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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM**

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Florida's Historic Black Public Schools

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Reconstruction Through Plessy v. Ferguson, 1869-1896
Progressive Era Through the Florida Land Boom, 1897-1928
Great Depression To the Era of Integration, 1929-1971

C. Form Prepared by

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date April 2003

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in **36 CFR Part 60** and the **Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation**. See continuation sheet for additional comments.

Janet Snyder Matthews
Signature and title of certifying official

6/12/2003
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

for Daniel J. Vivian
Signature of the Keeper

12/2/03
Date of Action

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below

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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Florida's Historic Black Public Schools

Summary

This section provides contexts outlining the development of Florida's historic black public schools. Documenting the significant activities of the state's public education system as it relates to African Americans, the narrative discusses various personalities associated with that development, the contributions of and challenges faced by African Americans in the realm of education, and the schoolhouses constructed during the historic period. An inventory enumerates Florida's historic black public schools previously recorded in the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) and listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Also a research tool and a predictive model to identify potential resources, the document provides the necessary historical contexts for listing Florida's historic African American public schools as individual properties in the NRHP. There were a number of private black schools in Florida, such as those established by the American Missionary Association and the Roman Catholic Church. Those schools, however, are not addressed in this cover.

Introduction

"I wept within that night for my children, who, through daily miseducation, are taught that the Negro is an irrelevant entity in American society; I wept for all the white parents and teachers who are forced to overlook the fact that the wealth of cultural and technological progress in America is a result of the commonwealth of inpouring contributions." Written in 1966 by Martin Luther King, Jr., these words broadly characterize the beliefs of many blacks over the issues of civil rights, education, and race in America a decade after the *Brown v Board of Education* seminal Supreme Court case ushered in the era of integration of public education. Composed almost a century after the enactment of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution, King's innermost thoughts reveal the relatively small, but important, gains made in changing the behavioral patterns of white southerners who, he believed, continued to miseducate their own youth as well as those of African descent. Reflecting the pattern of change adopted by other southern states, Florida slowly implemented a plan of integration in its public schools in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In 1866, those desiring to educate the freedmen faced many challenges. Because of President Andrew Johnson's lenient reconstruction policy, many of the buildings donated by the Freedmen's Bureau to be used as schools for freedmen were returned to their previous owners. Ansel Kinne, a white missionary and the Florida representative to the National Freedmen's Relief Association, commented, "Florida's freedmen had plenty of 'capacity,'" but the government's "new policy undercut their 'prospects.'" By contrast, the following year, a gathering of whites formed the Committee on the Education of our Colored People, in Tallahassee, Florida. They reported, "some of our most respected white ladies and gentlemen in the State have taken positions in these schools, and besides the approval of a good conscience, felt that they have rather gained than lost social position. . . ." Against this backdrop of alternative views of a segregated discriminatory system between the

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eras of Reconstruction and Integration, black Floridians endured significant roadblocks in their struggle to educate themselves and their youth using scant public and private resources.¹

In spite of the various challenges, Florida's African Americans made important gains in the field of public education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During Reconstruction, Southern blacks organized what historians have termed the "first crusade" to improve the region's public education system. Assisted by the Freedmen's Bureau and northern benevolence societies, the state's African Americans helped organize the beginnings of Florida's public education system. In 1868, black legislators supported the creation of the Department of Public Instruction and the position of state superintendent of public instruction. Teachers were hired, schools constructed, and some professional educators, such as Jonathan Gibbs, rose to important political and administrative positions. Yet, Florida's Department of Public Instruction, still a fledgling unit of government in the 1870s, yielded meager resources for the state's black children. A harbinger of the Supreme Court's actions that limited blacks in public accommodations, conservative politicians revised the Florida Constitution in 1885 and included a clause prohibiting the instruction of black and white children in the same school. In effect, public education became the first area of formal segregation in Florida.

Already dim, the educational prospects of Florida's black children were firmly entrenched in a segregated system by 1896, when the U. S. Supreme Court handed down its "separate, but equal" clause in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. A product of the so-called Progressive era, further restrictions known as "Jim Crow" laws segregated blacks and whites in all public accommodations. Countervailing influences combating the effect of segregation included the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which was founded in 1909 and maintained steady pressure in the courts seeking equal pay and opportunity. Philanthropy from wealthy northerners, such as Anna T. Jeanes, George Peabody, Julius Rosenwald, and Julia Slater, softened some of the harshest effects of the unequal school conditions. Enlightened benefactors contributed to the development of black schools, many of which would not have been completed without outside assistance. Those contributions included new buildings and better-trained teachers.

Although African Americans achieved important educational infrastructure gains, Southern blacks sustained a high cost, accepting northern influence and philanthropy. Not the least of those included prejudiced benefactors and organizations, and an insidious form of double taxation implemented by white governing officials and school boards. The process consisted of collecting property taxes, the bulk of which were directed at constructing and funding white schools; by comparison, some black schools were built solely from private black or philanthropic contributions with little or no assistance from local school districts. Coupled with the

¹John T. Foster and Sarah Whitmer Foster, "Aid Societies Were Not Alike: Teachers in Post-Civil War Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 73 (January 1993), 323.

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outmigration of rural blacks to urban centers of the South and northern cities, those improvements and political realities became hallmarks of the “second crusade for black common schools” (1910-1932).²

Full-scale retreat of white philanthropy, hiring qualified teachers, and new school construction ensued with the Great Depression, which severely depleted black resources. Later, during World War II and the Korean conflict, African Americans served in various combat and support capacities, and then were integrated into the nation's armed forces. Despite those changes, America's post-war conditions offered little hope for changes in Florida's education system. Then, in 1954, the landmark Supreme Court case, *Oliver Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, spelled the end of “separate, but equal” ruling, and ended the legality of segregated schools. The school law held the promise of new buildings, parity among facilities, and equal salaries for black and white teachers. However, well into the late-twentieth century, many of the nation's public schools remained unequal, the end of a condition that, in the words of historian C. Vann Woodward, was “agonizingly slow in coming.”³

By the mid-1950s, Florida's public education system included hundreds of black schools, some wood-frame buildings decades old and poignant symbols of a segregated society. They ranged in size from small, one-room “little red schoolhouses” to large, two-story masonry buildings. Many of those were later replaced or demolished for a number of reasons, including inadequate space, inferior construction, deterioration, insect infestation, interstate construction, or urban renewal. Other old schools were relocated to new sites, sold and rehabilitated for commercial or residential purposes, lost to fire, or expanded and modified to the extent that they are no longer recognizable as historic resources. Consequently, large numbers African American public schools built in Florida before the mid-1950s have largely disappeared. The remaining tangible resources are worthy of recognition for their contribution to the state's public school system and the role they played in educating Florida's black children.

Historical Contexts

Reconstruction Through *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 1869-1896

As part of the Florida Constitution of 1868, the Florida Legislature established the Department of Public Instruction and created the office of the superintendent of public instruction. The following year, the legislature enacted a school law to establish and maintain “a uniform system of public instruction, free to all the youth residing in the state between the age of six and twenty-one years.” C. Thurston Chase, the state's first superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction, compiled the inaugural report for the department in 1869. Appointed by the governor, the superintendent was confirmed by the state senate until the 1885 Constitution made the superintendent's office elective. This system remained largely unchanged until 1968,

²Lawrence Friedman, *A History of American Law* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1973), 579.

³C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), 147.

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when the Constitutional Revision of 1968 replaced the Department of Public Instruction with the Department of Education, and the position of superintendent of public instruction became the commissioner of education.⁴ As of 2003, by constitutional amendment, the position of commissioner of education is appointed by the governor. Although derived from these Reconstruction-era statutory actions, Florida's public education system has roots in the antebellum period. Early attempts to develop these so-called free, or common, schools included the formation of the Florida Education Society in Tallahassee in 1831. The following year, St. Augustine residents sought to establish a free school, but little of lasting consequence resulted from these fledgling efforts. In 1832, a school census enumerated 341 school-age Floridians, but only 137 children attended school, mostly at private academies. By 1840, Florida's educational society and free school movements had dissipated. That year, the territory supported eighteen private academies with 732 students. In contrast, fifty-one common schools reported 952 students. By 1850, private schools, which then numbered ten, had yielded to common schools, which totaled sixty-nine and reported over 3,100 students, all of whom were white. Although the Territorial Legislature provided for three trustees in each township to supervise school lands (section sixteen) donated by Congress, many townships counted no residents during the Territorial period. Trustees supervised the rent or sale of lands in each section, and applied the revenues to the development of common schools.⁵

Legislation enacted in 1832 prohibited educating blacks, slave or free. A severe restriction upon African Americans' reading, writing, or setting type, the code sought to limit communication between blacks and prevent the printed word from reaching or being read by African Americans. In effect, the state's early public education system failed to teach even free-black Floridians, who totaled fewer than 1,000 in the 1850s. In defiance of the code, some slaves, such as Robert Meacham of Quincy, secretly taught fellow bondsmen to read. The son of a plantation owner, Meacham was taught to read and write by his father and carried his knowledge to other plantation slaves in the Quincy area. Through an informal education system replete with heroic stories of African Americans defying white codes, some of Florida's free blacks and bondsmen gained an education.⁶

The outlines of Florida's public education system became dimly visible in the 1850s. It was directed by David S. Walker, who has been accorded various titles, including "educational statesman of Florida" and "father of

⁴Allen Morris, *Florida Handbook* (Tallahassee: Peninsular Publishing, 1985), 64-66; William N. Sheats, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1894* (Tallahassee: Department of Public Instruction, 1895), 9.

⁵Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 5-6, 61.

⁶Gary McDonough, ed., *The Florida Negro: A Federal Writers' Project Legacy* (Jackson and London: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 10, 99-100; Wali Kharif, "The Refinement of Racial Segregation in Florida After the Civil War," Ph.D. diss., Florida State University, 1983, p. 153; Roberts, "Social Legislation in Reconstruction Florida," 350; Nita Pyburn, "David Selby Walker: Educational Statesman of Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 34 (October 1955), 159-160, 162, 165; W. E. B. DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), 511; Rowland Rerick, comp., *Memoirs of Florida*, 2 vols., (Atlanta: Southern Historical Association, 1902), 1: 221; Joseph Thompson, "Toward a More Humane Oppression: Florida's Slave Codes, 1821-1861," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 71 (January 1993), 325.

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state education in Florida.” Walker, a native of Kentucky, arrived in Tallahassee in 1837 and became a successful attorney. He entered state politics in the 1840s, serving in the state house and senate. In 1850, when he took office as registrar of public lands, he became the state’s *ex officio* superintendent of public instruction. Walker wore the mantle of state superintendent largely because of his supervision of the sale of public lands for schools, rather than because of a sustained effort to develop a program of public education. In 1854, Walker reported that the state contained nearly 17,000 school-age children, and had collected \$5,000 from the sale of school lands. He reported that Gadsden County received the largest apportionment--\$546--an amount too small to implement a meaningful countywide school program.⁷

Still, by 1853, Walker’s efforts had earned Florida the distinction of being the fourth state in the Union to institute a system of public education. The enabling legislation designated county probate judges as *ex officio* county superintendents, and appointed the board of county commissioners of each county as local school boards. They combined meager resources from both state and county coffers to develop their respective common schools. In 1858, Walker reported on the public schools of Apalachicola, Jacksonville, Key West, Marianna, Pensacola, and Tallahassee. At Key West in 1860, six schools taught 125 students, but received no public funding. Operating with a public budget of \$175, two teachers instructed 195 students in a Monroe County school. A product of modest advancements and reforms, Florida’s antebellum public schools yielded few educated citizens. Indeed, most planters and wealthy citizens educated their children with tutors or at private academies and institutes, often outside the state. Public schools primarily educated only the children of yeoman farmers and poor whites.⁸

The Civil War crippled Florida’s nascent school system, which was “virtually extinct,” according to one observer, by the close of the conflict. Indeed, in late 1866, a Freedmen’s Bureau teacher reported that Florida was nearly bereft of schools, even for white children. Supervised by the War Department, the Freedmen’s Bureau was the foreshortened name of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands. Established in March 1865, the Bureau functioned as a relief agency, which, in addition to providing black settlers with supplies and rations, drafted and enforced labor contracts between planters and freedmen, and assisted voluntary associations in the operation of schools. Through the Freedmen’s Bureau, the Federal government responded to some of the education needs of emancipated slaves. The state and local governments were ill-equipped to provide an education for black children, who nearly doubled the number of pupils in need of an education. The Bureau allocated significant resources for Florida’s schools. In association with various northern aid societies,

⁷Derrell Roberts, “Social Legislation in Reconstruction Florida,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 43 (January 1965), 350; Pyburn, “David Selby Walker,” 159-160, 162, 165; DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 511; Rerick, *Memoirs of Florida*, 1: 221; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 5-7.

⁸McDonough, *The Florida Negro*, 10, 99-100; Janet Snyder Matthews, “The African American Experience in Southwest Florida and the Origins of Dunbar High School in Fort Myers, 1841 to 1927,” Ph.D. diss., Tallahassee, Florida State University, 1999, p. 40-41; Kharif, “Racial Segregation,” p. 153; Pyburn, “David Selby Walker,” 159-160, 162, 165; DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 511; Rerick, *Memoirs*, 1: 221; Roberts, “Social Legislation in Reconstruction Florida,” 350.

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it built an education system throughout much of the South, investing far more in public education than had southerners during the antebellum era. During the Reconstruction era, black Floridians participated in what is known as the South's first crusade for black common schools. George Bentley, a historian of Reconstruction, characterized education for the former slaves as "the fruit so long forbidden, ...a mystery which seemed almost holy. The freedmen flocked to teachers who would provide them with the magic of reading and writing."⁹

Benevolent societies, organized primarily from the ranks of New Englanders, operated in discreet areas of the South during the latter part of the war, and then spread throughout the southern countryside and into its cities following the conflict. Often opening schools in areas only recently captured by Federal troops, the societies hoped to implant among southern blacks and whites alike the values of education, the Protestant work ethic, and free-labor ideology. A resettlement experiment at Port Royal, near Beaufort, South Carolina, was the first and among the largest attempts by the Freedmen's Bureau to educate and resettle blacks. Developments at Port Royal prompted further Freedmen's colonies and schools. Chloe Merrick and Cornelia Smith of the Freedmen's Aid Society of Syracuse, New York, organized schools in Fernandina and St. Augustine. Natives of New England, John Milton Hawks and his wife, Esther Hill Hawks, participated in the Port Royal experiment, which inspired them to attempt their own resettlement and educational ventures in Florida.¹⁰

John Hawks, a native of New Hampshire, was graduated from Vermont Medical College and operated a medical practice in New Hampshire. He married Esther Hill, who graduated from Boston's Female Medical College in 1857 and joined her husband in the practice of medicine. The Hawkses visited Florida in the 1850s, and, in 1854, Esther Hawks covertly taught the children of slaves at Manatee, Florida. With the outbreak of war, the Hawkses volunteered their services to the New England Freedman's Aid Society. In February 1862, they arrived in Port Royal, where John was commissioned a surgeon in the Twenty-first U. S. Colored Troops Volunteers. His duties included examining recruits, supervising Charleston's small pox hospital, and serving as chief medical officer of the northern district of the South. Following the war, Hawks founded a short-lived freedmen's colony at Port Orange.¹¹

⁹James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 4-32, 148; James McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1982), 401, 561; Joe Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida, 1865-1877* (Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 1965), 97; Roberts, "Social Legislation in Reconstruction Florida," 350; Pyburn, "David Selby Walker," 159-160, 162, 165; DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 511; Rerick, *Memoirs*, 1: 221.

¹⁰McPherson, *Civil War*, 394-401; David Colburn and Jane Landers, *The African-American Heritage of Florida* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1995), 187; Sarah Foster and John Foster, Jr., "Chloe Merrick Reed: Freedom's First Lady," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 71 (January 1993), 283-284.

¹¹Gerald Schwartz, "An Integrated Free School in Civil War Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 61 (October 1982), 155-156; *Makers of America*, 3 vols. (Atlanta, 1909), 2: 384-386.

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At the outbreak of Civil War, Esther Hawks also volunteered her services as a physician, but Dorothea Dix, then superintendent of army nurses, assessed her as “too young, too pretty, and hence potentially disruptive” to serve in the medical corps. In 1862, Hawks obtained an appointment from the New York Freedman’s Aid Society to teach school at South Carolina’s sea islands, but also assisted her husband with medical cases.¹²

Later, in 1864, after Federal troops occupied Jacksonville, Florida, Esther Hawks moved to the port city, where she operated the state’s first racially integrated free school. She held school in the Odd Fellow’s Hall at Market and Adams Streets, which had been secured by Union forces. Hawks operated the integrated school for four months, but at the end of six weeks only one white child remained enrolled. White children who played out in the street during school hours occasionally peeked inside, revealing to Hawks that “Ma won’t let me come in.” The *New York Tribune* approved of her work, commenting that students at Esther Hawks’ school pursued their classwork “harmoniously.” In the fall of 1864, the school reopened with a new teacher, but now competed with a whites-only school supported by a special tax on local commercial interests. Frustrated by the racist beliefs of Jacksonville’s white community, Hawks briefly left, but returned in early 1865 to find that her former school consisted of four teachers conducting classes for 160 students. Later, she organized the First Union Freedmen School Society of Volusia County, which opened schools at Port Orange and New Smyrna in 1867. Forty students attended the first year. Appointed Volusia County’s first superintendent of public schools in 1868, John Hawks provided early guidance in the development of its public schools, including former slaves. The Port Orange school consisted of twenty-five students, including eight white children. An early example of an integrated educational facility, the school was burned in 1869 by whites who were incensed at the announcement of a new white teacher. Despite the setback, Esther Hawks continued to teach Florida’s black children until 1870, when she returned to Lynn, Massachusetts, to open a medical practice.¹³

During the Civil War, military training for black recruits included combat techniques and the basics of reading and writing. One of the training centers that included an informal school was located at Fort Barrancas near Pensacola. But, the main impetus for educating black Floridians during Reconstruction was provided by northern aid societies. By 1865, one of the most active of the benevolent associations, the National Freedmen’s Relief Association, had planted twenty-four teachers in Florida schools. Teachers and agents of the American Missionary Association (AMA) of New York arrived in 1864, and by 1868 had sponsored fourteen teachers in Florida. Eventually, the missionaries established black schools at Gainesville, Jacksonville, Key West, Magnolia, Monticello, Ocala, St. Augustine, Strawberry Mills, and Tallahassee. Benevolent societies and the Freedmen’s Bureau cooperated, establishing black schools in a variety of existing buildings, most often churches. At Fernandina, Chloe Merrick’s school and orphanage operated in the former home of Confederate

¹²Schwartz, “An Integrated Free School in Civil War Florida,” 155-161; Gerald Schwartz, ed., *A Woman Doctor’s Civil War: Esther Hill Hawks’ Diary* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1984), 274-280.

¹³Schwartz, “An Integrated Free School in Civil War Florida,” 155-161; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 98, 105, 108; Jerrell Shofner, *Nor Is It Over Yet: Florida in the Era of Reconstruction, 1863-1877* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1974), 16; Schwartz, *Hawks’ Diary*, 274-280.

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General Joseph Finegan. The Freedman's Bureau in Key West operated a school in the former home of C. W. Willey, an alleged secessionist whose property have been seized by Federal authorities. The Freedmen's Aid Society operated additional schools at Jacksonville and St. Augustine. At Key West, the average attendance amounted to fifty students, divided between one day and one night school. Blacks of all ages flocked to these public schools. In 1865, the ages of adult pupils ranged from twenty to seventy-five at the St. Augustine school. Many attended school intending to learn to read the Bible.¹⁴

In 1866, the Florida Legislature, comprised of unrepentant whites, enacted a public school law for blacks requiring them to pay one dollar per month per child, and assessed teachers in black schools a fee of five dollars per year. Legislators contrived the law, in part, to drive northern teachers and missionary associations from the state, and, in part, to keep blacks from attending school. The arrival of Union troops and the Freedmen's Bureau prevented the enforcement of the law. A precursor to the more broadly written school law of 1869, this legislation created Florida's first dual system of schools for blacks and whites.¹⁵

Florida's blacks and northern whites organized a number of schools during the Reconstruction era. Founded in 1868, Stanton High School in Jacksonville and Lincoln Academy (1872) in Tallahassee ranked among Florida's ten accredited high schools at the close of Reconstruction. Gainesville's Union Academy earned its accreditation in 1878. Dozens of small public schools serviced black neighborhoods in towns and rural communities. Black high schools and private institutes of higher education founded by churches and northern aid societies in the early 1870s, such as Brown Theological Institute at Live Oak and Cookman Institute at Jacksonville, produced a cadre of teachers who filled positions teaching youth in Florida's schools.¹⁶

The Freedmen's Bureau appointed H. H. Moore as the superintendent of schools, and named Thomas W. Osborne as assistant commissioner for Florida. Moore and Osborne helped coordinate the acquisition and construction of school buildings, transportation, and matching private-public financial assistance. Within a brief interval, they opened five schools using educated Union soldiers as teachers. At the close of 1865, Osborne reported that, in association with the National Freedmen's Relief Association and the Freedmen's Aid Society, Florida had ten schools with twenty-one instructors and approximately 2,000 pupils. Two Yankee "schoolmarms," Harriet Barnes and Catharine Bent, operated the Freedmen's Bureau school in Gainesville. In 1866, they reported to Osborne that their school was flourishing with 125 students. "Never were children more eager to learn, or more rapid in improvement," they told Osborne. In addition, a number of industrial schools and Sunday schools trained students, although most industrial training was handled by military troops. The

¹⁴Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 84, 98-99; Matthews, "Dunbar High School," p. 92, 96; Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 155.

¹⁵William Vaughn, *Schools for All: The Blacks and Public Education in the South, 1865-1877* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1974), 32,

¹⁶Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 165-166; Larry Rivers and Canter Brown, *Laborers in the Vineyard of the Lord: Beginnings of the A.M.E. Church in Florida, 1865-1895* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 2001), 79-80.

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Bureau initially established its schools in churches abandoned by white congregations. But, President Johnson's policy of returning confiscated property to white owners compelled the Bureau to obtain other buildings and blacks to construct their own schools. Some wealthy white planters organized plantation schools, in part, to control and stabilize a region's black labor force, rather than provide a quality education.¹⁷

Florida attracted northern teachers from aid societies not only because of the desperate condition of its Freedmen, but also because of the state's mild climate and large quantity of public land. Indeed, Florida contained more public lands than any other southern state included within the Southern Homestead Act. These variables lured northern relief agencies to the state, where agents helped establish schools, organized settlements, and guided former slaves in the process of obtaining homesteads. During the era, large numbers of African Americans migrated into Florida from elsewhere in the South. These former slaves placed new pressures on an already overburdened education system.¹⁸

To help build the state's education system and ensure the success of black schools, the Freedmen's Bureau helped pay teacher's salaries and rents on buildings. As benevolent associations pulled out of Florida and reduced their expenditures, the Bureau began acquiring school buildings, and then deeded the property to the trustees of the local school with the stipulation that it would be "held for school purposes for the benefit of all citizens of the county." In 1869, the Bureau constructed twenty schools in Florida. But, the Bureau began reducing its education expenditures in Florida soon after northern aid societies made their departure. In late 1870, the last of the Freedmen's Bureau education representatives abandoned Florida, leaving the state's blacks to their own resources.¹⁹

In January 1868, forty-five delegates consisting of twenty-seven whites and eighteen blacks, met in Tallahassee to draft a new constitution. The document, without question the most progressive in the state's history, called for universal male suffrage, abolished property requirements for voting and holding office, and established the cabinet post of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The superintendent, who was appointed by and served at the pleasure of the governor, was in charge of overseeing the operation and maintenance of the State's schools and responsible for giving an annual report of the status of education in the state. Several prominent blacks, including Florida's first black Congressman Josiah T. Walls and AME minister Charles H. Pearce, became strong advocates of the public school system during this period. Chairman of the senate committee on education, Pearce declared that he would rather have no schools than a bill that stipulated separate school

¹⁷Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 99-100; Shofner, *Florida in the Era of Reconstruction*, 73; Samuel Proctor, "Yankee `Schoolmarm's' in Post-War Florida," *Journal of Negro History* 44 (1959), 275-276.

¹⁸Claude Oubre, *Forty Acres and a Mule: The Freedman's Bureau and Black Land Ownership* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978), 137-157; DuBois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, 513; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 98.

¹⁹Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 111.

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systems. In article twelve, the school law read, in part, "It is the paramount duty of the State to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference."²⁰

Implemented in 1869, the enabling legislation formally organized Florida's public school system based on the State of Illinois's public school plan. The school law established and maintained "a uniform system of public instruction, free to all the youth residing in the state between the age of six and twenty-one years." The law organized a state board of public instruction consisting of the secretary of state, attorney general, and state superintendent. The board administered federal land grants to public schools, established policies to implement school laws, appointed county school board members, and arbitrated disputes arising between school districts. Despite Pearce's best efforts, the 1869 law permitted local school boards to separate the races based on the language of "grading and classifying the pupils." In part, because of this legislation and inadequate political pressure from liberal whites, few if any integrated public schools operated under the 1869 law. State superintendent reports between 1869 and 1873, and an 1876 report by the United States Commissioner of Education did not mention any integrated public schools in Florida. *De facto* segregation and retrenchment policies against blacks in the early 1870s led to constitutional legitimacy at the end of Reconstruction.²¹

The process included considerable political wrangling. In January 1866, the Democratic-dominated legislature had enacted laws permitting the governor to appoint a superintendent of common schools for African Americans. A tax on African Americans held the promise of new schools for black students. But, the revenues were absorbed into the general budget, where little of the collected revenue was allocated for schools, or any other projects for black citizens. Despite the provisions made in the Florida Constitution of 1868 and the school law of 1869, the Freedmen's Bureau and aid societies spent more on the construction of black schools and African American teachers' salaries than did the state in its formative years of conducting public school affairs. Between July 1869 and June 1870, the Bureau assembled sixteen schools for blacks. Mostly because of the Bureau's efforts, Florida's education system for African Americans grew faster in 1869 than in any other state in the nation. By then, Florida's blacks claimed 153 schools, 157 teachers, and approximately 7,000 students, including children and adults.²²

²⁰Vaughn, *Schools for All*, 59; F. Bruce Rosen, "The Influence of the Peabody Fund on Education in Reconstruction Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 55 (January 1977), 314-315; Ronald Goodenow and Arthur O. White, eds., *Education and the Rise of the New South* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981), 237; Peter Klingman, *Josiah T. Walls: Florida's Black Congressman of Reconstruction* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1976), 27; Joe M. Richardson, "The Freedman's Bureau and Negro Education in Florida," *Journal of Negro Education* 31 (Fall 1962), 467; Shofner, *Florida in the Era of Reconstruction*, 180.

²¹Vaughn, *Schools for All*, 59-60; Rosen, "The Influence of the Peabody Fund," 315; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 237; Klingman, *Josiah T. Walls*, 27; Richardson, "The Freedman's Bureau and Negro Education in Florida," 467; Shofner, *Florida in the Era of Reconstruction*, 180.

²²Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 100, 110-111; Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 161.

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During Reconstruction, Florida's public education system struggled to define itself and secure stable leadership, in part, because of the untimely deaths and a high turnover rate of superintendents, and, in part, due to the highly charged politics of Florida's during that era. Between 1868 and 1877, seven superintendents administered the system; none of them served in office more than two years. Appointed in 1868, C. Thurston Chase, a native of Ohio and a former AMA employee, traveled throughout the country researching school systems. Chase crafted Florida's enabling school legislation in 1869, using Illinois's education law as a model. He replaced the Reverend E. B. Duncan, who had been appointed state superintendent of common schools for freedmen in 1866 in a token measure to appease the Freedmen's Bureau and black politicians. John Wallace, a contemporary admirer of Duncan, recalled him as being "an able and conscientious man, who worked hard to establish colored schools in every county." In April and May of 1867, Duncan visited Freedman schools in Key West, Pensacola, St. Augustine, and Tampa. The state government fired Duncan stemming from allegations that he had hired white southern teachers rather than white educators from the North to teach in black schools. Other charges preferred against Duncan included proselytizing blacks into the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.²³

Credited as the "law-giver and organizer" of Florida's public education system, Chase slowly improved Florida's public schools. In 1869, Chase indicated that the legislature had allocated \$75,000 to construct and repair schoolhouses. By the close of 1869, boards of public instruction had been organized in only twenty-six of Florida's thirty-nine counties, and in 1870 fifteen counties still did not levy taxes to support public schools. Although Florida contained approximately 63,000 school-aged children in 1871, only 14,000 attended classes. Many school buildings were little more than log cabins, and most contained no privies or bathrooms. By 1873, boards of public instruction had been organized in all of Florida's counties, except Brevard, Dade, and Holmes.²⁴

Some colleagues favorably commented on Chase's work, but a successor attributed an estrangement between Chase and Governor Harrison Reed to the flagging progress of the state's education system. Still, during Chase's tenure (August 1868-September 1870), 240 public schools opened with an enrollment of 7,500 students. A professional educator, Chase died while serving as superintendent, but his successors were largely political appointees not steeped in education philosophy. Two of those, Charles Beecher (1871-1873) and William Hicks (1875-1877), were pastors and politicians rather than teachers. Following the demise of Chase,

²³Joe M. Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction: The American Missionary Association and Southern Black, 1861-1890* (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1986), 110; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 116, 122-123; Matthews, "Dunbar High School," p. 93, 95; Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 161; C. Thurston Chase, *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (Tallahassee: Board of Public Instruction, 1869), 6; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 238; Roberts, "Social Legislation in Reconstruction Florida," 351.

²⁴Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 116, 122-123; Chase, *1869 Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 6; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 238; Roberts, "Social Legislation in Reconstruction Florida," 351.

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Governor Harrison Reed appointed Henry Quarles, who held the post for six months, and then replaced Quarles with pastor Charles Beecher. A brother of Henry Ward Beecher, Charles Beecher came out of retirement in Newport, Florida, to serve twenty-two months in office. During his term, he introduced a graded system in a few schools, but found irregularities in the assessment and collection of school taxes as root causes in the state's deficient schools. He estimated that only one-fifth of the state's children attended either private or public schools. Beecher was followed by Jonathan C. Gibbs, a prominent African American trained at Dartmouth College and Princeton Theological Seminary, who also died an untimely death after a relatively short tenure (January 1873-August 1874).²⁵

Gibbs stands among the most renowned black Floridians to emerge during the era of Reconstruction. A native of Philadelphia possessing the training of New England culture, Gibbs arrived in Florida in December 1866, and quickly filled important state offices. Historian Jerrell Shofner portrayed him as "the most accomplished man of either race" in the Constitutional Convention of 1868. A Presbyterian minister, Gibbs served as secretary of state in the administration of Governor Harrison Reed (1868-1873). Ossian Hart, Florida's governor between 1873 and 1874, appointed Gibbs superintendent of public instruction in January 1873. In August 1873, Superintendent Gibbs delivered a speech to the National Education Association, indicating that among other initiatives, he was recommending a uniform textbook system and teacher training institutions in Florida. He reported that the state currently had a public school population of 18,000 students. During his tenure, Gibbs increased the number of black public schools, especially in Hillsborough, Levy, and Manatee counties. Assessing Gibbs' contribution to Florida's public education system, William Sheats, a later superintendent, reported that Gibbs enjoyed "the distinction of being the only Superintendent of Public Instruction of the state that has ever been assigned a place on the program of the National Education Association." Sheats believed that no other southerner had ever received so great an ovation by the Association. Gibbs died suddenly in August 1874, perhaps the victim of poisoning.²⁶

In August 1874, Governor Marcellus Stearns appointed Samuel McLin to replace Gibbs. McLin had been elected as Florida's secretary of state in 1873, and concurrently served as acting superintendent of public instruction until March 1875. He estimated that the state contained 557 schools in 1874, but lamented, "one of the greatest drawbacks to the success of our system is the want of competent teachers." In 1875, Stearns appointed another pastor, William Hicks, who served until January 1877. Elected to represent Dade County in the state legislature in 1875, Hicks was the last of the Republican Party appointments to the superintendent's

²⁵Rerick, *Memoirs of Florida*, 1:323-324, 333; Richardson, *Reconstruction in Florida*, 116, 119-120; Henry Marks, comp., *Who Was Who in Florida* (Huntsville: Strode Publishers, 1981), 33.

²⁶Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 164-165; Shofner, *Florida in the Era of Reconstruction*, 180; Leedell Neyland, *Twelve Black Floridians* (Tallahassee: Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Foundation, Inc., 1970), 9-11; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 118; Canter Brown, *Florida's Black Public Officials, 1867-1924* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1998), 92; David Colburn and Jane Landers, eds., *The African American Heritage of Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), 55, 201; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 14-15.

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post. Characterized as a “celebrated Republican stump speaker,” Hicks compiled a biennial report that included the admonition, “As to the prejudice against the negro’s right to education, it is enough to say that it is un-American, and has stamped upon it the reprobation of civilization, the interdiction of the Constitution and the curse of God.” Still, when Hicks compared the advancements of black and white students in 1876, he found that the grades of blacks were “little if any behind the whites in the same grade.” Ominously, Hicks cautioned that the “strong prejudice” of some whites against educating blacks was “liable to increase.” Hicks attributed part of the failure in the state’s public school system to county superintendents who resisted filing reports with his office. Hicks also found a powerful opposition from Democrats and conservatives confronting the common school system. Still, during his tenure the state adopted a uniform series of textbooks.²⁷

During this era of implementation and rapid transitions, Florida’s glacial education progress caught the attention and disdain of state and national leaders. In 1870, Governor Harrison Reed boasted that the Freedmen’s Bureau had provided the state with eighty-seven school buildings. But, alarmed by the repeal of the school tax, he urged the legislature to pass new legislation to “save the school system from paralysis,” and, to help reduce crime among the young, enact a compulsory education law. Responding to the deplorable state of Florida’s schools, the U. S. Commissioner of Education reported in 1873 that Florida’s “public education encounters fearful obstacles.” The commissioner cited several statistics representative of Florida’s distressed system: a school year consisting of fewer than eighty days for most students; only one in four children living within commuting distance of a school; and over fifty percent of the population illiterate.²⁸

Notwithstanding the warnings from federal officials, the withdrawal of school support by Federal agencies, and the admonishments of governors and superintendents alike, in 1879, Florida’s Democrats crippled the state’s education system by reducing the maximum amount that a county could tax its citizens for school purposes from five to two-and-one-half mills. The school superintendent of Madison County encouraged the legislature to leave the millage rate at five, or at least, permit local governments to assess school taxes. Henry Felkel, superintendent of Leon County’s public schools, railed that “the reduction of the school tax by the General Assembly has had the effect of embarrassing, to a most hurtful extent, the operation of the schools of this county.” J. V. Harris, the superintendent for the board of public instruction in Monroe County, assessed the measure as “a serious blow at the cause of education.”²⁹

With the appointment of William Haisley (1877-1881) by Governor George Drew, the superintendent’s post was filled by Democratic appointees for longer terms (three to nine years) than had been enjoyed by Republican

²⁷Rerick, *Memoirs of Florida*, 1:323-324, 333, 341; Richardson, *Reconstruction in Florida*, 119-120; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 16, 18-20.

²⁸Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 116, 122-123; Chase, *1869 Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 6; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 238; Roberts, “Social Legislation,” 353.

²⁹Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 116, 122-123; Chase, *1869 Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 6; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 238; Roberts, “Social Legislation,” 353.

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predecessors. One historian of Florida's public education system credited Haisley's term as an "epoch in the history of education in Florida." A native of Indiana who graduated from Harvard University and Yale University, Haisley lengthened schools terms and required county superintendents to file complete reports with the state office. Attendance and expenditures doubled. Characterized as a "field superintendent," Haisley encouraged administrators and teachers to conduct themselves professionally, and personally visited each county twice during the school year.³⁰

Even as the state reduced allocations for public schools and the Freedmen's Bureau reduced its assistance, black schools sought new sources of revenue. In 1867, George Peabody, a wealthy northern merchant and broker, established an organization to assist the school systems of the American South. Florida's schools first received Peabody Funds in 1869, amounting to \$1,800 and several thousand school books. But, in 1872 one Tallahassee newspaper viewed Peabody support in Florida as a "mere pittance." Some years, the Fund failed to deliver on its promise of revenues. In 1875, state superintendent Hicks lamented that "for the past two years little has been received from this truly great benevolence." A native of Wales and a former Methodist pastor from Georgia, superintendent Hicks maintained that Florida's whites generally held an intense prejudice against educating black children. In 1875, Hicks itemized Florida's schools scheduled to receive a combined \$6,000 in Peabody Funds: two facilities in Jacksonville, and schools in Key West, Monticello, Ocala, Pensacola, Tallahassee, Tampa, and St. Augustine. But, only one of those--Stanton High School in Jacksonville--served black students. Other black schools in Florida eventually receiving Peabody assistance during Reconstruction included those in Apalachicola, Gainesville, and Madison.³¹

In 1878, Florida's superintendent of public instruction William P. Haisley reported that the Peabody Fund had supplied \$3,600 divided between schools in Gainesville, Key West, Lake City, Ocala, Pensacola, Tallahassee, Tampa, and Waukeenh. In addition, public schools in Jackson and Leon Counties each received \$200. Both counties contained far more African American than white youths, with Leon County's schools educating nearly seven times more black children than whites. Despite the disparity in numbers, none of the black schools received Peabody Funds. On a more discouraging note, Barnas Sears, the Peabody Fund agent, revealed to superintendent Haisley that "Florida has heretofore received much more than its share of the Fund, I wish you could get through the year without aid." Describing a bleak future, Sears indicated that the Fund's "trustees have changed their plan of action, and withdrawn all aid from the smaller schools, and that they contemplate using their Fund hereafter more for education and training of teachers, by means of normal schools and teachers' institutes." Between 1869 and 1876, Florida's public schools received approximately \$42,000 from

³⁰Rerick, *Memoirs of Florida*, 1:323-324, 333, 341; Richardson, *Reconstruction in Florida*, 119-120; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 24-25.

³¹Bruce Rosen, "The Influence of the Peabody Fund on Education in Reconstruction Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 55 (June 1977), 318; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 114-123; William W. Hicks, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1875* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1875), 90-91.

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the Peabody Fund, but few of those resources were allocated to African American schools. Indeed, relatively few black schools in Florida received any Peabody Funds. Historian Bruce Rosen found that the significance of the Peabody Fund for Florida's black citizens "may well have been its support and encouragement of the state's racially separate but unequal school system."³²

People who contributed to the education of Florida's black children in the post-Civil War era represented a cross-section of American society. White abolitionists such as Esther Hawks and Chloe Merrick stood at the forefront of the state's education efforts. Two other white female teachers taught approximately three hundred black students at a Lake City school. St. Augustine's black children learned under the leadership of white missionaries Carrie Semple and Carrie Jocelyn. Catholic Sisters of St. Joseph also taught blacks in St. Augustine. Carrie Blood operated a school at Monticello, and George and Harriet Greely led classes at a Jacksonville school. William D. Scull taught classes in Gadsden County. In the 1870s, Harriet Beecher Stowe donated spelling books to black schools and students, which "they eagerly accepted, and some treasured with a sort of superstitious veneration." At her Florida plantation, Stowe observed that some elderly blacks "never got through the wilderness of the spelling-book into the promised land of the first-reader." Still, the effort to learn "book knowledge" by even the oldest of former slaves encouraged some whites to help African Americans build schools. Two white men from Federal Point donated land for a black church and school. John Bradley of Jefferson County gave two acres for a black school, and provided funds for the construction of another school on his plantation near Lake Miccosukee.³³

Although some whites willingly taught black students, African Americans comprised the largest number of teachers in black schools. The Freedmen's Bureau employed 179 teachers in 1868, of which 101 were African American. Large schools, such as Stanton High School in Jacksonville, supported six black teachers. By 1869, Stanton boasted a \$16,000 building that supported 348 students. Black teachers also educated children in small, rural settlements and even on plantations. Michael Rultger, a Freedman, taught students at Long Swamp School near Ocala. William Marshall, a white plantation owner near Ocala, permitted another Freedman, Samuel Boyd, to teach blacks in the area. Marshall charged Boyd for the use of his property, and, in turn, Boyd collected from the families of his black students at the close of a school year. William D. Bloxham, a future governor of Florida (1881-1885), made a similar arrangement near Tallahassee with Freedman-teacher John Wallace. Kitty Black operated yet another small school near Ocala. Northern black educators who arrived in Florida to teach school following the Civil War included Philadelphia-native Mary Still; New Jersey-born Susan L. Waterman; and Martha Sickles.³⁴

³²Rosen, "The Influence of the Peabody Fund," 320; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 114-123; William P. Haisley, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the School Years 1876-7 and 1877-8* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1879), 6, 18-19.

³³Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction*, 39; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 102, 117; Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 156, 166.

³⁴Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 159; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 103, 109.

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In the mid 1870s, some black teachers asserted their rights to educate their own children. By then, Florida's African Americans had witnessed the withdrawal of the Freedmen's Bureau, and expressed concern over alliances formed, at the expense of African Americans, between northern and southern whites. In Escambia County, one AMA teacher reported, "The 'color line' has been drawn at Pensacola and those fanatical colored men who belong to the so-called Equal Rights Club, oppose, by every means in their power, the employment of Northern teachers in public schools." In 1876, black leaders gained control of the school board in St. Augustine, and forced out the white teachers from the black public schools. Historian Joe Richardson points out the irony of "the blacks' demand for teachers of their own color aligned them with southern whites who also sought to oust northern white instructors." Despite the social origins and dynamics, the shift of forcing white teachers from black schools was complete throughout most of the urban South by 1890. This display of black power in education included the high cost of segregation.³⁵

Beyond teaching, blacks held other important roles in the field of education. Robert Meacham, the slave who taught other slaves to read in the antebellum era, served in the Florida Legislature between 1868 and 1879, and also several terms as superintendent of public instruction for Jefferson County. Because the county contained nearly 4,600 black residents, Meacham's appointment by Governor Harrison Reed effectively gave him control of the education of nearly one-third of the state's black pupils. Other black superintendents of public schools included Alexander Hawkins (Calhoun County, 1873-1875); Charles H. Pearce (Leon County, 1868-1872); Thomas W. Long (Madison County, 1868-1869); and Isaac Black (Marion County, 1868-1869). A veteran of the Civil War, Matthew Lewey taught school briefly at Newnansville in the 1870s, and later developed the *Florida Sentinel* in Gainesville and then moved the newspaper to Pensacola. Charles H. Pearce, the influential politician from Tallahassee, served as chairman of the state's committee on education. Henry S. Harmon and Richard Black, both from Alachua County, labored at the legislative level to help ensure some degree of parity for black students. The Florida Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church (A.M.E.) appointed Jacksonville minister John R. Scott as superintendent of Florida's "Colored Teacher's Training Movement." Through the efforts of Meacham, Scott, John Willis Menard, and other black leaders, the AME church played an important role in building Florida's early education system.³⁶

Although African Americans made significant educational gains during Reconstruction, their inability to overcome deep-rooted racial attitudes led to separate educational facilities. Within fifteen years (1865-1880), the state's public school officials had either secured the use of or built 301 school facilities for blacks, and, in the latter year, nearly 16,000 black students were taught within those buildings. The incipient system, however,

³⁵Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction*, 248-249; Howard Rabinowitz, "Half a Loaf: The Shift from White to Black Teachers in the Negro Schools of the Urban South, 1865-1890," *Journal of Southern History* 40 (November 1974), 565, 576, 594.

³⁶Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 165; Neyland, *Twelve Black Floridians*, 9-11; Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 113; Brown, *Florida's Black Public Officials, 1867-1924*, 96, 105, 115, 171; Rivers and Brown, *The Beginnings of the AME Church in Florida*, 57-58.

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remained segregated. Facing overwhelming resistance from unrepentant whites, black officials failed to garner sufficient support to enact legislation requiring integrated classrooms, or equal resources for schools serving the two races.³⁷ Between 1870 and 1877, public school officials increased enrollments of school-age children from fourteen percent to forty-three percent. But, the imperfect system faltered after 1877, and, by 1880, the disparity between black and white school facilities and personnel had become more evident. That year, Florida had 834 white schools and 301 black schools. In assessing Florida's school resources, education officials counted 27,672 white students and 15,632 black pupils, with an average of thirty-three whites to fifty-one blacks per school building. Funding formulas reveal that the disparities spilled over into teacher-to-pupil and funding-per-pupil ratios. In the 1895-1896 fiscal period, the state and school districts collectively spent \$6,700 on all of the buildings, furniture, and property for black schools. In the same interval, over \$9,000 was allocated for repairs alone to white schools, and nearly \$40,000 was expended on new buildings, furniture, and property for white schools. In 1895, the average annual salary for white teachers amounted to \$191, while the average black teacher earned \$147. Inequities born in the nineteenth century, this legacy of separate and unequal endured well into the twentieth century.³⁸

Education lay at the forefront of the white movement to segregate blacks in all public accommodations. Summarized by historian John Hope Franklin, "by the end of Reconstruction Jim Crow in the schools had become an important means of social control and a device for perpetuating the ignorance of a great mass of blacks." White appeasement of blacks, both in education and politics, ended with Reconstruction. Another historian of the era, Wali Kharif, found that "segregation in the schools was firmly entrenched by the time native whites reasserted their power in Florida [at the end of Reconstruction]. . . Segregation by law was first instituted in the educational system, and afterwards extended into other state and county institutions."³⁹

The first of Florida's Bourbon-era Democratic governors, George Drew (1877-1881) was a native of Massachusetts who believed it "cheaper to build schoolhouses than to build poor houses and jails to support paupers and criminals." Although Drew believed in educating blacks, he stopped short of integrating schools. His term witnessed reductions in school tax millage rates, and his superintendent of public instruction appointee, William Haisley, operated the public school system as a "business administration." In an attempt to professionalize the administration of schools, Haisley recommended that the state legislature only permit teachers to be eligible for the office of county superintendent. He also asked the legislature to clearly define the powers dividing school boards from minor local officials to avoid disputes. He reminded intransigent

³⁷Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 163, 169; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 62-63; William N. Sheats, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1896* (Tallahassee: Department of Public Instruction, 1896), 320-321, 332-333, 366-367.

³⁸Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 163, 169; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 62-63; Sheats, *1894-1896 Biennial Report*, 320-321, 332-333, 366-367.

³⁹Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 163, 168-169; John Hope Franklin, "Jim Crow Goes to School: The Genesis of Legal Segregation in Southern Schools," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 58 (Spring 1959), 225-235.

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conservatives that “many condemn the public school system as of alien birth, but it is not true, as is generally supposed, that the doctrine of educating the people at the expense of the government is an importation into the South. Mr. [Thomas] Jefferson was one of its first advocates in our country, and claimed that it is the right and duty of a State to tax itself for the support of elementary schools.”⁴⁰

In 1881, at the beginning of his term, Governor William D. Bloxham appointed Eleazer Foster as state superintendent. A native of Connecticut and a graduate of Yale University, Foster had moved to Florida in 1865 and settled at Sanford, Florida. Trained as an attorney, Foster encouraged compulsory education, and attendance increased from forty-four percent to seventy percent. But his term witnessed a setback for African-American children. Increasingly restrictive case law coming out of federal and state courts and the enactment of discriminatory statutes by southern legislatures dampened the prospects for providing black children with a good education. In 1883, the U. S. Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the Civil Rights Act of 1875, limiting the interpretation of equal protection under the law as outlined in the Fourteenth Amendment. Signed during the Grant administration, the civil rights legislation had offered blacks the hope of equal public accommodations. Other Supreme Court cases further undermined the intentions of the nation's Reconstruction legislators. The 1876 *Cruikshank* case curtailed privileges and immunities under federal protection, and in *Hall v. de Cuir* (1877) states could not prohibit segregation on common carriers. The 1890 *Louisville, New Orleans, and Texas Railroad v. Mississippi* ruled that states could constitutionally require segregation on carriers. The landmark *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896 set up the “separate, but equal” rule that justified formal segregation, and in 1898 *Williams v. Mississippi* further justified segregation, but specifically approved a plan to disfranchise African Americans in Mississippi. A rejection of equality in public accommodations, the court's actions against civil rights beginning in 1883 was a harbinger of the more formal and onerous policy of separate, but equal accommodations in the 1890s and later Jim Crow statutes.⁴¹

Florida's Constitutional Convention of 1885 established two normal schools in the state, and permitted school districts to tax property to three mills, but also eroded the rights and hopes of black Floridians for improvements and equal footing in public education. Only eight black delegates served in the convention comprised of 108 members. Dominated by whites fearful of educating the state's black population, the convention's members voted against the establishment of a state normal school for blacks. The revised state constitution strictly forbade integration in schools, stating in article twelve that “White and colored children shall not be taught in the same school, but impartial provision shall be made for both.” While school boards and the state superintendent strictly observed the first part of the section, school officials more loosely interpreted the second part. The new constitution only codified a system of public schools for blacks already unequal to those attended by whites. A

⁴⁰Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 238; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 94.

⁴¹Friedman, *American Law*, 299-300, 440-443; Woodward, *Jim Crow*, 70-71, 97, 102.

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poll tax and separate ballot boxes instituted in 1889 resulted in confusion and eventual disfranchisement of many black voters.⁴²

By 1890, Florida's per pupil expenditure stood at forty-six percent of the national average, trailing only Texas and Louisiana in the South. In 1896, the per capita cost per pupil statewide amounted to six dollars fifty-eight cents, but the allocation for black pupils amounted to two dollars thirty-five cents. Two thousand twenty-four white public school teachers earned a combined \$387,656; their six hundred forty-five black counterparts earned \$94,815. Although the average statewide monthly salary of black teachers amounted to thirty dollars and their white counterparts earned thirty-eight dollars monthly, the salary averages cloaked graphic statistics of race and gender bias in particular counties. Some school districts--Holmes, Lafayette, Lee, Pasco, and Taylor--did not employ, or at least failed to report or pay, any black teachers in the 1895-1896 school year. Similarly, school boards in Calhoun, Citrus, Columbia, Liberty, and Osceola counties did not hire any black female teachers that year. In St. Johns County, the average white male teacher received a monthly salary of sixty-three dollars, his black male counterpart twenty-eight dollars, and female black teachers received twenty dollars. Black female teachers in Duval, Escambia, and Monroe counties received thirty-one dollars monthly; white male teachers in those counties earned between eighty-three dollars and fifty-three dollars for the same period.⁴³

The disparity permeated the system. During the 1890s, black students spent an average of thirty-three days in school each year; the system afforded white children, on average, fifty-two school days. Perhaps the greatest disparity between blacks and whites lay in the value of school infrastructure. In 1896, Florida's public education officials assessed 560 black schools a net worth of \$71,560 for 24,143 students. The value of 1,781 white schools totaled \$352,873 for 41,962 students. That year, both races claimed an attendance rate of sixty-six percent. Despite the disparity in resources, segregation policy, and lethargic pace of educational improvements, in 1890, forty-nine percent of Florida's blacks were literate, the highest percent of literacy in any former Confederate state.⁴⁴

Two notable, if not notorious, state superintendents guided Florida's public education in the closing decades of the nineteenth century. It was during their respective terms that the onerous outlines of a segregated education system hardened. Appointed by Governor Bloxham in 1884, Albert J. Russell was a native of Virginia educated at Anderson Seminary in Petersburg, Virginia. An architect and builder by profession, Russell studied in Philadelphia and then moved to Charleston, South Carolina. He arrived in Florida in 1859, settling in

⁴²Rerick, *Memoirs*, 1: 359, 2: 394; Michael Gannon, ed., *The New History of Florida* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 275-276.

⁴³Sheats, *1894-1896 Biennial Report*, 366, 368; Gavin Wright, *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy Since the Civil War* (New York: Basic Publishing, 1986), 80.

⁴⁴Richardson, *The Negro in the Reconstruction of Florida*, 123; Sheats, *1894-1896 Biennial Report*, 317, 320-321, 342, 344, 366.

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Jacksonville. A Confederate officer during the Civil War, Russell was appointed Duval County school superintendent in the 1870s.⁴⁵

A popular state superintendent, Russell was re-appointed to the post by Governor Edward Perry in 1885, and then won election in November 1888, the first state superintendent elected to the position as provided in the 1885 constitution. In 1887, Russell reported that the state supported 2,100 public schools, 2,300 teachers, and 51,000 students. Of those, 28,000 black students attended classes in 513 schools, an average of fifty-five students per school. Sixteen hundred white public schools supported 54,000 students (thirty-four students per school). A sketchy report with statistical errors, Russell's tabulations suggested that only 473 black educators taught in the state's 513 black schools. His white school-to-teacher tabulations also failed to correspond. Still, allowing for similar accounting gaps in tallying black and white schools and teachers, the white teacher-to-student ratio in 1887 stood at one-to-thirty-eight, and one-to-fifty-nine for black schools.⁴⁶

Behind those averages stood wide disparities in black teacher-to-student ratios between school districts. In 1887, Alachua County contained the highest population of black children attending public school in the state. Forty-seven educators instructed 3,300 students, an average of one teacher to seventy students. Leon County's ratio reached one-to-eighty-four that year, Marion County stood at one-to-fifty-five, and Volusia County at one-to-thirty-four. Osceola County employed one black educator to train twenty-four students, and Lee County enjoyed the lowest ratio in the state, one teacher for nine students. That year, Dade, DeSoto, Manatee, and Pasco counties reported neither black students nor teachers.⁴⁷

The following year, over 100 additional black teachers served in the state's public schools. Part of the increase was attributed to the creation of a state normal school for blacks in Tallahassee. But, complicating already overcrowded circumstances, 5,500 more black students attended public schools than in 1887. The counties with the highest number of black students were Alachua (2,913), Marion (2,848), Leon (2,844), Jefferson (2,765), Duval (2,390), Gadsden (1,953), and Jackson (1,953). A tremendous wave of settlement drove up the state's population from 269,493 in 1880 to 464,639 by 1895, an increase that included nearly 70,000 more African Americans. In 1892, at the close of Russell's term as superintendent, the state supported nearly 2,400 schools of which 594 served black students. By then, nearly 37,000 black pupils attended the state's public schools. Notable achievements made by blacks during Russell's term included a permanent site of the State Normal College for Negroes in Tallahassee and the construction of the Jacksonville Colored Graded School, which was developed by the city's African American residents assisted by the Slater Fund.⁴⁸

⁴⁵Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 29-30; Rerick, *Memoirs*, 1: 362-363, 2: 354; Marks, *Who Was Who in Florida*, 219.

⁴⁶Albert J. Russell, *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Period Beginning January 1, 1887 and Ending December 31, 1887* (Tallahassee: Department of Public Instruction, 1888), 18, 22; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 29-30; Rerick, *Memoirs*, 1: 362-363, 2: 354.

⁴⁷Russell, *1887 Report*, 22.

⁴⁸Albert J. Russell, *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Period Beginning January 1,*

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Organized in 1882, the John F. Slater Fund primarily contributed to the training of African Americans enrolled in normal, or teaching, schools. A wealthy Connecticut cotton mill owner, Slater donated one million dollars for the education of Southern black teachers. Significant donations were made to various black institutes and colleges, including Claflin, Hampton, Spelman, and Tuskegee. Several teaching schools in Florida also received Slater Fund grants, assisting in the training of black teachers. In general, Slater's resources were directed toward teaching future educators, rather than contributing to school infrastructure.⁴⁹

Beyond philanthropy, other important developments included the organization of the Florida State Teachers Association (FSTA), a professional black teachers union. Founded in 1890 at the Bethel Baptist Church in Tallahassee, the FSTA began as the Association of Colored Teachers, but changed its name within a decade. Thomas DeSaille Tucker, president of the State Normal College for Negroes, served as the organizing president. Part of the early mission of the association was to encourage principals to sharpen their school management skills, improve the quality of public-school teachers, and promote scholastic achievement among students. The association held annual meetings, and on some occasions ranking politicians, such as Governor Fleming and state superintendent A. J. Russell, delivered speeches addressing Florida's public schools. Although the Association played an important role in improving public education, some of its effectiveness was mitigated by a dispute that emerged between Tucker and state superintendent Sheats, which eventually led to Tucker's resignation as the Association's president and his removal as president of the college.⁵⁰

Part of the impetus for the formation of the Association was to provide a measure of political influence against legislation that too often negatively affected black children and teachers. Legislative changes in 1889 included charging local school boards with the exclusive authority to assign and dismiss teachers, and established a requirement that schools should be at least three miles apart. An assessment of the three-mile requirement came from the state superintendent who commented, "The policy of this administration has been *better schools, and fewer, if necessary to produce that result*. . . It is honestly believed that it would be *far better* for every child in the State to be compelled to *walk from one and a half to two miles to school*, and, after it gets there, to receive instruction from a true teacher, than to multiply the schools beyond the ability of the fund to reach competent teachers, and secure a walk of half a mile or less, for half of the children of the State in reaching a poor school." Sounding like an admonishing parent, the superintendent continued, "Twenty years ago children thought

1888 and Ending December 31, 1888 (Tallahassee: Department of Public Instruction, 1889), 30; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 55, 58, 62-63; Leedell Neyland, "State-Supported Higher Education Among Negroes in the State of Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 43 (October 1964), 105-106.

⁴⁹Dumas Malone, *Dictionary of American Biography*, 20 vols., (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 17:205; General Education Board, *The General Education Board: An Account of its Activities, 1902-1914* (New York: General Education Board, 1915), 10-11.

⁵⁰Gilbert Porter and Leedell Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association* (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1977), 24-29.

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nothing of walking three miles to school,” and believed that the foundation for creating new schools close to scattered farmsteads was to “provide places for friends and kin-people of the patrons petitioning.”⁵¹ A precursor to the “school consolidation movement” of the twentieth century, this latter initiative spelled the end of the “little red schoolhouses” that still dotted Florida’s landscape in the 1890s. In effect, the legislation hampered black influence at the county level and even in local schools with the added disadvantage of requiring African Americans to develop larger schools they could ill-afford.

In 1892, Florida’s electorate replaced Russell as state superintendent with William N. Sheats. A native of Georgia, Sheats arrived in Florida in 1866 but earned a graduate degree from Emory University, located near Atlanta, in 1876. Initially, he taught school in Gainesville, Florida, and rose to the position of high school principal. In 1881 he became Alachua County’s school superintendent. As superintendent, he found most of Gainesville’s “townspeople were opposed to the spending of money for a [new] schoolhouse. . . . The poorer children had to attend either public school under extremely adverse conditions or do without education entirely.” Sheats served as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1885, helping to rewrite the state’s school law. Even though the education section of the constitution mandated separate facilities for black students, some of Sheats’ detractors called him the “school crank,” and believed he was “trying to confiscate the property of the state in order to educate Negroes.” In his first year as state superintendent, Sheats recommended “one good secondary school for every county for whites, and one for blacks in populous negro counties.”⁵²

Regarded as one of the South’s renowned educators and “Florida’s little giant of education,” Sheats both abetted and struggled against entrenched racism. An elected official, Sheats used tactics that primarily appeased conservative whites. He often revealed his paternalistic views towards blacks in biennial reports, which included statements such as, “to do all that I could to get them educated in a way that I think is best for them.” Education historian Arthur White characterized Sheats as a “firm believer in the separate but equal doctrine, [but] worked hard to equalize the dual school system.” Similarly, historian Joe Richardson viewed him as the personification of “the spirit of white supremacy that insisted upon strict segregation and no political rights for blacks.” Sheats attributed white Floridians’ discrimination toward blacks to five fears: the federal government’s intervention on behalf of blacks; the practice of social equality; northern attitudes implanted in the South; black/white school integration; and racial amalgamation.⁵³

⁵¹Russell, *1888 Report*, 30; Sheats, *1892-1894 Biennial Report*, 55, 58, 62-63.

⁵²Charles Hildreth and Merlin Cox, *History of Gainesville, Florida: 1854-1979* (Gainesville: Alachua County Historical Society, 1981), 93; *Jacksonville Florida Times Union*, 20 July 1922; Rupert J. Longstreet, *History of the Florida Education Association, 1886-1957* (Tallahassee: Florida Education Association, 1958), 273; Edward Williamson, “The Constitutional Convention of 1885, *Florida Historical Quarterly* 41 (October 1962), 123-124.

⁵³Arthur White, “Booker T. Washington’s Florida Incident, 1903-1904,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 51 (January 1973), 227-249; Ronald Goodenow and Arthur White, *Education and the Rise of the New South* (Boston: G. K. Hall and Company, 1981), 241; Joe M. Richardson, “‘The Nest of Vile Fanatics’: William N. Sheats and the Orange Park School,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 64 (April 1986), 396.

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Sheats cautioned blacks and whites against “mixed-schools,” and blamed northern benevolent associations who he believed were “exceedingly exasperating to the negro’s Southern friends.” He declared that in the realm of public education “there is no discrimination against them in school matters; they are given as nearly equal advantages as under the present conditions they are able to make use of or to materially appreciate. Negro teachers are paid as liberal salaries as teachers of similar qualifications receive anywhere in the United States.” Sheats continued that “There are quite a number of prominent negro educators getting splendid salaries,” but his tabular reports failed to reconcile the disparity between the salaries of whites and blacks in Florida. He waved off any concerns that “Some [negro] schools may go untaught for a time, but this need cause no alarm, and it will end in gain rather than a loss; as they would be much better not taught at all, than taught by such teachers as are too often obtained.”⁵⁴

In the mid-1890s, concurrent with the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, Sheats views hardened against the possibility of integrated schools in Florida, either public or private. A flashpoint in racial tensions occurred at Orange Park Normal and Industrial School, which was operated by the American Missionary Association (AMA) of New York, then the most significant benevolent society in the country engaged in educating blacks in private schools. Endowed by Daniel Hand, a northern philanthropist, it was designed to provide vocational education and teacher training for blacks. Founded in 1890, the Orange Park school consisted of 120 students in 1892, and the campus contained five buildings by 1896. In 1897, the school employed eight teachers, who instructed students in English, mathematics, and music, in addition to vocational training, such as agriculture, horticulture, printing, and typing. The only integrated school in Florida in the 1890s, Orange Park Normal also admitted white students, who totaled thirty-five by 1894. But soon, Orange Park Normal struggled against the racial hostility of the times. Sheats considered the faculty, staff, and benefactors of the school “a nest of vile fanatics.”⁵⁵

Sheats successfully lobbied the Florida Legislature in 1895 to enact the so-called “Sheats Law,” which prohibited whites from teaching black students. Aimed specifically at the Orange Park school, the legislation also banned classes with students of both races, even in private schools. Oddly, Sheats had taught at a black normal school that accepted white students in the 1880s, but now acted decisively to halt the practice. In April 1896, state authorities arrested the Orange Park school’s faculty and staff, and closed the school, news that appeared in the *New York Times*. But, in a district court, the AMA successfully contested the Sheats Law, and the school reopened in 1897. The AMA claimed that “separate could never be equal, that segregation was a false social distinction, a self-defeating economic goal, and an undemocratic practice.” Although Orange Park Normal continued to offer instruction into the second decade of the twentieth century, it finally closed, in part, because of local extralegal means and statewide legislative actions. In 1911, members of the Ku Klux Klan

⁵⁴Sheats, *1894-1896 Biennial Report*, 70-71.

⁵⁵*Clay County Times*, April 15, 1921; Richardson, “Orange Park School,” 393-406; Sheats, *1894-1896 Biennial Report*, 184-189.

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burned the school's chapel, and, in 1913, the Florida Legislature again passed a bill that forbade the instruction of black students by white teachers. In December 1913, after enduring two decades of strident discrimination and racism, the AMA closed the school and eventually sold the property.⁵⁶

By 1896, the year of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, Florida's public schools were firmly entrenched in a segregated system that defined much of the South. Even local black influence in developing neighborhood schools had eroded. In 1889, the state legislature abolished the school trustee system in which citizens elected trustees to administer each local school through the county's superintendent. In its place, the state placed each county school board in control of all public education within its jurisdiction. Additional legislation enacted in 1892 provided for elective boards, essentially a guarantee of "lily white" school boards in most Florida counties.⁵⁷

Not surprisingly, a wide gulf in resources defined Florida's black and white schools, belying the separate, but equal doctrine of Florida's 1885 Constitution and the ruling of the U. S. Supreme Court. In 1896, the value of the state's public school property amounted to \$628,000, of which black schoolhouses and property constituted fifteen percent, or \$53,000. Black children then constituted forty-four percent, or 66,000, of Florida's public school population. Amounting to twenty-four percent, or 530, of the state's public school buildings, black school infrastructure also reflected an unequal discriminatory practice. Statewide, white children were educated in eleven brick schools, blacks in two brick schools; whites occupied 1,400 wood-frame schools, while 450 had been constructed for blacks. Whites held classes in 294 log buildings, and blacks attended school in seventy-eight log buildings. The enactment of Jim Crow statutes by the Florida Legislature and the state's growth in the opening decades of the twentieth century only widened the imbalance between black and white public schools.⁵⁸

Progressive Era through the Florida Land Boom, 1897-1928

The Progressive movement at the turn of the century created many changes in American society. In Florida, the movement was characterized by reforms in business, conservation, and education. Tangible legacies included extensive citrus groves, county redistricting, railroad construction, and new towns. School reforms contributed to the larger movement. Florida's response to improve schools was part of the "great educational awakening of the South," led, in part, by North Carolina's department of education, and education visionaries Edward Alderman, Charles Aycock, and Walter Hines Page. Practical measures included the consolidation of schools within county districts and reorganizing the state's university system. A resurgence in northern philanthropy improved black schools. Northern philanthropic agencies that contributed to the crusade included the General Education Fund, established in 1901; the Jeanes Fund, founded in 1907; and the Julius Rosenwald Fund, organized in 1917. Yet,

⁵⁶*Clay County Times*, 15 April 1921; Richardson, "Orange Park School," 393-406; *New York Times*, 12 April 1896; Neyland, "Higher Education among Negroes," 106, 108-109; Richardson, *Christian Reconstruction*, 260.

⁵⁷Kharif, "Racial Segregation," 176.

⁵⁸Sheats, *1894-1896 Biennial Report*, 337, 370.

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trenchant discrimination by whites in the allocation of resources to public schools was codified and sharpened by legislators, belying the mantle of “progressive” applied to the era by contemporary reformers and subsequent historians. One reformer of the period described his work in black education as being as slow and arduous as “draining the Everglades of Florida.”⁵⁹

The Buckman Act of 1905 represented a notable education reform of the era. State-supported institutes of higher education were then located at Bartow, DeFuniak Springs, Gainesville, Lake City, St. Petersburg, and Tallahassee. The legislation reorganized the schools into three new institutions--the State Normal College for Colored Students (Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University [FAMU]) and the Florida State College for Women (Florida State University), both in Tallahassee; and the University of Florida in Gainesville. The African American institution had remained under the close scrutiny of the superintendent of public instruction since its inception in 1887. In 1901, several years before the passage of the Buckman Act, superintendent Sheats removed its organizing president, Thomas DeSaille Tucker, a native of Sierra Leone trained at Oberlin College. Tucker had taught common school in Kentucky and Louisiana, but then moved to Pensacola, where he opened a law practice. His background in education and law prompted the state board of public instruction to appoint him to the new African American institution of higher learning in 1887. But, within a decade, a disagreement arose between Sheats and Tucker over differences in education philosophy. Tucker promoted a comprehensive literary foundation for college students, while Sheats and the state board of public instruction emphasized agricultural and mechanical training, in line with Booker T. Washington's approach implemented at the Tuskegee Institute. The board's replacement of Tucker presaged a narrowing of education training and resources for black students in public schools.⁶⁰

Tucker was also a primary organizer and a dominant influence in the Florida State Teachers Association (FSTA). Organized in part to support and represent black teachers coming out of Lincoln Academy in Tallahassee, Union Academy in Gainesville, and the newly-established State Normal College for Negroes (FAMU), the FSTA was founded in 1890 with Tucker as president and G. P. McKinney, president of the Bible Theological and Literary Institute in Live Oak, serving as vice-president. Thomas V. Gibbs, a former state legislator from Jacksonville, served as secretary, and N. H. Gunn, a prominent Tallahassee physician, was treasurer. But, in 1898, to help diffuse the tense political circumstances in his emerging educational philosophy dispute with Superintendent Sheats, Tucker resigned his post as the association's president, and was replaced by James Weldon Johnson, principal at Stanton High School in Jacksonville. By then, Johnson had earned degrees from Atlanta University, studied law in Jacksonville, and was admitted to the Florida bar in 1898. But, in 1901, dismayed with racism and seeking better

⁵⁹C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1951), 404; Gannon, *New History of Florida*, 275-284; Eric Anderson and Alfred Moss, *Dangerous Donations: Northern Philanthropy and Southern Black Education, 1902-1930* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 39-40.

⁶⁰Samuel Proctor, “The University of Florida: The Early Years, 1852-1906,” Ph.D. dissertation, University of Florida, 1958, 465, 479-492; Leedell Neyland and John Riley, *The History of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1963), 35-47; Kharif, “Racial Segregation,” 175.

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opportunities, Johnson abandoned his home state, resigned as president of the FSTA, and left for New York. Johnson represented a growing trend among black professionals and common laborers alike.⁶¹

During the interval, Florida experienced significant growth and development, with a population doubling from 464,639 in 1895 to 948,470 at the close of World War I. The state's African American population ran counter to the upward trend. Beginning about 1910, a migration of blacks from the rural countryside to the state's towns and cities, and into the urban North, contributed to the population shift. Within a brief period, over 40,000 black Floridians migrated to the Midwest and Northeast. African Americans who left during the era and gained prominence elsewhere included James Weldon Johnson and A. Philip Randolph. In 1910, African Americans comprised more than fifty percent of the population in ten Florida counties; by 1920, that figure fell by half due to out-migration. Between 1845 and 1880, blacks had represented nearly one-half of the state's population; by 1920, African Americans comprised less than one third of Florida's residents.⁶²

Despite the mobility patterns and out-migration of black talent from the state, the public school population of African Americans more than doubled in the twenty years following 1898, from 66,000 to 124,000. In-migration of blacks from Alabama and Georgia, and the displacement of black families in west Florida to southeast Florida accounted for much of the increase. The development of African American institutes of higher learning in the late nineteenth century helped sustain this emerging population of young black students. During the Progressive era, African American institutes of higher education, such as Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Florida Memorial College (1873) in Live Oak, Cookman Institute (1872) and Edward Waters College (1882) in Jacksonville, expanded their campuses and curriculum. Other public and private academies that grew during the era and made important contributions to black education included Union Academy in Gainesville (1866), Howard Academy in Ocala (1867), Stanton High School in Jacksonville (1868), Lincoln Academy in Tallahassee (1876), and Boylan Home Industrial Training School in Jacksonville (1886). In addition to these older institutes, new centers of higher education for Florida's African Americans appeared, including Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School (1897) in Eatonville, Fessenden Academy (1895) in Marion County, and Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute (1904), the predecessor of Bethune-Cookman College.⁶³

⁶¹Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 26, 29-30.

⁶²William N. Sheats, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1918* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1918), 20; William N. Sheats, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1920* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1920), 315-326; T. Lynn Smith, "The Redistribution of the Negro Population of the United States, 1910-1960," *Journal of Negro History* 51 (July 1966), 173; Gannon, *New History of Florida*, 352, 421.

⁶³Sheats, *1916-1918 Biennial Report*, 20; Sheats, *1918-1920 Biennial Report*, 315-326; Smith, "Redistribution of the Negro Population," 173; Gannon, *New History of Florida*, 352, 421; Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 22.

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Part of Progressive era philosophy included using the principles of efficiency and science to root out social problems through research and practical application. Creative, wealthy, and well-connected political and business leaders from the Northeast and Midwest linked the process to education, implementing carefully designed programs to support southern blacks and public education. Founded by John D. Rockefeller, the General Education Board (GEB) was chartered by Congress in 1903 with the "promotion of education within the United States of America, without distinction of race, sex, or creed." Rockefeller donated \$1,000,000 in 1902, and additional endowments amounted to \$42,000,000 by 1907. By 1914, the GEB had contributed approximately \$16,000,000 to colleges, medical schools, universities, and farm demonstration schools. The nation's African American colleges and schools received \$700,000, and rural school agents, both blacks and whites, benefited from \$100,000 in GEB donations. In 1920, federal census statisticians found promising educational results in the form of extended school terms, and increased literacy and spending.⁶⁴

Board members believed the status quo in southern education was unjust and a threat to the prosperity of the nation. They tied the growth of black education to the expansion of southern white education, but soon it became clear to some observers that white educational needs came before black needs. Other critics suggested that GEB funds were withheld from liberal arts colleges that criticized Booker T. Washington's industrial education philosophy, or the methods of John D. Rockefeller. An outgrowth of what Rockefeller conceived as a "Negro Education Board," the GEB capitulated to southern whites in 1911, when it instituted a policy of "cooperating with the white people of the South in promoting negro education." In effect, the GEB assisted the South with its comprehensive educational system, and avoided any confrontation with them regarding black schools. In 1914, only four percent of the GEB's budget went to black schools. The board's greatest period of activity occurred between 1924 and 1931, allocating twenty-five million dollars for black education. Although the policy of the GEB was to build up public schools, the bulk of its resources were spent on private colleges and secondary schools, not public elementary education. Black schools, both private and public, received only nineteen percent of the GEB's resources.⁶⁵

Subsumed within and administered by the GEB were several smaller philanthropic organizations, including the Anna T. Jeanes Foundation and the Southern Education Board, the latter organized by Robert C. Ogden. A native of Pennsylvania, Anna Jeanes became a wealthy heiress of her family's Philadelphia wholesale dry goods business. About 1902, she met Dr. Hollis B. Frissell of Hampton Institute, education philanthropist George F. Peabody, and Booker T. Washington. She explained to them that her interest lay not in well-established black institutes, such as Hampton and Tuskegee, but in "the poor little Negro cabin one-teacher rural schools." In 1907, through their encouragement, the Quaker benefactor gave one million dollars to the education of southern blacks. With her largess, she established the Anna T. Jeanes Fund, formally organized as the Negro Rural School Fund, Inc. The

⁶⁴Anderson and Moss, *Dangerous Donations*, 41, 94-98; General Education Board, *The General Education Board, 1902-1914*, 3, 15-17, 212; Woodward, *New South*, 444.

⁶⁵Anderson and Moss, *Dangerous Donations*, 9, 40-41, 54, 94-98; General Education Board, *General Education Board, 1902-1914*, 3, 15-17, 212; Woodward, *New South*, 444.

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initial board of trustees consisted of Andrew Carnegie, Hollis Frissell, George Peabody, William Howard Taft, and Booker T. Washington. A graduate of Washington and Lee University, James Dillard served as president of the Fund between 1907 and 1931. In 1909, he visited Florida, where he disclosed to the state superintendent, William Holloway, that the Fund could supply the state department of public instruction with the salary for one teacher in each county to introduce industrial work into the black schools.⁶⁶

The Fund's overall objective was to help train black women to become more effective educators. Known as Jeanes supervisors, Jeanes teachers, industrial teachers, or visiting teachers, these women in practice delivered supplies to schools, checked on registrations and reports, observed teachers and made recommendations for improved classroom teaching, reported delinquents, and helped teachers and parents improve schoolhouses and grounds. Florida's education leaders were slow to adopt the Jeanes philosophy or accept its financial assistance. In 1912, Leon County reported the first use of Jeanes funds in Florida. County superintendent Edward Eppes believed it would "prove a blessing to both races, and should be encouraged by all citizens who have the true welfare of their country at heart." In 1914, J. W. Burns, superintendent for Columbia County's schools, praised the Fund for improving the black junior high in Lake City and several other rural schools in the county. In Chipley, Superintendent W. T. Horne expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to make use of the Fund, but found "that public sentiment is opposed to educating the negro, so much so that the Board of Public Instruction of Washington County will not accept the funds placed at their disposal." Indeed, by 1931, only thirteen Florida counties accepted assistance from the Negro Rural School Fund. That year, the Fund distributed \$3,400 statewide for black schools; Suwannee County received the most assistance of any Florida county--\$320.⁶⁷

Another wing of the GEB was the Southern Education Board, which contributed advice, agents, literature, and subsidies to some black schools. Robert Ogden, president of the board of trustees at Hampton Institute, helped set its policies, initiating a movement known as "Ogdenism." A symbolic leader of America's early twentieth century education revival, Ogden became a genius at bringing together donors and educators, and focusing public attention upon education problems. But, much of the rhetoric promoted consensus and cooperation, rather than solving problems. The movement drew criticisms from black and white southerners alike, some of the latter pointing out that Ogden and other northern philanthropists believed "that the South is the abode of barbarism." Frustrated by its

⁶⁶Arthur Wright, *The Negro Rural School Fund (Anna T. Jeanes Foundation), 1907-1933* (Washington, D.C.: Negro Rural School Fund, 1933), 1-10, 18, 20; *The National Cyclopedic of American Biography* (New York: James T. White Company, 1948), 34: 233; General Education Board, *General Education Board, 1902-1914*, 3, 11, 17, 212.

⁶⁷William Holloway, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1912* (Tallahassee: State Board of Public Instruction, 1912), 101-102; William Holloway, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1914* (Tallahassee: State Board of Public Instruction, 1914), 510, 650; William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1934* (Tallahassee: State Board of Public Instruction, 1934), 175-176.

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relative lack of activity, Booker T. Washington criticized Ogden and the SEB and “for its lack of black representation.” Between 1902 and 1910, Florida received the smallest SEB support of any southern state--\$2,600.⁶⁸

While philanthropic support remained in short supply for Florida's black community, the state's election politics for the seat of state superintendent played upon themes of race and segregation. Previously elected to the post three times, William Sheats came under attack by whites, some of whom regarded him as a liberal “education Czar” who stood up “for negro education in private conversation or on the platform.” Some blacks offered an opposing view, claiming that his support of segregated schools was a “means of protecting whites from ‘social equality’.” His third term as superintendent came to a close after a hard-fought election against William Holloway, Alachua County's school superintendent. A native of Georgia, Holloway had been trained in Ohio and taught several years in the Florida villages of LaCrosse, Pine Hill, and Trenton before becoming county superintendent. In 1900, as a member of the Florida State Teacher's Association, he organized a conference in Tampa to help improve education in Florida. A visit to Gainesville, Florida, by Booker T. Washington, at the behest of Sheats, served as a backdrop and flashpoint for the 1904 election.⁶⁹

An outcry over Washington's address to a joint meeting of the General Education Board and Florida's county superintendents in the auditorium of Gainesville's white high school caught the attention of the local and national press. The *Jacksonville Florida Times-Union* indicated that the meeting of blacks and whites represented a “threat to southern tradition and the southern way of life.” A front-page headline in the *New York Times* claimed “Race Prejudice in Florida, Citizens of Gainesville Refuse to Allow Booker T. Washington to Speak in Auditorium.” A Bridgeport, Connecticut, newspaper gleefully proclaimed that Washington's “mental ability the equal of and the superior of most of them” objecting to his appearance. Holloway turned up the heat, accusing Sheats of promoting “social equality,” after which Sheats preferred charges of libel against his opponent and had him arrested. Still, Holloway successfully used the Washington controversy to discredit Sheats among white voters. Prominent education philanthropist Robert Ogden bemoaned Sheats' loss to “an obscure county official who advocated less public money for the black school child.” A harbinger of Holloway's discriminatory policies, following the election Sheats pointed out that blacks already contributed more in property and poll taxes than they received for their public schools.⁷⁰

The election stirred the bitter emotions of whites, who enacted Jim Crow legislation to codify an already segregated culture. Literacy tests, property ownership qualifications, and poll taxes effectively disfranchised thousands of blacks. In 1901, the all white Democratic primary system ensured white dominance in political campaigns. In

⁶⁸Anderson and Moss, *Dangerous Donations*, 49-50, 58; Woodward, *New South*, 404.

⁶⁹Arthur White, “Booker T. Washington's Florida Incident, 1903-1904,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 51 (January 1973), 227-249; Rerick, *Memoirs*, 2: 566-567; Arthur White, “Race, Politics and Education: The Sheats-Holloway Election Controversy, 1903-1904,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 53 (January 1975), 253-272; Rerick, *Memoirs*, 2: 566-567; Longstreet, *History of the Florida Education Association*, 264.

⁷⁰White, “Booker T. Washington's Florida Incident,” 227-249.

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1903, the legislature prohibited marriages of blacks and whites, and a 1905 law required separate seating areas on the state's streetcars. Legislation regarding segregated railroad cars arrived in 1909. In public education, the state further complicated and restricted a segregated dual system by requiring separate textbooks for blacks and whites, even mandating separate storage facilities for books not in use. In 1907, Progressive-era governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward proposed removing blacks from the United States in his message to the legislature. Returned by the electorate to the state superintendent's position in 1912, William Sheats helped orchestrate a law to prohibit whites from teaching in black schools.⁷¹

Race and segregation even infected the school consolidation movement, an important Progressive era issue. A process of building fewer but larger schools, consolidation was derived, in part, from earlier legislation mandating a three-mile separation between public schools, the need for specialization in the teaching field, and conservation of scarce public resources. Reformers perceived consolidation as a panacea for the "little red schoolhouse" with their inadequate facilities and undertrained teachers. Improvement and expansion came to black schools, but at a much slower pace than in white neighborhoods. Between 1905 and 1915, the number of African American public schools increased by seventy-two, reaching 681 in the latter year. The number of classrooms increased by 137, a rise of thirteen percent. By contrast, the number of white schools rose by 253, and classrooms increased by over 2,200, or fifty percent. In effect, whites gained twice as many school buildings statewide as blacks gained in classrooms alone. Ratios in the quality of buildings reflected a similar disparity. Black students remained in log schools at a higher rate and far longer than white pupils. By 1915, only five African American schools were constructed with concrete or brick, while whites had gained over 140 masonry schools.⁷²

Education reports admonished lagging school boards and praised the followers of the consolidation philosophy. Palm Beach County's superintendent, W. E. Keen, believed that Florida lagged far behind in the movement, which had been aggressively practiced in some states since 1903. William T. Kennedy, Lake County's superintendent, believed that one four-room consolidated school was four hundred percent more efficient than four one-teacher "little red schoolhouses." George M. Lynch, Florida's first state inspector of rural schools, explained that the consolidation movement derived its origins about 1902 from I. P. Roberts, a dean at Cornell University. For Roberts, consolidation meant "A rural center housed in a large, plain, attractive building, fitted with kitchen and assembly hall for public meetings, social, recreative, educational and religious; a central meeting place, perhaps for two or more districts, where agriculture will be taught the young and old, and where handicrafts and domestic

⁷¹Woodward, *Jim Crow*, 82-85, 97, 102; Woodward, *New South*, 321; Jerrell Shofner, "Custom, Law, and History: The Enduring Influence of Florida's 'Black Code'," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 55 (January 1977), 287, 289-290; Richardson, "Orange Park School," 406.

⁷²William M. Holloway, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1906* (Tallahassee: State Board of Education, 1906), table 26; William M. Holloway, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1908* (Tallahassee: State Board of Education, 1908), 468; William N. Sheats, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1916* (Tallahassee: State Board of Public Instruction, 1916), 122.

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economy will be taught along side the three R's." Another politically divisive issue, good roads were an important part of the consolidation movement, making schools more accessible to larger numbers of students. In 1912, Lynch indicated that twelve of Florida's forty-nine counties had made progress in consolidating their public schools. But, in 1918, R. T. Turner of Inverness reported that sixty percent of Florida's rural students were still educated in one-room schools. The report concluded that those rural schools had twice the illiteracy rate of public schools in towns and cities.⁷³

In 1902, Brevard County school superintendent R. E. Mims reported, "our territory is wide and sparsely settled. The people do not favor it [consolidation of schools] as yet, but it will come with us in due time as it has already in various sections." Mims inventoried three log buildings and forty-three wood frame school buildings in Brevard County's education system. Most were relatively small, containing one or two rooms. But, in a region that stretched between Titusville and Stuart, the county only supplied African Americans four one-room schools--one log and three wood-frame buildings. After 1905, when legislators carved St. Lucie County out of Brevard, the school board persisted in its consolidation and expansion, constructing fewer, but larger schools. By 1908, Brevard County's blacks were taught in eight wood-frame schools containing ten classrooms.⁷⁴

Superintendent C. P. Platts of the new St. Lucie County school board shuddered at the difficulties entailed by consolidation. In 1906, he reported, "At one of the schools where this has been adopted it has caused friction practically from the start. The patrons of the school do not deny the increased efficiency of the school, but the loss of the individual school to the small community, thereby building up the school in a neighboring community, is rather more than some of the patrons can stand. Jealousies, quarrels, complaints to superintendent and board, even petitions to the Governor have resulted." In the end, Platts concluded that the consolidation plan, because of the bickering, was more expensive than the old style. Teaching wages ranged between thirty-five and one hundred dollars per month. A lack of compulsory education plagued Platts, who placed much of the blame on the "utter carelessness and ignorance on the part of parents." Without a compulsory education law, the superintendent speculated that St. Lucie County would soon have "illiterate whites and a fairly [well] educated colored population, as the negroes are sending to school better than the whites in many places."⁷⁵

His successor, W. J. Nesbitt, reported in 1908 that consolidation was progressing, but students and teachers alike were hampered by poor roads and "much ignorance . . . among the parents." He hoped to "establish a chain of Graded Schools along the front or Indian River section, which will entirely wipe out the old-style country schools." Nesbitt illustrated an early example of consolidation using some ingenuous methods. Pupils at Indian River Narrows were drawn from a region with a radius of five miles near Vero Beach, where they were collected in

⁷³William M. Holloway, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1912* (Tallahassee: State Board of Education, 1912), 227-228.

⁷⁴William N. Sheats, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1902* (Tallahassee: State Board of Education, 1902), 107, 245-248.

⁷⁵Holloway, *1904-1906 Biennial Report*, 338-339, 387-389, 468; Holloway, *1906-1908 Biennial Report*, 108-109, 468.

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launches and transported to the island school. Nesbitt proudly claimed not having one mishap during the past term and that this “unique method of centralizing has proved very satisfactory to a peculiarly situated section.” But progress in developing schools for black children fell far behind those of whites. By 1908, the St. Lucie school district maintained eighteen schools, but only one of those, a wood-frame building in Fort Pierce, accommodated black students.⁷⁶

In general, black school children did not benefit from school consolidation of public spending to the degree enjoyed by white pupils. School expenditures statewide in 1913 amounted to \$2,000,000 for whites, but only \$228,000 for blacks. The state's average annual per student spending stood at four dollars for whites and eighty-one cents for blacks. In Dade County, eight wood-frame schools contained seventeen rooms for African-American schools in 1913, a stark contrast to the five masonry and twenty-five wood-frame buildings for whites with 107 classrooms. The \$5,100 spent on black schools lagged far behind the \$92,000 spent on new white buildings. In 1918, Superintendent Robert E. Hall reported that by using the board's old plan Dade County would have maintained thirty-seven schools, rather than the thirty presently serving the county. Boasting that consolidation had made “possible a high school education for every boy and girl in Dade County,” Hall neglected to mention any improvements made for the education of African Americans. By 1920, Dade County's whites were taught in seventeen masonry buildings with 173 classrooms. But, African Americans still learned lessons in six wood-frame buildings containing seventeen rooms. In 1921, after sixteen years as superintendent, Hall proclaimed Dade County's public education system “second to none in Florida,” and retired from the education field to organize a real estate company in Miami.⁷⁷

In Lee County, a new white high school, Gwynne Institute, was completed in Fort Myers in 1911 at a cost of approximately thirty-three thousand dollars. Forty-two students enrolled in the 1911-1912 school year. The following year, the school board completed a “Col. School,” later known as Williams Academy, and a precursor of a black high school built in the mid-1920s. A lesson in contrasts between black and white schools of the era, the 1912 two-story wood-frame African American schoolhouse building was built at a cost of approximately \$1,100, without electricity and equipped with wood-burning stoves for heat. Presumably, privies stood behind the building. The white students at the Gwynne Institute enjoyed four restrooms, drinking fountains, and a central radiant heat system. The janitor of the white institute earned forty dollars per month. This salary was equivalent to the pay given K. D. Wilson, and ten dollars more each month than that earned by Saddy Ford, the teachers at Williams Academy.⁷⁸

One of the large projects of the period came in Marion County. Superintendent J. H. Brinson reported a new \$7,500 primary “negro school” in 1914, bringing the number of black schools to fifty-one, up from forty-three in 1908.

⁷⁶Holloway, *1904-1906 Biennial Report*, 338-339; Holloway, *1906-1908 Biennial Report*, 108-109, 468.

⁷⁷Holloway, *1904-1906 Biennial Report*, table 26; Sheats, *1914-1916 Biennial Report*, 122; Sheats, *1916-1918 Biennial Report*, 584, 873; Sheats, *1918-1920 Biennial Report*, 141; E. V. Blackman, *Miami and Dade County, Florida: Its Settlement, Progress and Achievement* (Washington, D. C.: Victor Rainbolt, 1921), 176-178.

⁷⁸Matthews, “Dunbar High School,” 189-195.

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Polk County's African Americans also made significant advances. Between 1913 and 1920, the number of schools increased from fourteen to twenty-seven, and classrooms from thirty-two to forty-seven. Escambia County also designated significant resources for black children. In the 1912-1914 period, the school district allocated \$26,000 to build new African American schools, but still used \$69,000 to develop new schools for whites. By 1920, Escambia County's blacks had gained one masonry and three wood-frame schools. Even with the construction program, the number of classrooms supporting black schools in the county represented a net gain of three. Statewide African Americans made small, but important advances in consolidation. Between 1913 and 1920, blacks lost fifty-five schools, but increased by one hundred thirty-two classrooms. Although no log schools remained in service, most schools were wood-frame construction. In 1920, public masonry school buildings supported black education only in Duval, Escambia, Jackson, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, and Pinellas counties.⁷⁹

A significant change in black public education occurred in 1920 with the appointment of a state supervisor of Negro education. As early as 1913, State Superintendent Sheats admitted, "the education of the negro was the weakest and most neglected phase of the school system of the State." Requesting assistance from the General Education Board, Sheats finally secured funding for the position in 1919, and the following year appointed J. H. Brinson, then the school superintendent of Marion County, Florida. A member of the Florida Education Association's (FEA) executive committee between 1909 and 1912, and the FEA's treasurer in 1917, Brinson had taught at the East Florida Seminary in Gainesville between 1901 and 1905, and served as Marion County's school superintendent between 1908 and 1920. Florida's first tentative steps to address the needs of African Americans in the public schools during the 1920s began with a white educator.⁸⁰

Brinson's duties largely consisted of encouraging county superintendents and school boards to improve their African American schools by allocating additional local revenues for buildings and teachers, and acquiring funds from philanthropic and federal programs. Specifically, he suggested the use of Jeanes and Slater funds, and the Smith-Hughes federal program, the latter directed at industrial and vocational education. Most of his work involved "changing attitudes of school officials [rather] than imposing material constructions." Conferences that he attended on black education in Alabama, Georgia, and Virginia made evident to him the extent to which Florida's education system for blacks had fallen behind the progress made in other southern states. His review of past reports and travels to schools throughout Florida revealed that only the school boards in Calhoun, Leon, Marion, and Volusia counties used Jeanes teachers to assist in improving African American schools. He also expressed concern over the low numbers and poor training of black teachers. Statewide, he found only one county training school for African Americans, at Delray Beach. In addition to promoting the county training school system for black teachers, his

⁷⁹William N. Holloway, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1914* (Tallahassee: State Board of Education, 1914), 100, 102, 109, 583; Sheats, *1918-1920 Biennial Report*, 141.

⁸⁰Longstreet, *Florida Education Association*, 256; Sheats, *1918-1920 Biennial Report*, 259-264.

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initial report expressed the hope that “county school authorities will feel a greater responsibility for the education of Negroes. . . and will be willing to make far better provision for the same than has heretofore been the practice.”⁸¹

Perhaps Brinson’s greatest contribution was to encourage local school districts to replace their aging black schools and develop buildings in regions not supported by a school from the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Described by one historian as “the most influential philanthropic force that came to [the] aid of Negroes” in the early twentieth century, the Rosenwald School Building Fund was the brainchild of Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck & Company of Chicago. In the opening decades of the twentieth century, Washington began work on public-private partnerships to enhance rural black education. He initially found support from Anna Jeanes, the wealthy Philadelphia Quaker, and then Henry H. Rogers, vice-president of Standard Oil Company. But, to launch an ambitious plan that he hoped would spread from Alabama throughout the South, Washington turned to Rosenwald.⁸²

In 1884, Rosenwald had established Rosenwald & Weil, a wholesale clothing company in Chicago. His phenomenal business success attracted the attention of Richard Sears, founder of Sears, Roebuck & Company, who hired him as vice-president in 1895. In part, because of Rosenwald’s marketing skills, Sears became America’s largest mail order catalog company. In 1910, upon Sears’ retirement, Rosenwald became president of the company, and the new president embarked on a program of philanthropy. His early efforts included offering \$25,000 toward the construction of a Y. M. C. A. building for African-Americans in any city that raised an additional \$75,000 by subscription. His philanthropy also extended to Chicago’s public schools and the University of Chicago. He aimed his longest-lived and most successful philanthropic program, however, at the South’s African Americans.⁸³

Rosenwald visited Booker T. Washington at the Tuskegee Institute in 1911. He had first learned about the Institute when reading a biography of William H. Baldwin, Jr., the chairman of Tuskegee’s board of trustees. During a visit to Alabama, Rosenwald was struck by the disparity between the “decadent rural surroundings and the energy and achievement at the Institute.” At Washington’s urging, Rosenwald was elected to the board of trustees. In 1912, on the fiftieth birthday of the mail-order magnate, Rosenwald celebrated the event, in part, by donating \$25,000 to Tuskegee. The Institute distributed the funds to various normal schools, and six small public school projects in the Alabama counties of Lee, Macon, and Montgomery. In June 1914, after receiving glowing reports about those public schools, Rosenwald contributed \$30,000 to aid in the building of an additional one hundred rural schools in Alabama’s African American neighborhoods. Spurred, in part, by the generous praise for the accomplishments

⁸¹Sheats, *1918-1920 Biennial Report*, 259-264; William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1928* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1928), 215; Thomas Cochran, *History of Public-School Education in Florida* (Tallahassee: State Department of Education, 1921), 142, 215.

⁸²Thomas Hanchett, “The Rosenwald Schools and Black Education in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 65 (October 1988); Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 153.

⁸³*National Cyclopedia of American Biography* (New York: James T. White Company, 1937), 26:110.

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made at those schools, and, in part, by Washington's death in 1915, Rosenwald incorporated the Julius Rosenwald Fund in October 1917 "for the well-being of mankind." His philanthropy came to "symbolize the crusade for black common schools in the rural South during the first third of the twentieth century."⁸⁴

Rosenwald initially endowed the Fund with twenty million dollars. Accrued interest and additional donations increased the endowment to thirty-four million dollars by 1929. By 1932, the Fund had distributed over \$4,000,000 for rural school construction. In all, the Rosenwald Fund and its predecessor organization (1914-1932) assisted in the development of over 5,300 rural schools in 853 counties in fifteen southern states. The first Rosenwald schools were built in Alabama (1914), and the following year Tennessee's education department received its initial funds. The states with the most active records of building schools with Rosenwald support included North Carolina (787), Mississippi (557), and South Carolina (481). Florida fell far behind the rest of the South, however, building its first "Rosenwald school" in 1921, and completing only 126 schools by 1932. In addition, one teacher's home and four shops were assembled in Florida using Rosenwald funds. Large projects supported by the Rosenwald Fund near the close of the era included the Practice School at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, the Goulds School in Dade County, and Industrial High School in Palm Beach County.⁸⁵

Despite the Fund's popularity elsewhere in the South, the Rosenwald Fund gained slow and limited acceptance in Florida's school districts. None of the state's public school systems applied for Rosenwald Funds prior to 1921. Some of the initial indifference to the Fund may be attributed to Superintendent William Sheats, who died in office in 1922, and was replaced by William S. Cawthon (1922-1937). Sheats had appointed J. H. Brinson to the post of state agent for Negro education in 1920, and Brinson, apparently, had been restrained in his early attempts to improve the quality of black schools. A native of Alabama, Cawthon held degrees from the University of Chicago and the University of Florida. His teaching and principal appointments included tenures at Chipley, Gainesville, Pensacola, Quincy, St. Augustine, and Tallahassee, followed by his appointment as state inspector of high schools (1909-1922). His positions in the Florida Education Association consisted of several terms on the executive committee between 1898 and 1913, and as president (1920-1921). Cawthon demonstrated his support of Florida's blacks, serving on the executive committee of the Florida State Teachers Association in 1898 and 1899.⁸⁶

⁸⁴Hanchett, "Rosenwald Schools," 425-427; Mary Hoffschwelle, "Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community: Reformers, Schools, and Homes in Tennessee, 1914-1929," Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1993, 109-129; James Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 156-157.

⁸⁵Hanchett, "Rosenwald Schools," 425-427; Mary Hoffschwelle, "Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community: Reformers, Schools, and Homes in Tennessee, 1914-1929," Ph.D. diss., Vanderbilt University, 1993, 109-129; *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 26:110; Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 155; William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two years Ending June 30, 1932* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1932), 171; "Total Cost for Buildings, Grounds & Equipment in Florida," Rosenwald Fund, Florida File, Fisk University Archives, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

⁸⁶*Jacksonville Florida Times-Union*, 20, 25 July 1922; Longstreet, *History of the Florida Education Association*, 258.

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Supported by Cawthon, Brinson urged school boards to use the philanthropic funding offered by Rosenwald, and in the 1921-1922 fiscal year the school boards of Alachua, Columbia, Lake, Leon, and Marion counties took advantage of the fund to build one school each. Acceptance still came slowly, however, and by the close of the land boom only thirty schools were built using Rosenwald funds. In 1925, to encourage Brinson and Cawthon to increase their applications for school building, Samuel Smith, the general agent of the Fund, wrote the administrators that the fund had allocated \$10,400 for Florida's black schools, and expressed his "appreciation to you and your department for the sympathetic and hearty cooperation you have given us in the past. . ."⁸⁷

Despite the relatively small allocations, school building campaigns by black Floridians and the philanthropic organization greatly increased the educational opportunities of Florida's African American children. Rosenwald investments in Florida between 1920 and 1932 amounted to approximately \$134,000. Those resources made possible the development of many schools that otherwise would not have been completed. In all, Rosenwald funding helped provide educational opportunities for approximately 23,000 students, 500 teachers, and amounted to \$1,432,706 in value of public school buildings, equipment, and grounds in Florida's African American communities. Over five hundred new classrooms were made available. In 1930, eighty-six black schools in twenty-five Florida counties celebrated Rosenwald School Day Programs, collecting nearly \$2,500 to construct additional black schools in the state. That year, donations to the Rosenwald Fund by African Americans throughout the South amounted to nearly \$82,000.⁸⁸

In mid-1927, a period of renewed urgency in black school construction began with the appointment of D. E. Williams as state agent for Negro schools. During a long and distinguished career, DeWitt Everett Williams composed various articles and monographs on education, including *A Brief Review of the Growth and Improvement of Education for Negroes in Florida, 1927-1962* and, with A. R. Ward and Hal G. Lewis, "A Study of Economic Status of Negro Teachers." Virginia had been the first state to organize a position of state agent for Negro schools in 1910, and most other southern states had followed suit by 1929. Florida had established the post in 1920. Appointed to the Florida position in June 1927, Williams became one of the most highly regarded state agents of the South. J. Curtis Dixon, executive director of the South Education Foundation, assessed Williams as a capable professional involved in the "conversion of money through ideas into the improvement of a culture." Dixon

⁸⁷S. L. Smith to W. S. Cawthon, 27 March 1925, D. E. Williams to S. L. Smith, 7 November 1927, "Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment," Rosenwald Fund, Florida File, Fisk University Archives; William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1930* (Tallahassee: Board of Public Instruction, 1930), 158, 161; Cawthon, *1930-1932 Biennial Report*, 171; Embree and Waxman, *Julius Rosenwald Fund*, 51.

⁸⁸Hanchett, "Rosenwald Schools," 425-427; Hoffschwelle, "Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community," 109-129; *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, 26:110; Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 155, 174; William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1932* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1932), 171; "Total Cost for Buildings, Grounds & Equipment in Florida," Rosenwald Fund, Florida File, Fisk University Archives.

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believed that Williams “probably visited more schools and counseled, advised, and encouraged more teachers than any other staff member of any State Department of Education.”⁸⁹

In 1927, the FSTA petitioned the Florida Legislature for relief in the deplorable conditions in black schools. Although free textbooks became available in 1925 for the first through the sixth grades, black teachers and children experienced substantial barriers to education growth. Williams would later write, “It is difficult for people to realize today that school was conducted in such [deplorable] conditions. Drinking water, sanitary toilets, desks, blackboards, sufficient textbooks, library books, a food heater and fuel were lacking in many of these schools. Pews and benches often substituted for desks. Water was brought in bottles and jugs by children or was gotten in a bucket from a so-called spring near the school. School officials were reluctant to provide pumps because people would steal them. Often trees and bushes served for toilets, and surface privies, when provided, were usually so filthy that children preferred to use the bushes. Toilet tissue and washing facilities were not provided in most schools. Wide planed boards painted black served as chalk boards.”⁹⁰

Consistently communicating with the Rosenwald Fund over the status of Florida's black schools, Williams in November 1927 wrote Samuel Smith, “I think that I have accomplished a tangible good getting contact with county superintendents, and I am happy to say that they have all accorded me a very hearty reception, and in most cases, seem anxious to secure all the aid which I can bring to them, and also are putting forth more effort themselves to better the condition of negro schools in the state.” For his part, Smith believed that although Williams “has been in office a little over five months, he has filed applications for 20 buildings-amounting to \$5,900 in excess of his construction budget this year. . . .” He wrote Alfred Stern, a trustee of the Fund, “Since Florida has gone so slowly in former years, but is moving along so well the present year, I hope that we can take care of the excess in that State. . . .” Williams' efforts paid handsome dividends, for the peak of Rosenwald school construction in Florida occurred in the 1928-1929 school year, when thirty-two buildings were completed. In all, however, between 1921 and 1932 only thirty-seven Florida counties participated in the Rosenwald Fund, leaving nearly one-half of the state bereft of Rosenwald's largess.⁹¹

To address these concerns throughout the South, in 1928, S. L. Smith implemented an incentive program, offering to pay fifty percent for two-room through ten-room schoolhouses in southern counties that had no Rosenwald school. A few Florida counties apparently took advantage of the incentive package, which paid substantially more than the

⁸⁹Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 53-54; D. E. Williams, *A Brief Review of the Growth and Improvement of Education for Negroes in Florida, 1927-1962* (Atlanta: Southern Education Foundation, 1963), 3.

⁹⁰Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 53-54.

⁹¹S. L. Smith to W. S. Cawthon, 27 March 1925, D. E. Williams to S. L. Smith, 7 November 1927, S. L. Smith to Alfred K. Stern, 5 December 1927, “Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment,” Rosenwald Fund, Florida File, Fisk University Archives; Cawthon, *1928-1930 Biennial Report*, 158, 161; W. S. Cawthon, *1930-1932 Biennial Report*, 171; Embree and Waxman, *Julius Rosenwald Fund*, 51.

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standard \$700 attached to two-room schoolhouses and \$2,100 for ten-room schools. Of equal significance was an \$8,800 special appropriation made to repair and rebuild black schools in Palm Beach County destroyed by the September 1928 hurricane. In December, Smith toured the West Palm Beach region with Williams and county superintendent Youngblood. Smith graphically observed, "Let me dismiss the harrowing scenes which we beheld by saying that no story written in the newspapers painted the pictures as bad as they really were." His photographs of nine schools depicted schoolhouses devastated by the storm. Trustee Stern approved the \$8,800 special request; on the remainder of the south Florida tour, Smith and Williams visited African American schools in Broward, Dade, and Monroe counties. At Key West, Williams found high school students attending classes in a "barn-like" frame structure. Commenting on the dilapidated building and a new masonry building for the primary grades, he asked Smith to consider "since this negro school is the only negro [high] school in Monroe County and since they have from their own energy and desire for progress constructed such a strong and sanitary building for the grades that I would want to recommend a remuneration of Rosenwald aid to them on the building with the proviso and understanding that they use this aid to pull down the old frame building. . . ." Despite the support of Williams and Smith, the Monroe County School Board declined to apply for Rosenwald support. Monroe County remained one of the Florida counties without a Rosenwald school.⁹²

In general, counties with large, rural African American populations contained Rosenwald schools. Eventually, the counties of Alachua, Lake, and Palm Beach each supported eleven schools, and Gadsden and Leon both maintained eight Rosenwald schools. Counties with large urban black populations contained few examples of Rosenwald schools. Not surprisingly, no Rosenwald schools were built in Hillsborough County, and Duval County and Escambia County each supported only one example. Among the southern states, Florida had the lowest rate of participation in Rosenwald schoolhouse assistance. William Cawthon chastised local school districts in his 1930 report, pointing out, "Rosenwald aid has been available in Florida since January, 1920. The tardiness with which Florida school officials have used this gift indicates their lethargic provision for Negro schools."⁹³

Cawthon's biennial report for the 1928-1930 period revealed some of the progress made in improving black schools using Rosenwald funding. Illustrations of new schools built in Bellaire, Boynton Beach, Fort Myers, Gifford, Madison, Micanopy, and Oklawaha portrayed the wide range of buildings developed in black communities across the state. Compiling the section of the biennial report on "Negro Schools," Williams skillfully included wood-frame and masonry buildings that ranged in size from one-teacher to unusually large seventeen-room schoolhouses eligible for Rosenwald funds. Training Schools in Coconut Grove, Delray Beach, and Eustis and even dwellings assembled by a carpentry class at the Florence Villa Rosenwald school helped popularize the program in Florida, and encourage school boards to participate in the funding opportunity.⁹⁴

⁹²S. L. Smith to W. S. Cawthon, 7 May 1927, S. L. Smith to D. E. Williams, 7 November 1928, S. L. Smith to Alfred Stern, 12 December 1928, D. E. Williams to S. L. Smith, 2 January 1929, Rosenwald Fund, Florida File, Fisk University Archives.

⁹³"Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment," Rosenwald Fund File, Florida, Fisk University Archives; Cawthon, *1928-1930 Biennial Report*, 158, 161; Cawthon, *1930-1932 Biennial Report*, 171; Embree and Waxman, *Julius Rosenwald Fund*, 51.

⁹⁴Cawthon, *1928-1930 Biennial Report*, 152-188.

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Brinson and Williams found that schoolhouse plans supplied by the Rosenwald Fund represented “the very best that is known in school house lighting and ventilation.” Brinson indicated that plans received from the Fund were the state’s only supply of stock blue prints and specifications for schools, and they were being used for both black and white buildings. In 1928, Williams reported that although Florida’s African Americans had contributed far more than the Rosenwald Fund had in the construction of their schoolhouses, he noted a trend in consolidation, that is, constructing larger schools in geographically centralized locations. On a more positive note, more schoolhouses were assembled with brick rather than wood frames. By then, the Fund had begun encouraging school districts to supply more of the revenues for black schools, and rely less upon its philanthropy.⁹⁵

Despite its widespread popularity among southern blacks, in truth, the Rosenwald Fund never contributed even as much as one-half the cost of construction of a public school. Typically, the Fund provided approximately sixteen percent of the entire project cost, that is, building materials, equipment, labor, and property. In Florida, however, the overall Rosenwald contributions amounted to less than ten percent. Between 1920 and 1934, public tax dollars allocated to Rosenwald-built schools amounted to \$1,186,602; white benefactors contributed \$67,021; and blacks collected \$54,758 for their schools. Interestingly, Florida’s black public schools associated with the Rosenwald organization form an anomaly in the larger regional context for the philanthropic organization. For instance, in Georgia, blacks contributed more for the construction of schools than the Rosenwald Fund, an experience shared by most other southern states. In addition, blacks generally contributed far more than whites in other areas of the South. One compelling comparison shows that Florida’s blacks and whites each donated more for 120 schools than Arkansas’ white population alone contributed for the construction of 338 Rosenwald schools.⁹⁶

This disparity within the program hinted at some of the larger unfulfilled expectations and ultimate objectives envisioned by Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington: changing the attitudes of southern whites towards blacks, and persuading whites to contribute to the education of African Americans. The life of the Rosenwald Fund reflected some of the underlying currents associated with the second crusade for black common schools (1910-1932), a period that spanned the closing years of the productive lives of Washington and Rosenwald. During the era, rural white landowners sought to slow the out-migration of blacks from the fields and farms to southern urban centers and into the North. Responses of wealthy white property owners who needed a ready and inexpensive source of labor included the construction of better schools for poor blacks. Still, the work conducted by Brinson, Cawthon, Williams, various county superintendents, and countless African American residents throughout Florida made possible the access to philanthropic funds that had been previously ignored by many of the state’s local school districts.⁹⁷

⁹⁵William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1924* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1924), 268; Cawthon, *1926-1928 Biennial Report*, 221.

⁹⁶Anderson, *Education of Blacks in the South*, 155.

⁹⁷Hanchett, “Rosenwald Schools,” 425-427; Hoffschwelle, “Rebuilding the Rural Southern Community,” 109-129.

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In 1927, 664 public school buildings supported Florida's African American student population. This reflected a material advance since 1920, not only in numbers (up by 77), but also in quality of construction. During the interval the number of brick schools increased nearly four-fold to twenty-eight, and the number of concrete buildings rose by a factor of six to a count of nineteen. Wood-frame buildings remained the standard form of architecture with forty-two new examples bringing the total to 619. The pace of building better, more permanent schools increased in the closing years of the 1920s. By 1930, the number of wood-frame black schools had decreased to 597, but brick and concrete schoolhouses numbered sixty-four, nearly evenly divided between the materials. In the final three years of the decade, the number of black classrooms increased from 1,700 to 2,000. Paid for through significant efforts by private, public, and philanthropic sources, this investment in infrastructure preceded a period of retrenchment associated with the Great Depression, when few new schools would be constructed.⁹⁸

Great Depression To the Era of Integration, 1929-1971

Funding for Florida's public schools was among the first casualties associated with the Great Depression. As characterized by historian Leedell Neyland, African Americans were generally the "last to be hired and first to be fired" in periods of prosperity and recession, respectively. Consequently, black schools were among the first and most deeply affected by the economic catastrophe of the 1930s. Funding fell precipitously for black schools, and teachers sustained unbearable cuts to already modest salaries predicated on race and gender. In 1930, the average black female public school instructor in Florida earned the smallest salary within her profession, and often worked in an inadequate facility. Stark comparisons show the average African-American Florida female educator earning sixty-one dollars monthly in 1930, while a black male teacher earned eight-four dollars. For the same work, a white woman instructor garnered \$115 each month, and white males earned \$169.⁹⁹

In a study of the economic status of black teachers, D. E. Williams noted the "appallingly low" salaries of black educators during the Great Depression. Beyond the challenges of poor pay, competition sharpened for a relatively scarce pool of teaching jobs. Williams articulated other distinctions between black and white teaching professionals, indicating that the former had more difficulties supplementing their incomes because many part-time jobs that otherwise could be obtained during the summer were not open to African Americans. Finding many limits to their opportunities for career advancement, black teachers often could not hold summer jobs because they were required to attend re-certification classes.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Sheats, *1918-1920 Biennial Report*, 141; Cawthon, *1926-1928 Biennial Report*, 286; Cawthon, *1930-1932 Biennial Report*, 352.

⁹⁹Leedell Neyland, "A Brief Survey of the Negro in American History, 1909-1954," *Bulletin of Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University* 18 (September 1969), 5; Colburn and Landers, *The African American Heritage of Florida*, 254; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 66-67.

¹⁰⁰Colburn and Landers, *The African American Heritage of Florida*, 255.

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By 1932, every southern state had cut back expenditures for public education. By 1935, although some of the most severe conditions of the crisis had eased, and spending programs and progressive reforms implemented earlier in the decade had resumed, African Americans were the last to benefit. In 1931, the Rosenwald Fund ended its support of public schoolhouses, further exacerbating the deplorable economic conditions and bringing to a virtual halt any additional school construction. By 1936, the Rosenwald Fund had resumed supporting public-school libraries, but had permanently abandoned its construction program. For black libraries, the Fund made available to elementary and high schools four sets of books, paying one-third the cost of their purchase and shipping.¹⁰¹

A few political achievements affected the state's school system, but did little to advance educational opportunities of African Americans. A powerful statewide lobby since the mid-1920s, the Florida Education Association (FEA) stood against railroads and large land companies who sought real estate tax relief and a lower corporate tax structure. In addition, Florida's school lobby was buffeted by various agencies within state government, such as the State Road Department, which began taking an increased share of the state's tax dollars. Some public agencies and corporations described Florida's public "schooling beyond basic literacy-training as 'wasteful frills'." Although teachers failed to secure a tenure law, the powerful lobby garnered eight-month school terms and established a teacher-to-student ratio of one-to-thirty-six. The results of the state's education lobby elicited from Florida's speaker of the house respect for "the most powerful and most vicious lobby in Florida."¹⁰²

Concerns over the achievement levels of black students prompted Superintendent Cawthon and Williams to compile countywide grade sheets during the 1933-1934 school year. The results in Dade County and Gadsden County provided graphic comparisons, and illustrated the challenges faced by the public education system. While the vast number of black students appeared to be on the appropriate grade level for their respective ages, some students fell far behind, and the system struggled to assist the mentally challenged. In Dade County, the African American public schools taught 821 students, but only twenty-six attended the twelfth grade. Rates of school enrollment by grade and age decreased dramatically after the first grade, dropping to only 124 students in the sixth grade. The study demonstrated that some of Dade County's students had advanced to a grade beyond the typical level associated with their age, but also found some eighteen-year-old students in the third, fourth, and fifth grades. Gadsden County's students mirrored many of those results, with four hundred sixty-five students in the first grade and three in the twelfth grade. But, in the rural county, only a few students had advanced beyond their normal grade level, and one eighteen year old attended the second grade and five were in the fourth grade. Disparities between Dade and Gadsden counties illustrated the extent of "retardation" among African Americans in public schools, but also showed some of the benefits of educational advances in urban regions compared to rural districts.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹Colburn and Landers, *African American Heritage of Florida*, 254; Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 66-67; William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1936* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1936), 199-200.

¹⁰²Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 242.

¹⁰³William S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1934* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1934), 152-158.

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Black and white pupil attendance in the state's public schools hovered near eighty percent in the mid-1930s. Some counties, such as Gulf, Sumter, and Suwannee, recorded black attendance below seventy percent. But, the counties of Lee, Osceola, and Sarasota recorded annual attendance for black students above ninety percent, a percentage well above white attendance. In 1936, the state boasted eighty-one masonry schools for black students, and nearly one thousand wood frame buildings. But, fewer than half of Florida's counties had built even one brick or concrete school for African Americans. The large urban counties of Duval and Hillsborough supported eight and seven masonry black schools, respectively.¹⁰⁴

Oddly, nearly one-third of Florida's black public schools were then leased, rather than owned by their respective school districts. In 1932 Williams characterized the leased buildings as "churches, lodges, and shacks." Following his inspection of Florida's black public schools in 1935, Williams commented that even the buildings owned by the counties "were inadequate for school purposes." In contrast, nearly all white schools were locally owned, and nearly one-half of those fifteen hundred buildings were of brick or concrete construction. After a careful analysis and assessment of school populations and buildings, Williams declared that the state needed fourteen hundred additional classrooms for black students to "merely accommodate the present needs." Mirroring a theme played out over the decades, he lamented, but clearly understood, that "Under the present taxing system . . . the school children will be relatively handicapped by failure to provide the needed class-rooms."¹⁰⁵

Serving an alternative function of schoolhouse, the churches, lodges, and shacks characterized by Williams were scattered throughout the state, but primarily occupied sites in rural counties. Typically, African Americans leased churches and lodges from congregations and associations with the county only supplying the funds to pay the teachers. In 1933, only a few Florida counties owned all of their African American public-school infrastructure. Examples included Palm Beach County's school board with eleven black schools. Orange County's African Americans held classes in fourteen public-owned buildings, Dade County maintained its thirteen black public schools, and Nassau County owned fourteen of its fifteen schools. But, large disparities in public-private school infrastructure existed in many counties. Marion County's black public school teachers taught students in forty-nine buildings of which fifteen were churches, and in Pasco County eight of ten public schools were leased houses of worship. Religion-related buildings also dominated Jefferson County's public school infrastructure, which amounted to twenty-seven churches and ten schoolhouses. Madison County's black students attended classes in forty-one buildings. But, the county school district only owned eleven of those, with African Americans supplying "30 churches, lodges, or shacks." Thirty-two houses of worship, meeting halls, and dilapidated dwellings also supported the Gadsden County public school system, which then consisted of forty schools. Liberty County's public-school infrastructure was divided evenly between six churches and six schoolhouses.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Cawthon, *1934-1936 Biennial Report*, 189-190, 396-397, 408-409.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 178-204.

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Williams' duties as state agent of Negro education included visiting most of Florida's black public schools each year, compiling statistics and developing reports on African-American schools, corresponding with county superintendents, administrators of the Jeanes Fund and the Rosenwald Fund, and a host of other responsibilities. William Cawthon often accompanied Williams during his statewide inspections. They recorded their observations at each school on visiting record forms, and held countywide meetings at each county seat. For the 1934-1935 school term, they discovered that fifty-five of Florida's sixty-seven counties had "spent less on Negro teachers' salaries than they received from the State on instruction units allotted to Negro schools." Union County had the greatest disparity, with a difference of sixty-nine percent between its allotment and expenditures. Only twelve counties paid their black teachers an amount equal to their respective state allotment. The average annual salary of black teachers then amounted to less than \$400, an amount less than half of the pay received by comparable white teachers. The average black teacher's salary in 1930 was only forty-two percent of a white counterpart; by 1940, the disparity had lessened somewhat to fifty-five percent.¹⁰⁷

In 1937, Williams made the transition from Cawthon as state superintendent to his elected replacement Colin English, a native of Alva, Florida. English earned degrees at Columbia University, Emory University, and the University of Edinburgh, and his teaching positions included Fort Myers High School, Ocala High School, and White Springs School. Between 1925 and 1933, he served as county superintendent of Lee County's public schools, and, before his election to Florida's top education post, supervising principal of Ocala's public school. Soon after English's successful election bid as state superintendent, African Americans turned to the courts to address the issue of fairness in public education.¹⁰⁸

In 1937, Noah W. Griffin, principal of Gibbs High School in St. Petersburg, filed suit for salary equalization. But, a lower court finding upheld by the Florida Supreme Court denied Griffin his mandamus proceedings against the Pinellas County School Board. Following the litigation, the school board dismissed Griffin, who struggled to locate employment elsewhere in the state. Even the Florida State Teachers Association feared to support Griffin, fearing reprisals from whites. Eventually, Griffin found employment as a regional director of the NAACP in the Far West. In Brevard County, principal John Gilbert and teachers Harry T. Moore and P. D. L. Williams also filed suit in 1937, seeking a single salary schedule for blacks and whites in their respective positions. In this circumstance, the plaintiffs lost their case, in part, because the suit was filed in state court, rather than in federal court, where the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment could have produced a different outcome. In 1939, the Florida Supreme Court denied the lawsuit, and Gilbert was dismissed as principal. Nevertheless, those cases served as a turning point in which Florida's African American teachers increasingly turned to the courts to address salary grievances.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 181-189.

¹⁰⁸Longstreet, *History of the Florida Education Association*, 260.

¹⁰⁹Porter and Gilbert, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 64-70.

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In 1941, principal Vernon McDaniel at Washington High School in Pensacola won his case for pay equalization in federal district court. In a negotiated settlement, the school board agreed to a single salary scale within three years. One of the first black women to file suit against a Florida school board, Mary Blocker of Jacksonville, won her pay discrimination case but was compelled to retire from her teaching position. A similar process in 1943 netted Charles Stabbins of West Palm Beach a commitment from the Palm Beach County School Board to begin paying black and white teachers equal salaries in 1944. The same year, the Dade County School Board also agreed to a single schedule of pay; but, in Hillsborough County, although Hilda Turner won her case, school officials manipulated the pay schedule to continue paying black professionals less than white teachers. Some white teachers opposed salary equalization, and even the Florida Education Association, the counterpart white organization to the Florida State Teachers Association, tried to intervene in the *McDaniel v. Escambia County* case, claiming that “increasing the salaries of black teachers adversely affected those of white teachers.” In cases where black teachers or administrators lost their jobs after filing suit against a school board, the Florida State Teacher’s Association typically provided financial support and assistance in locating another job for the teacher. The closing years of the Great Depression and World War II served as a watershed for initiating litigation and the beginnings of equal pay for equal work in Florida’s public schools.¹¹⁰

The “strawberry school” was a popular, if derisive, moniker associated with some of Florida’s public schools, both black and white, in rural districts that closed during harvest seasons. Particularly well-suited to Hillsborough County in general and Plant City in particular, the term had various regional adaptations associated with tobacco in north Florida, or truck crops in central and south Florida, both of which required intensive amounts of labor each growing season. In Broward County, black children attended school from August to December, and harvested beans and vegetables from January through May. In Plant City, the public schools operated twelve months to permit children who harvested strawberries for the “Strawberry Festival” to attend school during the summer. By 1939, the annual festival and its associated crop netted white strawberry farmers of Hillsborough County more than one million dollars. In Seminole County, white students attended classes for eight months and black students six months. Earlier in the century, Superintendent Sheats had rendered the opinion that “colored children will not attend [school] with any degree of regularity for a longer term than six months,” a dictum predicated more on the financial standing of the state and county than the ability of black children, but one that still held force decades later.¹¹¹

In 1930, only sixteen percent of the state’s black children attended school for at least 160 days; as much as thirty-three percent attended class fewer than ninety days. Consequently, some black children received fewer than three

¹¹⁰Porter and Gilbert, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 67-70; Colburn and Landers, *The African American Heritage of Florida*, 255; Jones and McCarthy, *African Americans in Florida*, 93-94.

¹¹¹Jones and McCarthy, *African Americans in Florida*, 95-96; Stephen Andrews, “`Brasshats’ and `Baby Fingers’: The Battle Over Rural Education,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 75 (Winter 1997), 304-305, 307-313; Works Progress Administration, *Florida: A Guide to the Southernmost State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939), 518; Patricia Dillon, “Civil Rights and School Desegregation in Sanford,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 76 (Winter 1988), 312.

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months of education, spending much of their time picking fruits and vegetables to provide income for their families. Some county school boards attempted to recover the lost classroom time by providing summer terms. In 1932, Marion County was compelled to reopen its schools after African American parents hired an attorney to file suit. A similar scenario occurred eleven years later in Broward County. But, to exacerbate particularly difficult circumstances, some illiterate African Americans may have placed little value in the state's schools, and consequently unwittingly conspired with white landholders to deprive black children of an education. Dramatized as a central issue between the "brass hats" and the "baby fingers" of Hillsborough County, Florida's strawberry schools only began to diminish in number in the mid-1950s.¹¹²

Faced with unprecedented cutbacks and distressed by the bleak physical and financial condition of Florida's Depression-era black public schools, Williams continued to encourage counties to "improve their facilities and beautify their grounds." He found many schools "drab, poorly built, poorly lighted, unpainted, and in bad state of repair." He expressed the conviction that "it is most valuable for the Negroes themselves to do the work," in part, to help children develop "impressions of cleanliness, orderliness, and beauty at school." Williams could record few meaningful changes in the plight of black education during World War II. In the 1944-1945 school year, Florida's counties spent only seven percent of their capital expenditures on the construction and repair of African American schools. Rates of attendance and teachers' salaries made little progress. Although education historian Helen Bracey found blacks represented one-quarter of the state's population, African American students were taught in three times the number of one-teacher public schoolhouses than whites, and nearly twice as many two-teacher school buildings. Bracey naturally concluded, "The small uneconomical isolated school is still much more prevalent for Negroes than for whites." Still, by 1947, twelfth-grade enrollments for blacks had increased five-fold from enrollments in 1929. Stanford Achievement Tests were administered to black students between the fifth and eighth grades. Even more encouraging, the average days per school year inched upward to one hundred seventy-six in the early-1940s, and the court cases of the late-1930s and 1940s promised statewide parity in salaries for black and white teachers.¹¹³

Florida's black voter participation increased following World War II, and became an important political bloc in the 1950s. Changes in labor demands were linked to black economic progress and some advances in education. North Florida retained much of its Old South character, however, and political leaders sought to maintain the region's weak public school system and well-established color line. School segregation became an important symbol during several gubernatorial campaigns, such as those engineered by Charlie Johns and Fuller Warren. By then, maintaining a dual system of schools with blacks now garnering wages and facilities nearly equal to those of whites placed severe strains on taxpayers and state education administrators.¹¹⁴

¹¹²Jones and McCarthy, *African Americans in Florida*, 95-96; Andrews, "Battle Over Rural Education," 312-313, 318-320.

¹¹³Cawthon, *1934-1936 Biennial Report*, 190-191; Colin English, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Fiscal Years Beginning July 1, 1946 and Ending June 30, 1948* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1948), 272-273; Helen Bracey, "The Education of Negroes in Florida," *The Journal of Negro Education* 16 (Summer 1947), 341-344.

¹¹⁴Robert Margo, *Race and Schooling in the South, 1880-1950: An Economic History* (Chicago and London: University of

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Yet, discrimination continued to define the state's education program because many white Floridians grudgingly held racist views. Nevertheless, Florida's public education system made important advances in other areas. In 1947, supported by Superintendent English, Florida's teachers and the FEA established the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP). The MFP distributed state revenues predicated on a formula using automobile license tag sales, value of real estate, railroad and telegraph properties, farm products, and retail sales within a county district. Participation in the MFP required a county school board to publish teachers' salaries, convene school for 180 days, levy at least six mills for schools, and guarantee degree-holding teachers a minimum annual salary of \$2,550. In 1949, annual per pupil expenditures increased by nearly fifty dollars, and the state's school year lasted ten days longer than the national average. By then, Florida's public-school teachers received the eighteenth best salary rates in the nation. That year, the Florida Legislature enacted a three percent sales tax to support the MFP, which became a model in many other states.¹¹⁵

By 1950, Florida's education reforms largely mirrored those of the rest of the South. Implemented earlier in the century, the reforms included accreditation, county-wide administrative bureaucracies, consolidated schools, and professionally trained teachers and administrators. But despite the modest advances, resistance to integration and mitigating pay equalization encountered fierce resistance. In Florida, a teacher in 1937 who brought suit for equal salary lost his job and the ensuing court case. In Georgia in the early-1940s, Governor Eugene Talmadge stood firmly against equal salaries. In 1949, public school teachers in New Orleans lost a court case seeking equalization of salaries, and the U. S. Supreme Court dismissed an appeal in 1951. Later in the decade, Talmadge's son threatened to abolish Georgia's public schools rather than integrate them. Racially mixed classes remained an explosive issue throughout the South, and in 1956 Georgia's state board of education threatened to fire any teacher who taught in a racially mixed class.¹¹⁶

In the early 1950s, Florida's black teachers, supported by the Florida State Teachers Association, headed by Samuel O. Cohen, had decreased the disparity between black and white salaries. Other officers in the professional African American association included S. C. Evans, the vice-president and administrator at West Lewisville School in Jacksonville; Garrett T. Wiggins, the secretary of research and principal of Washington High School in Pensacola; and Ben D. Griffin, the association's treasurer, who was then employed at Harlem Elementary School in Tampa. In 1951, black principals earned an annual salary of \$4,000; white principals earned \$4,700. A similar disparity remained for instructional staff, with black teachers earning \$2,900 annually and white teachers \$3,200.¹¹⁷

Chicago Press, 1990), 106-107.

¹¹⁵Goodenow and White, *Education and the Rise of the New South*, 242.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 66-67, 156; George Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 563-564.

¹¹⁷Thomas D. Bailey, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Fiscal Years Beginning July 1, 1950 and Ending June 30, 1952* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Education, 1952), 4, 24

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Distinguished black Floridians serving in the field of public education during the period included Garrett Wiggins. Born about 1902 in Orange City, Wiggins attended public school in DeLand, but completed his education at Cookman Institute, which then was located in Jacksonville. He earned a high school diploma in Kingston, Pennsylvania, and then completed college at Syracuse University. His graduate studies included a master's degree from the University of Chicago, and a Ph.D. from the Ohio State University. His career in education spanned forty years and included principalships at Gibbs High School in St. Petersburg, University High School at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and Washington Junior-Senior High School in Pensacola. He also served as dean of the teacher education division and director of the extension service at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and the first dean of the graduate school at Texas Southern University.¹¹⁸

A native of Melrose, Florida, Coleman Hacker was also a product, in part, of Florida's public schools. After graduation from high school, he earned a bachelor's degree from Benedict College in South Carolina, and completed graduate studies at Howard University and Oberlin College. Hired to fill a teaching position at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, he later became principal of Holsey Institute in Quitman, Georgia. In 1950, he presented testimony before an ad hoc committee of the United Nations on peonage and labor.¹¹⁹

Some black Floridians attended public school, left the state to continue their education, and then returned to Florida to teach public school. Born in 1902 in Campbellton, Florida, Floy Lenora Britt followed that pattern, attending the public schools of Jackson County, and then graduating from the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in 1929. Britt took additional coursework at Hampton Institute and Cornell University. She began her teaching career as an instructor of home economics in Jackson County, taught a similar course at Industrial High School in West Palm Beach, and served as home development agent for Hillsborough County's public schools between 1932 and 1943.¹²⁰

Other educators made their way to Florida during World War II and in its aftermath to teach in the public schools. A native of Ohio, Mayme Williams earned her teaching degree at Wilberforce University, and then taught in Arkansas and North Carolina. In Arkansas, she served as president of the State Parent-Teachers Association. In 1944, she arrived in Miami, where she taught at Booker T. Washington High School into the 1950s. In 1948, the *Miami Times* named her one of Miami's outstanding citizens.¹²¹

Thomas McPherson, born in Gainesville in 1908, attended public school in Alachua County, and graduated from the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. McPherson attended graduate school at Xavier University and

¹¹⁸*Pensacola News Journal*, 4 February 1978; Garrett Thurston Wiggins File, Black Archives Research Center and Museum, Tallahassee, Florida.

¹¹⁹G. James Fleming and Christian Burckel, eds., *Who's Who in Colored America* (New York: Christian E. Burckel & Associates, 1950), 231.

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, 55.

¹²¹*Ibid.*, 560.

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Columbia University. In the early 1930s, he returned to Gainesville, where he served as a coach at Lincoln High School between 1933 and 1947.¹²²

Teacher, personnel director, and clergyman, Moses Miles of Lakeland attended public school in Polk County and graduated from the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and then the Ohio State University. After a brief tenure teaching in Cairo, Georgia, Miles served as assistant principal at Belle Glade High School, and then taught classes at Industrial High School in West Palm Beach. Later, Miles obtained employment as director of personnel at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and then pastor of the Philadelphia Primitive Baptist Church in Tallahassee.¹²³

Receiving part of his education in the public schools of Gadsden County, Florida, Richard V. Moore was born in Quincy and earned degrees at Atlanta College, Edward Waters College in Jacksonville, and Knoxville College in Tennessee. His teaching and administrative career included brief stops at Pinellas High School, Rosenwald High School in Panama City, Union Academy in Tarpon Springs, and Washington High School in Pensacola. Between 1946 and 1947, he served as Florida's state superintendent for secondary schools for Negroes, and in 1947 was appointed president of Bethune-Cookman College.¹²⁴

Notable African Americans who received part of their education in Florida's public schools included Augusta Savage who was born in West Palm Beach about 1896, and later moved to Green Cove Springs. After attending the public schools of Clay County, Savage earned a college degree from the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, and returned to her hometown. But, dissatisfied with Clay County, she moved to West Palm Beach, and won a competition for a sculpture of Henry Flagler in 1922. Her gifted artwork won her the admiration and financial support of Flagler's relatives, who helped send her to New York for further study. Additional work there gained her a scholarship to Cooper Union Art School, and then a similar scholarship to Fountainebleau, France, and the Royal Academy of the Fine Arts in Rome. In 1929, a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship sent her to Paris, where she spent three years studying and winning art citations. She returned to New York in the early 1930s, and eventually opened an art school in Harlem. Her carvings won national acclaim, and in Philadelphia she helped organize the Negro Art and Culture Exhibit at the Sesquicentennial Exposition.¹²⁵

Other significant African Americans who received part of their education in Florida's public schools include Joseph W. Hatchett, the state's first black State Supreme Court justice. A native of Pinellas County, Hatchett attended school in his hometown of Clearwater, and graduated from the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College in 1954. At Howard University, he studied civil rights law, and about 1959 established a law practice in Daytona Beach. In

¹²²Ibid., 368.

¹²³Ibid., 373.

¹²⁴Ibid., 382.

¹²⁵McDonough, *The Florida Negro*, 97-99.

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1966, he was appointed Assistant United States Attorney in Jacksonville, and served as a federal magistrate in the early 1970s. Governor Reubin Askew appointed Hatchett to the Florida Supreme Court in 1975, where he remained until 1979, when President Jimmy Carter appointed him a federal district judge.¹²⁶

Born in 1942, Robert Lee Hayes attended the public schools of Jacksonville, graduating from Gilbert High School, and then entered the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University on a football scholarship in 1960. In 1963, Bob Hayes set the world's record in the one hundred yard dash, which earned him the nickname "World's Fastest Human." He anchored the American four-hundred-meter track team in the 1964 Olympics in Japan. As a college senior, Hayes played in the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Alabama, the first African American to appear in that venerable college football series, and one of the first African Americans to play in a white stadium before largely white football fans. Drafted by the Dallas Cowboys in 1964, Hayes gained renown for his speed and offensive running skill and helped lead the Cowboys to several Superbowls under the direction of coach Tom Landry over the following decades.¹²⁷

Many black educators, professionals, sports figures, and countless others gained an education, in part, through Florida's segregated public school system. Modest changes in civil rights since the late 1930s and 1940s accelerated in the 1950s. In 1954, the U. S. Supreme Court handed down its *Oliver Brown et al. v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* decision. Composing the unanimous opinion, Chief Justice Earl Warren stated that the "Segregation of white and colored children in public schools has a detrimental effect upon the colored children, for it generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone." Characterized as "the most momentous of all Supreme Court decisions" by historian Lawrence Friedman, the *Brown* case ended the legality of segregated public schools. Despite the ruling, sixteen years later most public schools both in the North and the South remained segregated. Yet, in sounding the death knell for the separate but equal clause of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the *Brown* case "involved the Court in a storm of controversy. Vilification only seemed to make Warren and the justices more sure of their moral premises. Later cases made clear the meaning of *Brown*: no form of segregation was permissible. An enduring symbol that prepared the groundwork to address future grievances through constitutional means, the *Brown* decision left its mark on the national consciousness, altering old regulations and leading to the development of new methods and laws."¹²⁸

Notwithstanding the momentous nature of the *Brown* decision, the legal context and practical realities of the case suggest that *Brown* was part of the larger Civil Rights Movement context with deep roots in the African-American community. A legal defense strategy implemented decades earlier by the NAACP included a well-orchestrated plan to dismantle Jim Crow legislation, a campaign that led, in part, to the *Brown* case. Integration and desegregation, however, occurred in the South not specifically because of *Brown*, but depended heavily upon numerous blacks as

¹²⁶Jones and McCarthy, *African Americans in Florida*, 124-125.

¹²⁷Neyland, *Twelve Black Floridians*, 77-84.

¹²⁸Friedman, *History of the American Law*, 579-580; Woodward, *Jim Crow*, 146-147.

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plaintiffs in law suits, federal support, sit-ins and demonstrations, and African American networks that insisted that all Americans obey the new school law and change the Southern way of life.¹²⁹

The Supreme Court implemented the *Brown* decision in May 1955, but set no deadline for compliance. By May 1956, nineteen decisions in southern courts had upheld *Brown* under the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. Those rulings directed a "prompt and reasonable start," but, just like the *Brown* decision, provided no deadlines or timetables. Inaugurated as Florida's governor in January 1955, Leroy Collins had initially indicated a willingness to gradually accept integration. But, after the Court implemented *Brown*, he declared, "we are just as determined as any other southern state to maintain segregation," and in the summer of 1956 he called the Florida Legislature into a special session to tighten its segregation statutes. Indeed, integration moved at a glacial pace throughout the South. By 1957, only 1712 southern school districts had desegregated, and the trend slowed to only thirteen additional districts in 1958 and seventeen in 1960. Many white southerners expressed confidence that the ruling could be further forestalled in district courts.¹³⁰

White southern conservatives attacked the Supreme Court in the press, in statehouses, and in the Congress, calling for judicial restraint. Some white southern officials resisted and defied federal authority. Arkansas' governor threatened to close public schools rather than allow them to be integrated. The states of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia adopted pro-segregation laws, claiming the right of state "interposition" against federal interference. Some states crafted private school plans to avoid the Court's decision and preserve segregation. Yet, a few urban areas of the South adopted steps toward school integration. In 1961, public schools in Atlanta, Dallas, Galveston, Memphis, and Tampa desegregated peacefully. The 1961-1962 school year also witnessed the desegregation of a few schools in Florida's Broward, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, and Volusia counties. The counties of Alachua, Bay, Brevard, Lee, and Marion implemented desegregation in 1964, and Seminole County launched its desegregation plan in 1965. But, in the early 1960s, Alabama, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina remained staunchly opposed to public school integration, and the states of Florida, Louisiana, and Virginia had integrated fewer than one percent of their schools. Nine years after the *Brown* decision, only thirteen thousand out of two million eight hundred thousand black public-school students attended classes in integrated classes in the American South. By the close of the 1962-1963 school year, only one-and-one-half percent of Florida's black children, amounting to 3600 students, attended desegregated schools.¹³¹

As early as 1964, some black and white teachers favored combining the FEA and FSTA into one association. Concrete proposals for integration were developed, but some black education leaders believed that African

¹²⁹Peter Levy, ed., *Documentary History of the Modern Civil Rights Movement* (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1992), 29; Susan Salvatore, Waldo Martin, Jr., Vicki Ruiz, Patricia Sullivan, and Harvard Sitkoff, "Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States," Washington, D. C., National Register of Historic Places, August 2000, p. 107.

¹³⁰Woodward, *Jim Crow*, 152, 153, 162, 167.

¹³¹*Ibid.*, 156, 172-173; Levy, *Modern Civil Rights Movement*, 30; Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 123; Dillon, "Desegregation in Sanford," 323-324.

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Americans should not disband the FSTA upon a merger, just in case a merger with white teachers failed. Despite the misgivings, in 1965 the board of directors of the FSTA moved forward on its negotiations with the FEA to assure "equality of opportunity for all members to participate in the affairs of the single professional association." Members approved the merger in 1966. But, retention of the white name of FEA for the newly-expanded professional organization was a harbinger of the erosion of leadership by black educators over the following decades. Blacks were guaranteed representation on various boards and committees for the first three years, after which they would be compelled to run for election. Some black members encountered resistance from white colleagues to the FEA's integration; black participation in the FEA often came at the cost of confronting discrimination from school districts as well as their new professional association. Many black teachers lamented the loss of their former FSTA Building in Tallahassee, which had just been dedicated in 1962.¹³²

By 1965, the school integration and segregation issues had shifted from the South to the North. There non-violent resistance often yielded to militant reaction and, in some cases, guerilla tactics. Martin Luther King, Jr. "asserted that the worst hatred he ever faced was in Cicero, Illinois," and in Boston and New York whites bitterly feuded over how to integrate their public schools. As coined by historian C. Vann Woodward, America's "Second Reconstruction" ended in 1966, following the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Despite fourteen years of the use of "deliberate speed" to integrate the region's public schools, in 1968 nearly eighty percent of black children in the South attended "minority schools." In 1969, the Supreme Court ordered segregation to end "at once." By 1971, integration in Florida was virtually complete, the Osborne School in West Palm Beach being the school with the latest date of integration as far as is known at the time of the writing of this cover.

By 1972, nearly fifty percent of the southern black children enrolled in public schools attended classes in white majority schools. Afterwards, integration came more swiftly in the South than in the North. For example, in Boston in 1972, public schools were more tightly segregated than any southern city of significance south of the nation's capital. By 1980, approximately seventy-five percent of southern black students attended an integrated school, a rate higher than the rates of integration for public schools in other regions of the nation.¹³³

Integration, however, took a toll on the black communities. In the early 1950s, the number of black public schools in Florida had stood at 560, a decrease of nearly one-half of the number of schools in 1939, a by-product of the consolidation movement. By 1955, 440 public schools supported Florida's African American children. The decrease in elementary schools alone was staggering, a decline from 875 in 1939 to 295 schools in 1955. Nearly 600 black schools closed during the period; no doubt some of those churches and meeting halls were no longer needed with the construction of new school buildings. But, countless older schoolhouses were processed out of the public domain through abandonment, demolition, or outright sale. During the interval, enrollments soared by

¹³²Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 157-158, 160-167.

¹³³Woodward, *Jim Crow*, 186, 190-195, 209, 212; Levy, *Modern Civil Rights Movement*, 211-212, 261.

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twenty-five percent, reaching 126,000 students in 1951. Over the following decades, urban renewal and interstate construction programs would result in the demolition of older schools, especially in urban neighborhoods, but even in small towns and villages.¹³⁴

The effects of desegregation in the late 1950s and early 1960s also represented important gains made by a neighborhood. Many black high schools became adult centers, day care centers, elementary schools, or middle schools. Relatively few played their originally intended role. The change, however, meant that hundreds of professionals were displaced. Black principals, especially, found themselves in positions with lower pay, such as assistant principal or as teachers. Some others successfully negotiated the dramatic changes associated with integration to become an area superintendent or regained their positions as principals. A few left the system to work in other fields.¹³⁵

The school desegregation movement eventually spread into the communities of American Indians, Mexican Americans, and Chicanos, where the movement took on new meanings and responses. But, trends in the post-Civil Rights era pointed toward a growing "separate albeit equal education" emphasis. A declining commitment to desegregation in the nation's public schools began translating into fewer opportunities for poor students, as well as those of various ethnic minorities. Since the 1970s, an uneven pattern of school desegregation has turned toward a national framework of re-segregation in some places. Within this uneven framework of change, the loss of tangible African American heritage has included crumbling public school infrastructure, and, in some cases, demolition of historic black schools. Largely undocumented and unrecognized, Florida's black schools represented a relatively large concentration of buildings in 1950. Yet, only about twenty-five resources built as African American public schools have been inventoried and documented in Florida, and only eight of those are listed in the NRHP. Tightened education budgets require creative responses to rehabilitating some older schools and adapting others to new uses. "Historic Schools Reuse," a 1997 document, sponsored, in part, by the Bureau of Historic Preservation and the Florida Department of Education, provides a context for examining some of these issues. Countless public schools in which Florida's African Americans learned to read and write have disappeared from the landscape. The history of the state's African American education system suggests that educators, legislators, and the public should act, despite their uncertainties and doubts, to preserve some of Florida's most poignant African American heritage, and shape history for a better future.¹³⁶

¹³⁴Colin English, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Fiscal Years Beginning July 1, 1938 and Ending June 30, 1940* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1940), 70-71, 82-83; Thomas Bailey, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Fiscal Years Beginning July 1, 1950 and Ending June 30, 1952* (Tallahassee: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1952), 48-49, 62-63.

¹³⁵Porter and Neyland, *History of the Florida State Teachers Association*, 173-188.

¹³⁶Gary Orfield, *Dismantling Desegregation: The Quiet Reversal of Brown v. Board of Education* (New York: New York Press, 1996); Jan Abell and Lee Braun, "Historic Schools Reuse," Tallahassee, Florida Division of Historical Resources, February 1997.

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PROPERTY TYPE: F.1

1. Name of Property Type: Black Public Schools

2. Description: Florida's historic black public schools represent a small but important property type. According to data compiled from the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) in 2001, about twenty-five resources built as African American public schools have been inventoried and documented in Florida; eight of those are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

The majority of the resources contributing to this property type are derived from Frame Vernacular construction trends. A small number were assembled using Masonry Vernacular construction techniques, and some display the influences of various revival styles, including the Colonial, Classical, Italian Renaissance, Mediterranean, and Mission genres.

They also display a wide variety of sizes and characteristics, ranging between one-room, wood-frame schools to large, two-story masonry buildings. Footprints are typically irregular, rectangular, or square, but some buildings exhibit capital E and H shapes, L shapes, T shapes, or primary block with lateral wing or annex plans. Flat, gable, or hip roofs protect the schools. Some buildings with masonry structural systems, or Mediterranean Revival and Mission Revival influences display shaped parapets and brick or textured stucco exterior walls. Various wood products, including clapboard, drop siding, weatherboard, and wood shingles, are common exterior wall fabrics applied to most wood-frame buildings. Fenestration is typically asymmetrical and irregular with ribbon arrangements of large double-hung sash windows displaying six-over-six, nine-over-nine, or other multi-light patterns. In some buildings, casement, hopper, or pivot windows also admit natural light and provide ventilation into interior spaces. Continuous or pier type foundations of brick or concrete support buildings.

In Florida, most black settlements and communities initially built wood-frame schoolhouses, or held classes in churches, meeting halls, lodges, or other buildings until sufficient funds became available to construct a school. Generally, second-generation school buildings were of a more permanent nature than their predecessors. Some of the state's black schools during the 1920s and 1930s were masonry designs that rose one or two stories with formal architectural influences.

Schools are a particular building type designed for an education function. The characteristics of the American school building were first described in detail in the 1830s, when William Alcott published a treatise on schoolhouses. Alcott stressed the importance of fresh air, space and light, large windows, and open surroundings for recreation. In the 1860s, plan books for schools appeared, featuring buildings that displayed Greek and Gothic revival designs. Despite the new architectural trends, most rural schools remained simple one-room buildings into the early twentieth century. Beginning in the 1890s, reformers emphasized practical

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interior improvements with regard to equipment, furniture, illumination, sanitation, and ventilation. They asserted that a formal architectural design applied to a schoolhouse contributed to the development of a student's morals and good character.¹

As part of Progressive era reforms of the early twentieth century, a school consolidation movement swept the country, resulting in fewer but larger schools. Some state boards of public instruction furnished local school districts with plan books to develop new schools. In 1911, Elmer E. Brown, Commissioner of the U. S. Bureau of Education, estimated that the nation spent seventy million dollars annually constructing public schools. He encouraged "a more general diffusion of knowledge respecting the recognized standards of schoolhouse construction." He hired Fletcher B. Dresslar, professor of education at the University of Alabama, to document the nation's school infrastructure and recommend standardized school plans. Dresslar depended heavily upon the works of architect C. B. J. Snyder, who then served as superintendent of school buildings for New York City, and the prominent school architect William B. Ittner of California. Also derived from studies on schools in Alabama, California, Indiana, New York, and Wisconsin, Dresslar's 1911 treatise included over three hundred floor plans and elevations of schools throughout the nation. His *American Schoolhouses* documented the rich variety of America's school infrastructure, and addressed the benefits and necessities for standardization in school construction.²

Dresslar disparaged America's rural schools, commenting, "The type of country school building which has been prevalent in our country for a century is one of the most forlorn and desolate structures one can imagine. There has rarely been any thought whatever of real beauty, and in the main it has been the product of "hatchet-and-saw" carpenters, with no plans to guide and no ability to read them even if they had been furnished." To help remedy the plight of rural school architecture, he included in his publication standardized plans for one-, two-, three-, and four-room buildings that he obtained from state superintendent C. P. Cary of Wisconsin.³

Standardized plans influenced the development of some of Florida's black public schools. Architectural design competitions, such as those sponsored by the editors of the *White Pine Series*, promoted quality design and materials in the construction of schools. But, most of those designs were too expensive to purchase and execute in rural black communities or urban neighborhoods of the South. Less expensive and readily adapted standardized plans appeared in a treatise published by Booker T. Washington and Clinton J. Calloway in 1915, *The Negro Rural School and Its Relationship to the Community*. The volume provided plans for three types of schoolhouses and a teacher's cottage with additional advice on site selection, grounds and landscaping, and school equipment. Architectural renderings and floor plans appeared for one-teacher and central schoolhouses, and large county training buildings.⁴

¹Diane Maddex, ed., *Built in the U.S.A.* (Washington: Preservation Press, 1985), 150-153.

²Fletcher B. Dresslar, *American Schoolhouses* (Washington, D. C.: GPO, 1911).

³Dresslar, *American Schoolhouses*, 126.

⁴Booker T. Washington and Clinton J. Calloway, *The Rural Negro School and its Relation to the Community* (Tuskegee:

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James Sibley of the Alabama Department of Education, and W. A. Hazel and Robert R. Taylor with the Division of Architecture and Mechanical Industries at Tuskegee Institute drafted specific building plans and recommendations on architectural design and landscaping. A graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology with a degree in architecture, Taylor helped establish the National Builder's Association in 1900, and then supervised the Division of Architecture at Tuskegee Institute. Plans developed by Hazel and Taylor consisted of wood-frame buildings with symmetrical facades, hip roofs, small entrance porches or stoops, ribbons or paired arrangements of nine-over-nine-light, double-hung sash windows, and pier foundation systems. Not limited to simple bricks-and-mortar advice, the publication addressed various topics ranging from the quality of blackboards, floor finishes, jacketed stoves, sanitary toilets, gardens, and demonstration plots. Some of their designs and suggestions were derived from Dresslar's *American Schoolhouses*. Consequently, between 1913 and 1920, a few standardized schools were built, in part, from scant black financial resources, but also from funds provided by local school boards and benefactors, and philanthropic foundations, such as the Julius Rosenwald Fund.⁵

Despite its initial success, the Tuskegee school building program fell short of its goal of comprehensive standardization, a finding issued by Dresslar in 1920. His report highlighted the poor construction techniques and lack of standardization in many of the early schools built under the Tuskegee plan. Subsequently, Julius Rosenwald transferred the nascent schoolhouse building program at Tuskegee to Nashville, Tennessee, where he established the Southern Office of the Julius Rosenwald Fund. He greatly expanded the Fund, infusing it with several million dollars, which profoundly affected the standardization of schoolhouses in the rural South.⁶

Rosenwald hired Samuel L. Smith as the Fund's general field agent. Earning a master's degree in rural school education, Smith had studied at Harvard University and the University of Chicago, and became a protégé of Dresslar and his schoolhouse construction philosophy. Between 1914 and 1920, Smith served as state agent for Negro schools in Tennessee. As general field agent for the Rosenwald Fund, he became one of the most influential forces in the design of black infrastructure in America. He drafted a series of pamphlets entitled *Community School Plans*, which included designs for seventeen types of schoolhouses, and plans for privies, shops, and teacher's homes. The Fund first issued booklets with standardized designs in 1924, and its popularity spawned re-issues in 1926, 1927, and 1928. His development of school architecture under the

Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, 1915); Eric Anderson and Alfred Moss, *Dangerous Donations: Northern Philanthropy and Southern Black Education, 1902-1930* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 194-199; Russell Whitehead, ed., "Designs for a Three Teacher Rural School with Teachers' Cottage," *White Pine Series* 7 (August 1921), 1-24.

⁵Booker T. Washington and Clinton J. Calloway, *The Rural Negro School and its Relation to the Community* (Tuskegee: Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, 1915); Eric Anderson and Alfred Moss, *Dangerous Donations: Northern Philanthropy and Southern Black Education, 1902-1930* (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 194-199.

⁶F. B. Dresslar, *A Report on the Rosenwald School Buildings* (Chicago: Rosenwald Fund, 1920); Washington and Calloway, *The Rural Negro School*; Anderson and Moss, *Dangerous Donations*, 194-199; Edwin Embree and Julia Waxman, *Investment in People: The Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 37-59.

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direction of Rosenwald shared a similarity with Sears, Roebuck & Company's ready-to-assemble house kits, which included standardized building plans, but also construction materials.⁷

Smith's schoolhouse plans and the resulting Rosenwald schools set a new standard for rural architecture, which extended beyond the schoolhouse into the architecture of a surrounding community. Part of Rosenwald's philosophy of curtailing expenses and improving black education, Smith's plans became stock blueprints, eliminating architect's fee and reducing construction costs. His seventeen types of plans ranged from one-teacher to seven-teacher buildings. The one-story wood frame schoolhouses displayed rectangular, irregular, or capital H shapes and T shapes with gable or hip roofs with moderate roof slopes. Exhibiting little overhang, eaves were held closely to wall surfaces, and louvered attic vents appeared in the gable ends. Small entrance porches were either incised within the main body of the building, or projected at the front elevation. Other features included ribbon arrangements of double-hung sash windows, horizontal wood siding, and brick pier foundation systems.⁸

For each participating school, Smith made available a floor plan and line drawing as part of a four-page pamphlet. Participation in the Rosenwald plan required placing the building facing either north or south, resulting in an east-west axis for the primary arrangements of windows to maximize natural interior lighting and ventilation. Smith's plans also prescribed exterior and interior color combinations, room arrangements including blackboard and seating locations, and window treatments. Each school either included folding doors between connecting rooms, or an auditorium, which made these buildings adaptable as community centers.⁹

By 1928, one-fifth of the South's rural schools for blacks had been developed using Rosenwald grant funds. That year, the Fund's trustees hired Edwin Embree, a sociologist and vice-president of the Rockefeller Foundation, to supervise its activities. Under the direction of Smith and Embree, the Rosenwald Fund emerged as America's largest private, modern social agency dedicated to assisting blacks improve their public education system.¹⁰

By 1932, the Rosenwald Fund supported the construction of approximately 5,300 schools throughout the South. In Florida, the Fund contributed approximately \$134,000 toward the construction of one hundred twenty-six schoolhouses in African American communities. They ranged in size from diminutive one-teacher buildings, such as those at Black Branch (Walton County) and Tavares (Lake County) to large seventeen-room schools at Bartow (Polk County) and Dunbar High School at Fort Myers (Lee County). Rosenwald's contributions for school construction ranged from as small as \$200 for the Boca Raton School (Palm Beach County) and O'Brien

⁷Hanchett, "Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina," 400; Alfred Stern, "A History of the Rosenwald School Building Fund," unpub. mss., Tuskegee University, n.d., chapter 4, p. 11-14.

⁸Hanchett, "Rosenwald Schools and Black Education," 400.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Washington and Calloway, *The Rural Negro School*; Anderson and Moss, *Dangerous Donations, 194-199*; Edwin Embree and Julia Waxman, *Investment in People: The Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), 37-59.

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School (Suwannee County) to \$2,600 for Lincoln Consolidated (Alachua County) and Quincy School (Gadsden County). The least expensive of Florida's Rosenwald schools were the \$1,500 Crestview School (Okaloosa County) and St. Johns School (Walton County); the most expensive was Dunbar High in Fort Myers, a two-story hybrid Rosenwald design which was executed by a professional architect from Tampa (Leslie N. Iredell) in the Mission Revival style and completed at a cost of \$136,000. The Fund provided that "When an architect is employed," as with the Dunbar High School and Peck High School (designed by Roy A. Benjamin of Jacksonville) in Fernandina Beach, "sketches of plans should be submitted for approval before drawn in complete detail."¹¹

If Rosenwald school construction of the period is an indication of the larger patterns in Florida's consolidation movement, then it appears that few of the state's black schools participated in the trend. Most of Florida's Rosenwald schools were of the two-teacher type (forty-two), and other commonly assembled facilities included the one-teacher (fourteen) and three-teacher (nineteen) types. Far scarcer were larger schools that reflect patterns of consolidation. Rosenwald-built schools in Florida ranging between four and eight classrooms totaled thirty-four, and Florida's black students attended classes in only seven Rosenwald-built schools that contained between twelve to seventeen classrooms. In 1928, the Fund began offering financial bonuses for the construction of larger schools to encourage consolidation of black education resources. The Fund also began to promote brick or masonry construction over wood frame buildings. Permanent construction bonuses applied to three-teacher type and larger buildings with the bonuses ranging between \$150 and \$500 per school. A photographic essay of Florida's Rosenwald schools appeared in the state superintendent's report for 1930, which depicted buildings in Bellaire (Leon County), Boynton Beach (Palm Beach County), Fort Myers (Lee County), Gifford (Indian River County), Madison (Madison County), Micanopy (Alachua County), and Oklawaha (Marion County).¹²

In general, counties with large, rural African American populations contained Rosenwald schools. The counties of Alachua, Lake, and Palm Beach each supported eleven schools, and Gadsden and Leon counties both maintained eight Rosenwald schools. Counties with large urban black populations contained few examples of Rosenwald schools. No Rosenwald schools were built in Hillsborough County, and Duval County and Escambia County each supported only one example. Among the southern states, Florida had the lowest rate of participation in Rosenwald schoolhouse assistance. Superintendent Cawthon, Florida's superintendent for public instruction (1922-1937), chastised local school districts in his 1930 report, pointing out that "Rosenwald aid has been available in Florida since January, 1920. The tardiness with which Florida school officials have used this gift indicates their lethargic provision for Negro schools."¹³

¹¹"Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment," Rosenwald Fund File, Florida, Fisk University Archives; Cawthon, *1928-1930 Biennial Report*, 152; Matthews, "Dunbar High School," 252.

¹²"Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment," Rosenwald Fund File, Florida, Fisk University Archives; W. S. Cawthon, *1928 Biennial Report*, 221-222, 155, 160-163.

¹³"Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment," Rosenwald Fund File, Florida, Fisk University Archives; W. S. Cawthon,

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Beyond Rosenwald's philanthropy, black schools were developed along vernacular and formal architectural lines with and without the benefit of architectural services. In urban areas, local school districts often hired professional architects to construct relatively large buildings. The Jacksonville architectural firm of Mark & Sheftall prepared the plans for the New Smyrna Negro School in 1915. The following year, Mark & Sheftall drafted plans for three black schools at Daytona and another at Seabreeze. In 1917, the Duval County Board of Public Instruction hired Mellen C. Greeley of Jacksonville to execute the plans for Edwin M. Stanton High School and three additional elementary schools in the LaVilla community. In the mid-1920s, Tampa architect Leslie Irdell executed the plans for the Mission Revival Dunbar High School and Edison Park Elementary School in Fort Myers. A two-story masonry school, Cypress Street Elementary in Daytona Beach (NRHP 1996) was one of three black schools assembled in that city during the 1920s. William J. Carpenter and Francis Bent, DeLand architects, crafted the plans with Mission Revival details. Carpenter and Bent also prepared the plans for relatively small wood-frame vernacular black schools in Enterprise, Ormond Beach, and Seville. In 1924, the Broward County Board of Public Instruction turned to architect John Peterman to execute the plans for the Masonry Vernacular Dillard High School (NRHP 1991). Jacksonville architect Roy A. Benjamin employed Masonry Vernacular concepts to plan Peck High School in Fernandina Beach in 1927. In the 1920s, some school boards, such as Orange County's board of public instruction, hired consulting architects to prepare standardized plans for school buildings. Despite the measure to streamline architectural services, few standardized plans were implemented to develop Orange County's black schools.¹⁴

Beyond these notable exceptions, many black schoolhouses in Broward, Duval, Escambia, Lee, Nassau, Orange, and Volusia counties and countless others elsewhere in the state were built without the benefit of professional design services. A one-story wood frame school completed about 1938, the Old Negro Elementary in Orange Park (NRHP 1998) was typical of buildings assembled without formal architectural renderings. Apalachicola's black public school of the early twentieth century consisted of a two-story wood frame building that stood on Avenue M between 8th Street and 9th Street. Possessing a large, rural black population, Leon County contained numerous one-room public schoolhouses, presumably assembled by carpenters and residents without formal plans. Lost long ago to fire, demolition, or deterioration, the schools at Bell, Copeland, Gum Pond, and Norris displayed simple rectangular footprints, steeply-pitched gable roofs, clapboard siding, and single arrangements

Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1930 (Tallahassee: Board of Public Instruction, 1930), 158, 161; W. S. Cawthon, *Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1932* (Tallahassee: Board of Public Instruction, 1932), 171; Embree and Waxman, *Julius Rosenwald Fund*, 51.

¹⁴Matthews, "Dunbar School," 252; James B. Crooks, *Jacksonville After the Fire, 1901-1919: A New South City* (Jacksonville: University of North Florida Press, 1991), 60; Morton Winsberg, comp., *Florida's History Through Its Places: Properties in the National Register of Historic Places* (Tallahassee: Florida State University and Bureau of Historic Preservation, 1995), 12; Minute Book 4, pp. 493, 545, 557, Minute Book 5, pp. 1, 37, 217, 221, 257, 279, 291, 437, Volusia County School Board, DeLand, Florida; *DeLand News*, 25 August 1920; *DeLand Daily News*, 21 January, 24 August 1921, 9 January, 21 December 1923, 14 January 1924, 23 November 1925, 2 June, 31 July 1926.

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of double-hung sash windows. Students attending the Ward School in Leon County near Old St. Augustine Road met in a large two-story wood-frame building in the late-nineteenth century. But, deterioration and population changes necessitated its replacement with a smaller one-story wood-frame building in the 1920s. Elsewhere in Leon County the Bellaire School and Ochlocknee School displayed similar lines to the replacement Ward School, all of which were one-teacher Rosenwald models built in the mid-1920s. Growth in West Augustine compelled the St. Johns County's Board of Public Instruction to acquire land for new schools. In 1893, the board purchased a one-acre site on McLaughlin Street, and within fifteen years one large two-story and several smaller one-story wood-frame schools had been constructed.¹⁵

In contrast to rural areas, large urban areas contained a variety of resources in which black youths were educated. By the mid-1930s, the Phylliss-Wheatley School in Miami consisted of twenty-five diminutive one-story wood frame buildings at the northwest corner of the intersection of N. W. 1st Court and N. W. 18th Street. Elsewhere in the city, a small rectangular two-story wood-frame public school stood at the intersection of Douglas Road and William Avenue. Occupying a prominent site at N. W. 6th Avenue and N. W. 12th Street in Miami, the large three-story masonry Washington Colored School was completed in 1925. Built in 1920, the two-story masonry North End Colored School at N. W. 5th Avenue and N. W. 20th Street was expanded in 1936, presumably with assistance from a New Deal agency.¹⁶

During the Great Depression, the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt implemented several so-called "alphabet programs" as part of the New Deal. Federal agencies that contributed to improving the nation's school infrastructure included the Public Works Administration (PWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA). Black schools developed using assistance from federal agencies typically required professionally executed architectural plans. Completed in 1937, the Roosevelt Academy in Lake Wales (NRHP 2001) is an example of this trend. Lakeland architect Wilbur B. Talley executed the plans with retrained Italian Renaissance details.¹⁷

¹⁵Debra Herman and Althemese Barnes, *African-American Education in Leon County, Florida: Emancipation Through Desegregation, 1863-1968* (Tallahassee: Leon County Cultural Resources Commission, 1997), 66, 68, 71, 88-91; Sidney Johnston and Bob Jones, "Old Negro School, Orange Park, FL," National Register Nomination, 2001; "Total Cost of Buildings, Grounds & Equipment," Rosenwald Fund File, Florida, Fisk University Archives; Diane Maddex, ed., *Built in the U.S.A.* (Washington: Preservation Press, 1985), 150-153; Deed Book VV, p. 418, Clerk of Court, St. Johns County Courthouse, St. Augustine, FL; Sidney Johnston, "Historic Properties Survey of St. Johns County, Florida," unpub. mss., Jacksonville, 2001, p. 59-60.

¹⁶Sanborn Map Company, *Fire Insurance Map of Miami, Dade County, FL* (New York: Sanborn Company, 1921, 1924, 1938, 1950); Sidney Johnston and Bob Jones, "Old Negro School, Orange Park, FL," National Register Nomination, 2001; Diane Maddex, ed., *Built in the U.S.A.* (Washington: Preservation Press, 1985), 150-153.

¹⁷Sanborn Map Company, *Fire Insurance Map of Miami, Dade County, FL* (New York: Sanborn Company, 1921, 1924, 1938, 1950); Sidney Johnston and Bob Jones, "Roosevelt School, Lake Wales, FL," National Register Nomination, 2001; Diane Maddex, ed., *Built in the U.S.A.* (Washington: Preservation Press, 1985), 150-153.

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Following World War II, abandonments, demolition, and fires resulted in the loss of hundreds of black schools throughout the state. Surveys in numerous communities, including Avon Park, Bartow, Crescent City, Davenport, DeFuniak Springs, DeLand, Fellsmere, Fort Pierce, Gifford, Green Cove Springs, Haines City, Hastings, Kissimmee, Melbourne, Rockledge, Stuart, Vero Beach, and Winter Haven have failed to document a single historic black school. Many countywide surveys, such as those of Clay County, Indian River County, Martin County, Orange County, St. Lucie County, and Volusia County typically record few historic black schools. In 2001, only about twenty-five resources built as African American public schools have been inventoried and documented in Florida; eight of those are NRHP listed and most of those are relatively large resources, rather than the relatively small one-teacher type of building that served as the backbone of Florida's black public education system for over a century.

Florida's historic black public schools are consistent with education-related architecture developed throughout the United States. As examples of national trends in school architecture between the middle of the nineteenth century and the 1950s, the buildings have significance for their association with Florida's public education system. Contributing to America's diverse vernacular and formal architectural genres, Florida's black public schools epitomize the nation's rich variety of building traditions, including the use of standardized plans, individual creations fabricated by carpenters and local district officials at a particular site, and the works of professional architects and contractors.

Architectural Contexts

Classical Revival

A few schools display the influences of the Classical Revival style, which evolved from an interest in the architecture of ancient Greek and Roman cultures. The first period of interest in Classical models in the United States dates from the colonial and national periods, which extended between the 1770s and 1850s. The World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893, sparked a renaissance of interest in classical architecture. Many of the best-known architects of the day designed buildings for the Exposition based on classical precedents. Examples varied from monumental copies of Greek temples to smaller models that drew heavily from designs of Adam, Georgian, and early Classical Revival residences assembled in the early nineteenth century. The Exposition, which drew large crowds, helped make the style fashionable again. In Florida, Classical Revival became a popular design for commercial and government buildings. The application of the style to residences is less common.

The prominent characteristic of Classical Revival architecture is full-height classical columns supporting a porch roof, typically with Ionic or Corinthian capitals. The facade is generally symmetrical, and gable or hip roofs are trimmed with a roof-line balustrade, boxed eaves, dentils or modillions, and a wide frieze band.

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Accentuated doorways feature classical surrounds, decorative pediments, transoms, and side lights. Fenestration is regular with double-hung sash windows, usually with six or nine panes per sash.

Colonial Revival

Occasionally applied to the design of a school, the Colonial Revival style was a dominant influence in American residential architecture during the first half of the twentieth century. The term, Colonial Revival, refers to a rebirth of interest in the early English and Dutch houses of the Atlantic Seaboard. The Georgian and Adam styles were the backbone of the Revival, which also drew upon post-medieval English and Dutch Colonial architecture for references. The style was introduced at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876, when the centennial of the Declaration of Independence sparked renewed interest in colonial architecture. Many of the buildings designed for the Exposition were based on historically significant colonial models. Publicity on the Exposition occurred simultaneously with efforts made by national organizations to preserve Old South Church in Boston and Mount Vernon. About the same time a series of articles on eighteenth century American architecture appeared in the *American Architect* and *Harpers'*. The publicity the Colonial Revival style received helped popularize the style throughout the country.

The typical Colonial Revival building in Florida is an eclectic mixture of several colonial designs rather than a direct copy of a single plan. The influences of the Prairie style and American Foursquare plan often appear on later models. The style emerged in the state in the late-1880s, and reached the height of its popularity in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. Some identifying characteristics of Colonial Revival architecture include gable, hip, or gambrel roofs, often pierced by dormers, and a simple entry porch with round columns. The front entrance is often accentuated with a transom and side lights. These buildings often display a symmetrical facade, although it is fairly common for the front entrance to be set off-center. Exterior wall fabrics include brick or a variety of wood siding products. Other distinctive features include double-hung sash windows arranged in pairs and usually with multi-pane glazing in each sash.

Frame Vernacular

The Frame Vernacular description refers to wood frame buildings that do not display a defined architectural style. The term, frame vernacular, does not, however, imply inferior or mundane architecture. Buildings characterized as vernacular lend themselves to categorization by building form associated with a particular era, function, or region of the country, rather than classification within a particular genre of formal architecture. The Oxford English Dictionary defines vernacular architecture as “native or peculiar to a particular country or locality. . . concerned with ordinary domestic and functional buildings rather than the essentially monumental.”

Frame Vernacular, the prevalent style of historic school architecture in Florida, refers to common wood frame construction techniques employed by lay or self-taught builders. Before the Civil War, residents relied upon local materials and their own methods and designs to construct houses. The Industrial Revolution permitted

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standardization of building materials and parts and exerted a pervasive influence over vernacular house design. Popular magazines helped to make architectural trends universal throughout the country. The railroad provided cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, individual builders had access to finished architectural products from which to create their own designs. Many popular vernacular building forms of the Antebellum period were used by builders during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Frame Vernacular schools are typically one or two stories in height, with wood frame structural systems and pier and continuous foundations assembled with brick. They display a variety of footprints, plans, and forms, including irregularly massed, L-shape, rectangular, square, and primary block with lateral wing or annex. Most models often have steeply pitched gable or hip roofs that accommodate attic space. Dormers pierce some rooflines, and corbeled brick chimneys ventilate interior furnaces or stoves. Board-and-batten, horizontal drop siding, weatherboard, and wood shingles are common exterior wall surface materials. Simple entrance porches with gable or shed roofs, or cutaway corner models incised within the primary roof, protect entrances, which often consist of paneled wood doors with glazings. Fenestration is often irregular and symmetrical with ribbon arrangements of large double-hung sashes windows, supplemented by casements, hopper, or pivot windows. Most sashes are divided into multi-light patterns. Exterior decoration is sparse. Some Frame Vernacular models display Craftsman influences, which may include ornamental woodwork, triangular brackets mounted under the eaves, carved brackets supporting porch roofs, projecting purlins, and exposed rafter ends.

Italian Renaissance

The Italian Renaissance style, popular in the United States between 1890 and 1935, is based on authentic Italian models. Its predecessor, the Italianate style, persisted between 1840 and 1885, and was loosely based on early Italian designs. In the 1880s, the firm of McKim, Mead, and White gave impetus to the Italian Renaissance style with the Villard Houses in New York. In the 1890s, fashionable architects employed the style, which provided contrast with Gothic-inspired Shingle and Queen Anne styles. After World War I, the perfection of simulated masonry exterior veneering fabrics made possible the accurate representations even in modest examples of the style. Although the style made significant advances nationally in residential architecture by 1910, most of Florida's Italian Renaissance style buildings were erected during the land boom of the 1920s. Generally reserved for use on landmarks in large cities, the style was eclipsed by the ubiquitous Bungalow and revival designs from Colonial and Mediterranean traditions. After 1935, the Italian Renaissance style faded from fashion.

Identifying features of the style include low-pitched hip roofs, usually covered with ceramic tiles; wide boxed eaves that commonly contain large decorative brackets; symmetrical facade, although asymmetrical models with projecting wings and porte cocheres are not uncommon; masonry construction with brick or stucco veneers; large brick chimneys; a variety of window treatments, with second story windows typically smaller and less

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elaborate than those located in the first story; and a recessed central entrance, usually with an arched opening accentuated by classical columns or pilasters.

Masonry Vernacular

The term, Masonry Vernacular, applies to buildings that display no formal style of architecture and is defined as the common masonry construction techniques of lay or self taught builders. Prior to the Civil War vernacular designs were local in nature, transmitted by word of mouth or by demonstration and relying heavily upon native building materials. With the coming of the American Industrial Revolution mass manufacturers became the pervasive influence over vernacular design. Popular magazines featuring standardized manufactured building components, house plans, and house decorating tips flooded consumer markets and helped to make building trends universal across the country. The railroad also aided the process by providing cheap and efficient transportation for manufactured building materials. Ultimately, the individual builder had access to a myriad of finished architectural products from which to select to create a design of his own.

Masonry Vernacular is more commonly associated with commercial and residential building types than with education-related architecture. In Florida, most schools developed before the twentieth century were wood frame, but a number of older examples feature the rough-faced cast block popularized by Henry Hobson Richardson in his Romanesque buildings of the late nineteenth century. The Masonry Vernacular designs of the early twentieth century were often influenced by popular Art Deco, Collegiate Gothic, Colonial Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Mission Revival, and Prairie designs. Popular masonry building materials of the era included brick, ceramic hollow tiles, and rough-face cast blocks. Extensive bands of windows furnished interior lighting, and entrances were often centrally located and heavily adorned. Because of its relatively inexpensive cost, cinder block construction came into use during the Great Depression, and gained popularity for school construction in the post-World War II era.

Mediterranean Revival

The Mediterranean Revival style, largely found in those states with a Spanish colonial heritage, embraces a broad category of subtypes of Spanish revival architecture in America. The style gained popularity in the American Southwest and Florida during the early twentieth century. The influence of the Spanish and other Mediterranean-derived styles found expression through a detailed study of Latin American architecture made by Bertram Goodhue at the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego in 1915. The exhibition prominently featured the Spanish architectural variety of Central and South America. Encouraged by the publicity afforded the exposition, architects began to look to the Mediterranean basin where they found more building traditions, and often used regional historical precedents to design buildings within a local context.

In Florida, the popularity of the style soared in the 1920s and maintained a pervasive influence on building design until World War II. The style came to symbolize Florida architecture during the 1920s and was adapted

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for a variety of building types ranging from churches, country clubs, town houses, commercial and government buildings, hotels, mansions, railroad depots, theaters, and small residences, the latter often referred to as "Spanish bungalows." Journals, such as *Architectural Record*, featured articles on the style. In June 1925, *House Beautiful* characterized the style as "a new composite style. . . producing a type of small villa distinctly for and of Florida." Even small models were often picturesque, displaying an "architectural blend that make it essentially appropriate for adaptation in Florida. Informal in its essence as well as in its execution, this Mediterranean style accords well with the informal life of the great winter resort to which yearly thousands repair to escape all that reminds them of the North."

For a brief period during the 1920s, the style gained popularity throughout the country. In the 1930s, even as its popularity waned, the style was applied to large public facilities built using New Deal assistance monies. Identifying features of the style include complex roof plans, often a combination of flat, gable, and hip roofs with ceramic tile surfacing or cresting along parapets or pent roofs. Porches or arcades generally protect entrances. Textured stucco exteriors often originally displayed pigments mixed with the cement to form a rich intensity, or a light tint. Medallions, sconces, and ceramic tiles adorn walls and chimneys exhibit arched vents and caps with barrel tile cresting. Arched openings and fenestration consists of multi-light casement and double-hung sash windows, often deeply set in the walls or arched openings. Wrought-iron balconets typically protect small balconies with French doors. Patios and loggias extend from the main body of the building, or appear in gardens or other landscaped areas. Pergolas, fountains, and trellises often appear in the surrounding landscape.

3. Significance: The historic black public schools of Florida may possess significance at the local, statewide, or national levels under NRHP Criteria A, B, and/or C in several areas of significance, including, but not limited to, Architecture, Community Planning and Development, Exploration and Early Settlement, Education, and Ethnic Heritage: Black. These schools represent a distinctive building type developed specifically for an education use. Typically, the buildings were either planned and executed by professional architects and contractors, adapted from standardized plans, or derived from plans worked out on a site by a carpenter and representatives from a local school district. Many schools were derived from vernacular construction traditions to suit the needs of school officials. But, in some cases, schools display the influences of a particular style and contribute to larger trends in formal architecture. Designed by professional architects in private industry, some historic black schools are relatively large well-executed buildings exhibiting formal architectural characteristics, or vague stylistic influences.

4. Registration Requirements: Buildings eligible for nomination under the F.1 property type must have served a historic education function associated with an African-American community or neighborhood. In addition, a school must have been constructed during one of the historic periods outlined in Section E. Eligibility for schools is restricted to buildings that clearly represent an architectural style or type of architecture, or have an association with important historical events or a significant person.

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The Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation*, codified in 36 CFR 67, and NRHP Bulletin 15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, will serve as guides for gauging eligibility. Individual buildings must retain their integrity and original appearance to a high degree. Integrity is defined as the ability of a property to convey its significance. In general, properties eligible for listing under this MPS cover must retain the essential physical features that enable them to convey their historic significance. It should be recognized that although general guidelines may be useful, the integrity of individual properties must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

There are seven aspects or qualities of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The importance of these aspects under this MPS cover is as follows:

Location. Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the event occurred. Within this African-American MPS cover, location helps to define the historic context of a school within a larger African-American neighborhood or community, and the geographic attitudes of segregation and later integration. All properties associated with this MPS should be in their original locations or in an appropriate setting within its historic neighborhood to possess significance under either Criteria A or B. Architecturally significant properties will be eligible under Criterion C if the building meets Criteria Consideration B for moved properties.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the historic form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The essential historic features of an African-American public school consist of its original roof, exterior wall fabric and details, doors and windows, and interior floor plan and circulation pattern. Although many schools are of recent construction, most will have experienced some changes over time. For example, a school converted to a community center may maintain its original form, plan, space, and stylistic influences, and retain integrity. In contrast, a school converted to single-family or elderly housing, losing most of its original interior plan, may have lost its ability to convey its significance as a school under Criterion C, but retain an acceptable amount of its exterior features and interior plan to meet sufficiency under Criteria A or B. With regard to a school's eligibility under Criterion C associated with a style outlined in the associated property types, a building should retain its essential character defining features and details. Regarding eligibility under Criterion C, a school should retain its architectural characteristics to a high degree, that is, its scale, proportions, materials, workmanship, stylistic details, spatial arrangements of doors and windows, and aesthetic qualities that give a property its significance. Some alterations sensitive to the original design and appearance of a school may not preclude its eligibility. Additions and modifications sensitive to a historic school will generally appear at the rear or side elevations, and in general should be compatible with but distinct from the historic resource. Non-contributing resources added to historic school campus should not directly interrupt the walls of a historic resource, but may be connected to the historic property by a system of cover sidewalks. Asbestos shingles, vinyl siding, or other synthetic fabrics installed over the original exterior siding of a school do not necessarily preclude a property from eligibility. However, when synthetic fabrics installed on the exterior walls even during the historic period obscure important characteristics, such as saw-tooth wood shingles, distinctive window moldings, or result in the removal of eaves brackets, a property may be excluded from listing under Criterion C.

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Nevertheless, a school building sheathed with synthetic materials that cover the original exterior wall fabric may still be eligible for listing under Criteria A or B. Enclosing entrances and porches in a manner that results in a diminution or loss of historic character, such as using solid materials like wood, stucco, or masonry, may also exclude a school from eligibility under Criterion C, but not Criterion A or B. Replacement windows should display the original type of window and glazing pattern. In cases where large window banks are distinctive features, the installation of inappropriate replacement windows constitutes a dramatic visual change, and may exclude a resource from eligibility under Criterion C, but not under Criteria A or B. Original interior classroom design integrity, features, and circulation patterns are important considerations from the standpoint of architecture and interpreting historic events. In general, schools that no longer display significant architectural details associated with the historic period are excluded from eligibility. Alterations to a school will vary in importance depending upon the size and design of the building and the property's significance. The integrity of individual properties must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Setting: Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. Over time settings may change. For instance, a rural property fifty years ago may presently stand in a suburb. A school campus may expand over time from a single building to several buildings that date from within the historic period and outside the historic period. In any case, non-contributing buildings should not significantly disrupt the historic ambiance of the setting.

Materials: Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. A property must retain key exterior materials dating from its period of significance to be eligible under Criterion C, and to a lesser degree for Criteria A or B. For Criterion C, important historic materials should accurately reflect the architectural style in which the building was constructed and may consist of but not be limited to casement or double-hung sash windows, ceramic barrel tiles, drop siding, stucco, paneled wood doors, or wood shingles. For events that occurred inside schools, especially in cases bearing on Criterion A, retention of interior materials will be important. Replacement of original materials compromises the interpretation of historic events associated with those materials. In general, schools that display materials inconsistent with the historic period in which they were constructed are excluded from eligibility.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history. This element is most often associated with architecturally significant properties, and thereby is a critical component for properties eligible under Criterion C.

Feeling: Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. Integrity of feeling may be associated with the concept of retaining a sense of place. For example, an African-American school retaining original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of education, community life, and ethnic heritage.

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Association: Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. While many historic events associated with the development of a school may have occurred at a local residence, a school board building, or even a state government office building, the most tangible manifestations of these activities may be other properties, such as schools themselves. However, because many African American schools were converted for other uses during the Era of Integration and since that time, a continuing educational use is not necessary for a historic black school to be eligible under this cover.

Black public schools previously inventoried in the FMSF or listed in the NRHP

Alachua County

Institute of Black Culture

Broward County

Old Dillard School (NRHP, 1991)

Clay County

Black School House

Orange Park Negro Elementary/Teresa Miller School (NRHP, 1998)

Duval County

Old East Jacksonville School No. 3

Edwin M. Stanton School (NRHP, 1983)

Flagler County

Old Flagler County School

Hillsborough County

Citrus Park Colored School

Glover School (NRHP 2001)

Jackson County

Union Grove School House

Lee County

Paul Dunbar High School (NRHP, 1992))

Williams Academy

Leon County

E. B. Hall Jones School

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Orange County

Callahan Center
Old Oakland Negro School
Plymouth Black School
Tangerine School

Pinellas

Jordan Park Elementary School

Polk County

Roosevelt Academy (NRHP, 2001)

Putnam County

Central Academy (NRHP, 1998)

Volusia County

Bonner Elementary School
DeLeon Springs Colored School
Lake Helen School
Orange City Colored School
Cypress Street Elementary (NRHP, 1996)

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Geographical Data

The geographical limits are the boundaries of the state line and coastal limits of the State of Florida.

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Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

In 2001, Historic DeLand, Inc., a non-profit historic preservation organization, was awarded a grant by Florida's Bureau of Historic Preservation to prepare a Multiple Property Submission (MPS) covering Florida's Historic Black Public Schools. The methodology used to prepare the MPS largely consisted of a literature search to determine the periods of development, emphasizing important activities, individuals, and significant themes in the construction and development of Florida's black public schools. The development of property types and historical contexts for evaluating the schools constituted the primary parts of the project.

Various articles and monographs pertaining to the educational history of African Americans in Florida, the South, and across the nation provided an important framework for the document. Contextual and site specific history was derived from reports of superintendents of Florida's public education system published between the 1860s and 1950s. Numerous articles in *Florida Historical Quarterly* and *The Journal of Negro History* describe various aspects of black education in Florida. In addition, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations of individual historic black schools provided useful information.

Research was conducted at various repositories, including the Fisk University Archives, Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee; the Black Archives Research Center and Museum at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee; the Florida State Archives and the State Library of Florida in Tallahassee; and the Map & Imagery Library and P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History at the University of Florida in Gainesville. A librarian at the Office of School Improvement, Florida Department of Education (DOE) confirmed that the DOE does not maintain an archives of historical documents and files.

The Florida Master Site File (FMSF) in the Florida Division of Historical Resources maintains files of previously recorded historic black schools in Florida. Approximately twenty-five of African-American education-related properties have been recorded in the FMSF; only eight of these resources have been NRHP listed.

Following the collection of research, Florida's historic black public schools were analyzed and evaluated for architectural themes and historic contexts. NRHP nominations of black schools, both MPS and Theme Studies, suggested contextual frameworks and methodologies for organizing the Florida document. The methodology included pinpointing the type and categories of properties, and assessing their particular significance. A period of development extending between 1869 and 1952 was selected because it reflects the historic period of significance for Florida's public school system. The historic period allows for the inclusion of public-school property types developed for the training of black students in the primary and secondary education system of Florida.

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Various articles and monographs pertaining to the educational history of African Americans in Florida, the South, and across the nation provided an important framework for the document. Contextual and site specific history was derived from reports of superintendents of Florida's public education system published between the 1860s and 1950s. Numerous articles in *Florida Historical Quarterly* and *The Journal of Negro History* describe various aspects of black education in Florida. In addition, National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) nominations of individual historic black schools provided useful information.

Research was conducted at various repositories, including the Fisk University Archives, Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee; the Black Archives Research Center and Museum at the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University in Tallahassee; the Florida State Archives and the State Library of Florida in Tallahassee; and the Map & Imagery Library and P. K. Yonge Library of Florida History at the University of Florida in Gainesville. A librarian at the Office of School Improvement, Florida Department of Education (DOE) confirmed that the DOE does not maintain an archives of historical documents and files.

The Florida Master Site File (FMSF) in the Florida Division of Historical Resources maintains files of previously recorded historic black schools in Florida. Approximately twenty-five of African-American education-related properties have been recorded in the FMSF; only eight of these resources have been NRHP listed.

Following the collection of research, Florida's historic black public schools were analyzed and evaluated for architectural themes and historic contexts. NRHP nominations of black schools, both MPS and Theme Studies, suggested contextual frameworks and methodologies for organizing the Florida document. The methodology included pinpointing the type and categories of properties, and assessing their particular significance. A period of development extending between 1869 and 1952 was selected because it reflects the historic period of significance for Florida's public school system. The historic period allows for the inclusion of public-school property types developed for the training of black students in the primary and secondary education system of Florida.

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