

Supreme Court Decisions on the Racial Makeup of Schools

Justices who voted with the majority are denoted by a darker image.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Ruled that segregated schools are unconstitutional, finding that "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."



Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (1971)

Upheld busing as a way to desegregate schools.



Milliken v. Bradley (1974)

Barred "multidistrict" busing, intended to take inner-city children to suburban schools and vice versa.



Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)

Banned quotas, but said race could be used as one factor in a mix of admissions criteria meant to promote diversity.



Freeman v. Pitts (1992)

Provided standards for ending federal court supervision of formerly segregated school districts, even if some "vestiges" of segregation remained.



Did not participate

Gratz v. Bollinger (2003)

Struck down the University of Michigan's undergraduate affirmative action program, determining the point system it used to rate applicants was too quota-like.



Grutter v. Bollinger (2003)

Upheld affirmative action in university admissions, allowing the University of Michigan's law school to consider race as part of a nuanced review of each applicant.



Yesterday's ruling

Rejected plans in Seattle and Louisville, Ky., that use race alone in making school assignments.

