

Year	US Legislation / Litigation affecting Bilingual Education	Implication
1906	Nationality Act passed	First legislation requiring in-migrants to speak English to become naturalized.
1923	<i>Meyer v Nebraska</i> ruling by the US Supreme Court	The ruling outlawed, as an unconstitutional infringement of individual liberties, arbitrary restrictions on the teaching languages other than English. Proficiency in a foreign language was also constitutional.
1950	Amendments to the Nationality Act	English literacy required for naturalization.
1954	<i>Brown v Board of Education</i>	Segregated education based on race made unconstitutional.
1958	National Defense Education Act	The first federal legislation to promote foreign language learning.
1965	Immigration and Nationality Act	The Act eliminated racial criteria for admission expanding immigration especially from Asia and Latin America. The Act also emphasized the goal of 'family unification' over occupational skills. This encouraged increased immigration by Mexicans in particular.
1965	Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)	Funds granted to meet the needs of 'educationally deprived children'.
1968	Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) amendment: The Bilingual Education Act, Title VII	Provided funding to establish bilingual programs for students who did not speak English and who were economically poor.
1974	<i>Lau v Nichols</i>	Established that language programs for language minorities not proficient in English were necessary to provide equal educational opportunities.
1974	Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA)	Codified the <i>Lau v. Nichols</i> decision, requiring every school district to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs.
1974	Reauthorization of Bilingual Education Act Title VII of ESEA	Native-language instruction was required for the first time as a condition for receiving bilingual education grants. Bilingual Education was defined as transitional (TBE).
1975	Lau Remedies	Informal guideline on schools' obligations toward LEP students. This required the provision of bilingual education in districts where the civil rights of such students had been violated.
1976	<i>Keyes v School District no. 1, Denver, Colorado</i>	Established bilingual education as compatible with desegregation.

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1978	Reauthorization of Bilingual Education Act Title VII of ESEA	A new restriction was introduced. Grants could support native-language instruction only to the extent necessary to allow a child to achieve competence in the English language. Funding was thus restricted to TBE; maintenance programs were now ineligible for funding. The term 'Limited English Proficient' (LEP) introduced, replacing LES (Limited English Speaking).
1980-81	Lau Regulations	The Carter Administration attempted to formalize the Lau Remedies, requiring bilingual instruction for LEP students where feasible. The Reagan Administration subsequently withdrew the proposal, leaving uncertainty about schools' obligations in this area.
1981	<i>Castañeda v. Pickard</i>	An Appeals court decision established a three-part test to determine whether schools were taking "appropriate action" under the 1974 Equal Educational Opportunity Act. Programs for LEP students (bilingual or otherwise) must be: (1) based on sound educational theory, (2) implemented with adequate resources, and (3) evaluated and proven effective.
1983	US English Movement launched	Debates about the dominant place of English in law, society and education became more prominent.
1984	Reauthorization of Bilingual Education Act Title VII of ESEA	While most funding was reserved for TBE, monies for maintenance programs were once again permitted, along with 'special alternative' English-only programs.
1988	Reauthorization of Bilingual Education Act Title VII of ESEA	Same as in 1984, but 25% of funding given for English-only Special Alternative Instructional (SAIP) programs.
1994	Reauthorization of Bilingual Education Act Title VII of ESEA	Full bilingual proficiency recognized as a lawful educational goal. Funded dual language programs that included English speakers and programs to support Native American languages. The quota for funding SAIP programs was lifted. The new law sought to bring LEP students into mainstream school reform efforts, making it more difficult for their particular needs to be ignored in policymaking.
1998	Proposition 227 passed in California	The 'Unz initiative' sought to impose severe restrictions on native-language instruction for English learners in California. Most bilingual programs dismantled, with similar measures in Arizona (2000) and Massachusetts (2002).
2002	No Child Left Behind legislation as a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 and a repeal of the Bilingual Education Act	Schools and states encouraged to move to English-only education through mandatory high-stakes testing in English. Measures of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reported for schools, school districts and states including English proficiency.