

Timeline of Desegregation in Tucson Unified School District

1908

Superintendent
S.C. Newsom
(1908-16)

1909

Territorial legislature enacts a law requiring Arizona districts to segregate "students of African ancestry" from other students

1910

1913

Tucson School District One (since renamed Tucson Unified School District) opens a "colored" school at a temporary location, initiating a "Dual" school system – one for black students, one for non-black students.

1918

JANUARY - TSDO opens Dunbar School to serve black students in elementary and middle schools (who then attend the integrated Tucson High).

1920

Superintendent
Clinton E. Rose
1920-41

1930

1940

Superintendent
Dr. Robert D. Morrow
(1941-68)

1950

1951
Arizona revises the language in its segregation law from "shall" to "may," giving school districts the authority to desegregate. TUSD desegregates Dunbar and sends black students to neighborhood schools. To some extent, segregated neighborhood housing patterns perpetuate school segregation.

1960

1968

Superintendent
Dr. Thomas Lee
(1968-78)

1970

1973

U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare reports TUSD is racially unbalanced and is not offering equal educational opportunities to minority students.

1974

FEBRUARY - U.S. Office for Civil Rights indicates TUSD must eliminate minority-identifiable schools (no school should have more than 50 percent minority enrollment).
APRIL - TUSD's Governing Board votes to oppose mandatory busing and reaffirms that equal opportunities are available to all students.
MAY - The NAACP and Black Plaintiffs (Roy and Josie Fisher) file a class-action lawsuit alleging TUSD is not providing equal educational opportunities to black students.
OCTOBER - The MALDEF and Latino Plaintiffs (Maria Mendoza and others) file a similar lawsuit related to Latino students.

1975

The two cases are merged into one, Fisher-Mendoza.

1976

The Department of Justice (DOJ) intervenes as a defendant on behalf of the United States.

1977

The case goes to trial in federal district court, and the judge takes the decision under advisement for over a year.

1978

JUNE - In a 223-page ruling, Judge Frey orders TUSD to eliminate vestiges of prior constitutionally-prohibited conduct at nine schools (Brichta, Manzo, Tully, Roosevelt, University Heights, Jefferson Park, Cragin, Spring and Safford)
JULY - TUSD's Governing Board closes three racially identifiable schools: University Heights, Roosevelt, and Spring (formerly Dunbar).
AUGUST - The parties agree to settle the case through the 1978 Stipulation of Settlement Agreement.

1978-1983

The district implements a three-phase desegregation plan pursuant to the 1978 Agreement.

1980

Superintendent
Dr. Wilbur Lewis
(1978-79)

Superintendent
Dr. Merrill Grant
(1979-85)

1983

Arizona legislature enacts a statute to allow school districts to raise property-tax levies above their statutory spending limits to comply with desegregation costs.

1990

Superintendent
Dr. Dorothy Magett
(Acting Superintendent)
1985-86

Superintendent
Dr. Paul Houston
1986-91

Superintendent
Dr. George F. Garcia
1991-2000

2000

Superintendent
Dr. Estanislado "Stan" Paz
(2000-04)

Superintendent
Roger Pfeuffer
(2004-08)

Superintendent
Dr. Elizabeth Celania-Fagen
(2008-10)

Dr. John Carroll
(Interim Superintendent, 2010)

2003

Case is transferred to Judge David Bury.

2004

APRIL - Judge Bury orders parties to show cause why case should not be closed.

2005

JANUARY - TUSD petitions for "Unitary Status" (indicating that a school district has eliminated traces of the prior "Dual" system to create a "Unitary" system).

2008

APRIL - Judge Bury grants TUSD's petition for unitary status and termination of court oversight pending the court's acceptance of TUSD's post-unitary plan.

2009

DECEMBER - Judge Bury approves TUSD's post-unitary status plan, closes the case and ends federal judicial oversight of TUSD operations. TUSD begins implementing the PUSP

2010

Superintendent
Dr. John Pedicone
(2010-2013)

Superintendent
Dr. H.T. Sánchez
(2013-2017)

Superintendent
Dr. Gabriel Trujillo
(2017-present)

2010

JANUARY-FEBRUARY - Plaintiffs appeal to 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.
JULY - The 9th Circuit agrees with the Plaintiffs that TUSD should not have been granted Unitary status and sends the case back to the District Court to resume court oversight until such time as TUSD obtains Unitary status.

2011

TUSD opens the following new magnet programs: Ochoa, Robison (2010-11)

2012

JANUARY - Dr. Willis Hawley is appointed as the Special Master.
The Parties jointly develop the Unitary Status Plan (USP).

2013

Judge Bury adopts the USP as the controlling "Consent Decree" in the case.

2013-14

TUSD begins the first full year of USP implementation.

