that schools must offer “an individualized education program reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.”

2017 President Donald Trump rescinds the Obama administration’s controversial transgender bathroom directive.

2018 A young man is charged with 17 counts of murder in yet another school massacre in Parkland, Florida, bringing the total number of school shooting incidents for this year to 18.

2018 Ten are killed and 10 more wounded at Santa Fe High School (Texas) in another school shooting incident.

Education Policy: A Timeline, ASCD.org. The History of Inequality in Education, Sacred Heart University.