

# Memories of Mexican Schools

an interactive listening station  
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Museum of Teaching and Learning  
(MOTAL)



Orange County,  
California, occupies  
a significant place  
on the  
civil rights map of  
the United States.

## This Compact Exhibit Is Now Available for Purchase

# Memories of Mexican Schools



Visitors to this exhibit are usually surprised to hear that there were separate schools for children of Mexican heritage. Inevitably they say, “*I didn’t know that this happened in Orange County! In California?!*”

Yet it’s true. And consequently, five brave families who saw the inequities suffered by their children when forced to attend segregated schools initiated a landmark court case. The name of that 1945 case was *Mendez et al. v. Westminster et al.*, and it was won and upheld in 1946 and 1947. That case had ripple effects that helped cause change, first for the state of California— the first state to desegregate its schools.

Seven years later, lessons learned through the victories of *Mendez v. Westminster* ultimately influenced the success of the better-known case that served to end segregation on a national level, *Brown v. Board of Education*.



Sponsored by the  
Museum of Teaching  
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Headquartered in Fullerton, California, MOTAL teaches the public about education through interactive exhibits and events that explore, communicate, and celebrate how people learn.

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