This PhD study investigates how policies with regard to ethnicity/race issues are formulated and framed by Brazilian civil society and national, Rio de Janeiro state, and Niterói municipal government, and how the outcomes of this process ultimately take shape in the practice of schools. Specific object of study is education Law 10.639 from 2003. The analysis shows that the Brazilian Black Movement was the main motor in the policy change process, a process that took place in a context of increased political opportunities on different levels of governance. Recognizing the enactment of Law 10.639 as a victory of civil society, the analysis of the institutionalization of the law in the official political arena and the pedagogical arena shows that a majority of actors does not interpret it the way it was initially framed. Discourses were dominated by a non-critical liberal/conservative approach to ethnicity/race issues. An image was maintained of a Brazil characterized by a history of harmonious racial relations (the myth of Brazil as a racial democracy). The majority of actors focused on education about different ethnic/racial groups. No priority or visibility being given to the institutionalization and implementation of the policy in political and bureaucratic processes. Moreover, institutionalization and implementation mainly happened in separate "appendixes" such as special commissions or departments in which actors linked to the Brazilian Black Movement were often held responsible for promoting the further implementation of the legal instruments. This led to a stagnation of the institutionalization process and to a lack of financing, dissemination, and development of material, as well as insufficient teacher training. At the school level, only a few actors were found to understand the essence of the law as being transformative. Recontextualization of the law was strongly marked by offering "additional" educational content. Moreover, education contexts, processes, and actors were primarily discussed as being neutral and color blind, not connected to differences and inequalities in society. But, individual professional actors at the school were found to position themselves differently within the context. Diverse contextual issues such as (availability of, or access to) time, material, and knowledge were presented by some actors as a positive influence, while others identified these as a negative influence in working with Law 10.639. The personal ethnic/racial background of teachers was found to play a role here.