**External Influences on Education Timeline**

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**Abstract**

When exploring how our education system is shaped and developed, it is knowing and understanding the external influences of the past. For example, milestone acts shaped and designed a diverse student body to provide a Free and Appropriate Education. However, desegregating schools, inclusion for disabled students, work training, and ensuring that children can keep up with the standards set by the experts in education has their positives and negatives.

*Keywords*: Education, Law, IDEA, NCLB

**External Influences on Education Timeline**

**First Event:** 1954

**External Influence:** Political

**Summary of the Event**

 The decision of Brown versus The Board of Education began the process of desegregating schools, thus allowing children of color to attend predominately Caucasian populated schools. Before the decision, children of color were bused several miles from their homes to participate in all-Black schools (Ornstein et al., 2017 pp. 240-241). Gutek (1995) describes that this judgment overturned Plessy versus Ferguson that upheld the legal right of states to have separate schools for Caucasian and Black students.

**Impact on Education**

The ruling allows for students to be attending school within their local school districts. The verdict was a step in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, promoting equal rights for students of color and Caucasian peers. However, the political implications were initiated by protests. When the decision to desegregate was made and upheld, the Governor of Arkansas tried to evade the court order. Finally, President Eisenhower issued an executive order and provided military support to carry out the Supreme Courts' decision (pp. 509, 512).

**Personal Thoughts on Influence**

 The significant impact addressed the equality and integration of multiple ethnicities in the classroom. While the Brown versus the Board of Education decision was a step in the direction of the Civil Rights Movement, it also laid the groundwork for the continued demand for inclusion. Another group of students that benefited was children identified with disabilities. The framework led to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. While the sentiment of desegregation was meaningful, segregation is still happening based on disabilities, socioeconomic status, and where students reside despite efforts to bus students to meet the ratios.

**Second Event:** 1975

**External Influence:** Advocacy

**Summary of the Event**

 The extension to the Brown versus the Board of Education ruling, students with intellectual and physical disabilities have been brought to the forefront in receiving a Free and Appropriate Education. While using the framework of Brown versus Board of Education of 1954, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 used similar arguments for inclusivity of children with intellectual and physical disabilities. Such efforts resulted in Wright's Law and the formation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (Wright and Wright, 2019, p. 14).

**Impact on Education**

The overall impact allows the schools to provide services and assistance to students with intellectual and physical disabilities that could hinder their learning experience. These programs under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 provide services such as Speech, Physical, and Occupational Therapies along with some therapies for behavior modification (Wright and Wright, 2019, p.14). According to Wright and Wright (2019), the primary objective is to assist the student in living independently and preventing institutionalism when the parents can no longer care for their child.

**Personal Thoughts on Influence**

 This piece of legislation leading to the IDEA has not only an impact on students with disabilities as a whole but myself personally as a mother of neurodivergent children. Having these services provided by the school has been a blessing to my children. They could get the help they needed and gradually phase out supports as they become more academically independent. Unfortunately, there are barriers with school systems that continuously deny services. This behavior prompts an increase in advocacy work to ensure these students receive a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. I do acknowledge that some IEP and 504 teams are better than others. However, they will always be room for improvement.

**Third Event:** 1983

**External Influence:** Business

**Summary of the Event**

 Students' focus to meet state and federal curriculum guidelines became the focus in determining the student's readiness post-PK-12. After a *Nation at Risk* report, recommendations in the primary subjects of importance for the student when leaving K-12 (Ornstein, 2017, p.184). These commissions comprised multiple business owners and stakeholders working with educators to determine what skills were needed in the workforce or post-secondary education. These commissions have periodically continued to meet to reevaluate the growing trends of the various industries.

**Impact on Education**

This moment in educational history laid the groundwork for curriculums to be evaluated and differentiated to develop what we now know as Common Core Standards. These standards detail what the writers of the measures believe every American citizen needs to know when they complete their education (Ornstein et al., 2017, p. 184). Especially now in the technology world, the growing technologies allow standards to be updated and changed as trends progress.

**Personal Thoughts on Influence**

 I believe The Standards Movement of 1983 had the best intentions when it first started. Students needed the basic skills required to acquire employment and support themselves and their families. However, I believe standards need to be utilized as a benchmark for post-secondary readiness. There again are drawbacks and a lack of balance to consider differences in skill and how a student may learn and apply that knowledge. Therefore, instructors and on-the-job trainers need to identify these strengths and weaknesses and adapt to the student or trainee's learning.

**Fourth Event:** 1990

**External Influence:** Business

**Summary of the Event**

 Businesses began having a significant impact on elementary and secondary education. As the Business Roundtable Commission started during the Standards movement in 1983, President George H. W. Bush brought about this coalition of business owners. These discussions concluded that standards needed to be raised to prepare students for post-secondary education and the workforce. Here, the Business RoundTable developed updated standards in science, math, reading and literacy, and computer sciences. These commissions also determined that students must perform at higher standards and show continued improvement (Traiman, n.d.).

**Impact on Education**

According to Traiman (n.d.), as brought up before, the Business Roundtable committed to ten years of commitment and support to the education system and educators. After ten years, they found that the initial promise was not sufficient. Traiman (n.d.) continued to state that a study completed in two states determined that continued involvement in the education sector needed to continue. When George W. Bush was elected in 2000, he furthered his father's vision and elevating education standards. This initiative was to be completed by forming the Business Coalition for Excellence in Education (BCEE). The benefit of this included a working relationship with Congress to pass the bill in a bipartisan manner.

**Personal Thoughts on Influence**

 As mentioned in the Standards Movement, this particular time in Education history was a significant step in the standards movement, leading to No Child Left Behind. No Child Left Behind became the step in merging the Standards Movement and Business Roundtables into legislation to ensure that students meet the standards set for their respective states. Again, many of these steps to improve education mean well; however, leadership in schools can be overzealous when providing free and appropriate education and assessments of that learning.

**Fifth Event:** 2001

**External Influence:** Political and Business

**Summary of the Event**

 Much like his father's attempt to focus on education, President George W. Bush passed the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. According to Ornstein et al., (2017), the idea had three purposes for it to be successful. (1) Focus on standards and testing to guide the instructors and schools. (2) Students with special needs and IEPS will be assessed separately. (3) Students will have to show Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on the data of their assessments (p. 355). Those who show below standard were determined to needing assistance from the State and Federal Government to provide the tools needed to assist the students (p. 355).

**Impact on Education**

The impact of No Child Left behind had some issues in the beginning. However, it did bring Common Core Standards, which emphasized testing. As a result, No Child Left Behind gained criticism from advocates of how NCLB can be compliant with the initiative put in place (Wright and Wright, 2019). This included tools such as Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or 504s to allow students the supports they need to learn the curriculum and meet the standards as the rest of their peers. Unfortunately, according to Ornstein et al. (2017), the standards of NCLB caused teachers to focus more on the proficiency of the students who could do well and, unfortunately, neglected the lower proficient students. When students fail these assessments, schools, and teachers are heavily reprimanded by their respective State Board of Education (pp. 356-357).

**Personal Thoughts on Influence**

 While NCLB was well-intended for continuing to build and improve the Standards Movement of 1983 and the Business Roundtables in 1990, I believe No Child Left Behind caused the continuous observation and evaluation of standards to improve student achievement in the classroom. The concept of placing a heavy emphasis on testing that Common Core has developed, in my opinion, several problems. The focus on assessments took the art of teaching away from the instructor, the art of learning away from the student.

**Summary Conclusion**

I believe these different legislations and judicial decisions significantly impacted education and how we conduct instruction with the students and enforce the standards with our teachers. In addition, each piece of legislation can be connected, covering a diverse student body while also evolving into what we have today. While each act has positives, some negatives come along with it. In future legislation to improve education, whether the benefit outweighs the risk should be considered when making significant changes. As with anything, instructors and lawmakers must adapt to the continuous changes and demands of the world around us.

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