



2014 Brock International
Prize in Education Nominee

Vanessa Siddle Walker

Nominated by Mark Gooden

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Brock International Prize
2013 Nomination Portfolio
Nominee: E. Vanessa Siddle Walker

TABLE OF CONTENTS	0
Letter of Nomination	1
Brief Biographical Statement	6
Full Biographical Statement	7
Abbreviated Curriculum Vita	8
Links to Video Presentations	22
Appendices: Three Relevant Works	
Second-Class Integration: A Historical Perspective for a Contemporary Agenda	23
Caswell County Training School, 1933-1969: Relationships between Community and School	39
The Architects of Black schooling in the segregated south: The Case of One Principal Leader.	61



October 1, 2013

Dear Brock Prize Jurors:

It is indeed a pleasure to nominate Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker, Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Educational Studies at Emory University, for the Brock International Prize in Education. The Brock Prize recognizes “an individual who has made a specific innovation or contribution to the science and art of education, resulting in a significant impact on the practice or understanding of the field of education.” After 20 years as an educator working at multiple levels and grappling with some of the most entrenched equity issues in education, I have found the work of Dr. Siddle Walker to be incredibly powerful in the goal to achieve equity in schools by examining history to see what has worked in the past. Dr. Siddle Walker’s research and its implementation by her and others have indeed made a significant impact on the understanding the field of education.

What can we learn from history about the power of educating all children? Scholars have argued convincingly that when we improve schools for poor, children of color we will undoubtedly improve classrooms and schools for all children. Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker has produced high quality historical analyses that have literally changed the way we view the history of education. Dr. Siddle Walker’s scholarship has included the voices that educational historians have often diminished, marginalized or altogether omitted and she has done so in a way that honors their story and includes their voice. For example, Dr. Siddle Walker presents strategies to educate Black children effectively as offered by Black educators and parents in the years preceding segregation. Dr. Siddle Walker’s important historical research absolutely informs some of the deepest educational dilemmas today as it achieves several important goals. However, for brevity’s sake, I focus here on just three themes that have been consistently represented in her work, and that have made her scholarship so useful to researchers, practitioners, and policy makers.

The first theme is education must be vigorously pursued for the most marginalized children in this country, or we will find that those who have historically been marginalized will remain in this untenable predicament. In her article, *Second-Class Integration: A Historical Perspective for a Contemporary Agenda*, Dr. Siddle Walker employs a complex analysis of historical accounts, archives, and other data to re-construct a history that unearths a clear goal that was lost in quest to desegregate schools. That goal, presented and pursued by Black parents and educators, is the unyielding pursuit of a high quality and equitable educational experience for African American children. Indeed, as Dr. Siddle Walker shares, her scholarship “provides some context for a new vision for educational justice for African American children and a call to the elucidate the moral imperative that was somehow lost in the quest for racial desegregation of schools.” Dr. Siddle Walker brings to life the efforts of diligent, focused, and tenacious educators like Dr. Horace Edward Tate and his leadership of the Georgia Teachers and Education Association (GTEA). That organization was developed for Black educators by Black educators, conceived in 1878 to protest inequality in Georgia’s

distribution of school funding. As executive director, Tate was responsible for representing the collective interests of Black educators and promoting educational opportunities for all Black children. During this time period in history, these goals were not mutually exclusive. Tate was extremely serious about his role and pursued his work with vigor and precision. Through explaining the detailed activities of Tate, GTEA, and other Black educators, Dr. Siddle Walker familiarizes us with their concept of second-class integration, a reality where Black teachers and educators were finally integrated within White school systems. However, integration left all of the power within the hands of school boards that were 99% White and resistant to desegregation. As a result of White resistance, the Black educators were professionally punished, resulting in a big hit to their identities as professionals and their financial well-being. Specifically, those White school boards demoted, fired, or otherwise excluded some 31,000 Black educators from the education systems so that Whites could be hired. So the fallout for African American children was that second-class integration caused them to feel subordinated in the educational environment because they were getting White teachers who had never really taught Black students. Gone were the Black educators who taught in segregated schools who were “characterized by self-efficacious, committed, and well-trained black teachers; extra-curricular activities that encouraged students to use their many talents; strong leadership that engaged parents in the support of their children’s education; and institutional and interpersonal forms of caring that encouraged students to believe in what they could achieve.”

To shed light on this history, Dr. Siddle Walker takes the reader through the strategies that the GTEA employed in to attempt to head off some of these deleterious effects of “second-class” integration. She provides the detailed accounts of the sophisticated approaches used by Black educators to engage in partnerships with the NAACP and National Education Association (NEA), which was not really an integrated organization but one that could move GTEA’s agenda of supporting Black educators and students. Both partnerships eventually dissolved due to divergent agendas, but not for a lack of focus of the GTEA Black educators. The broad lesson here is we must learn how to care for those poor children of color who are living in really difficult times as they attempt to learn. Educators must find ways to support these students in caring ways that still push them to achieve academically.

Today’s educators appear to be at a lost when involving parents of color. The second theme is it is necessary to involve parents and the community in education in a way that meets them where they are so that they can become more engaged partners in the educational process. In her article, *Caswell County Training School, 1933-1969: Relationships between Community and School*, Dr. Siddle Walker presents research that is the precursor to her famous and widely used best-selling volume, *Their Highest Potential*. In both publications, she highlights important ways in which the community supported the segregated Caswell County Training School (CCTS). For example, Black parents, students and community members who were mostly working class and poor, made significant donations of equipment like stage curtains, system clocks, lights, and a range of other types of equipment that contributed to improving physical plant of the school, making CCTS one of the most impressive physical facilities in the county. White communities did not have to pay beyond their taxes that were already collected whereas Black parents and community members could get no support from the school board to improve their facilities unless they

contributed money or equipment, resulting in “double taxation.” Beyond financial support, parents also supported the school through other means like boarding principals and teachers. Parents believed in the school, and the school officials believed in the parents. The school then supported the community by providing services and access beyond just teaching children in the community. For example, CCTS officials routinely accompanied parents and their children when they visited colleges. The schools met the parents and community where they were educationally, and offered educational opportunities for community members to learn and for them to better themselves. Educators were also members of the community who were accessible to the community.

This mutual support system was made necessary in many ways by segregation. However, even though that time has passed, this work has had enormous implications for present day school settings and the development of community-based schools. Historically, there was a positive relationship between school and community. Dr. Siddle Walker’s historical context then informs the current school reform debates by demonstrating clearly how we can support present-day educators, parents, students, and community members to positively impact the school infrastructures in a way that will support the work of all children.

For the third theme, I highlight how Dr. Siddle Walker focuses on the power of the effective principal, in leading segregated schools. In her article, *The Architects of Black schooling in the segregated south: The Case of One Principal Leader* and the more extensive version in her book *Hello Professor*, she elucidates the importance of the principal in leading the school to success. Recent research confirms her historical account and tells us that the principal plays a significant role in providing the appropriate context for effectively educating students. I have argued in my research that having an effective principal becomes even more important for poor children of color, as they tend to be in schools with more structural and academic challenges. Dr. Siddle Walker’s research has shown us how we can really understand and reconnect the work of the principal by using the culturally-centered model employed by so many leaders during segregation. She demonstrates that Black principals supported Black children during segregation and how principals can use a caring, supportive, and knowledge-based approach to support all children in education systems today. In the tradition of looking back to move forward, Dr. Siddle Walker teaches us that we must examine the work of successful Black educators of the past who were making gains with Black children.

Accordingly, Dr. Siddle Walker’s research brings out these principals’ voices in undeniable clarity, as in the person of Ulysses Byas. His success as a principal working during segregation exemplifies three qualities of attending to climate, maintaining resilience, and inspiring positive beliefs in educators who were forced to work in segregated educational environments. Black principals worked to ameliorate the segregated environment of substandard physical facilities, poor supplies, and transportation challenges to work to love their children and educate them to their highest potential. Byas who became principal of Gainesville, Georgia Fair Street High School, overcame several challenges, including circumvented an unresponsive superintendent to construct three goals that are instructive for teaching aspiring and current principals of Black children today. Early in his job, Byas had to build a school program that would inspire student success, develop in teachers a belief in teaching excellence, and to continue his own professional development. Dr. Siddle Walker’s

work captures Byas as a principal who cares deeply for his students and works hard on their behalf. Additionally, he had to build rapport with a community that originally thought he was too young and not prepared for the job based on his looks, even though he had six years experience as a teacher and principal. Dr. Siddie Walker again skillfully uses her historical methodology to explain aspects of school leadership that worked to lift Black children to achieve higher heights. Byas also consistently interacted with the community, including getting the parents and community members engaged with his faculty on a curriculum study of the school to study some of its academic challenges. He used these data to make the argument for improvements for the schools. Byas supported learning of the community by doing things like visiting churches, visiting homes to discuss education, using his education to help others in the community. For example, he tutored nine Black citizens interested in becoming police officers but who had consistently failed the aptitude part of the exam. After Byas's tutoring, eight of the nine community members passed the exam. In addition to being a community member, of course Byas had to show he was effective as a principal and he did that. For instance, during his 11 years as principal of the high school, 400 students graduated and many of them went on to college. This is in contrast to the 130 that graduated in the 9-year period previous to his arrival. Additionally, during his tenure students showed yearly gains on standardized tests. However, in addition to being successful on multiple indicators, Byas used an approach to leadership during one of the toughest times to lead for Black principals. As Dr. Siddie Walker teaches through this history of Byas's leadership and accounts of other principals, we discover that we can indeed learn from the work of the past.

Dr. Siddie Walker's focus is on exploring and analyzing the Black educators' efforts that have worked for poor African American children in the South during desegregation. However, the history of that chronicles their struggle to be successful is everyone's history in America. To the extent that we can learn from their experiences, then we can really use her work to inform the huge challenges we are facing in education, especially with the children who are struggling the most. Dr. Siddie Walker also tells a history that intersects intentionally with American education history. For example, she recounts the story of how these Black educators interfaced directly with the federal government to advocate for their children and themselves as upstanding, hardworking professionals. Specifically, Black educators' stories intersect with Health, Education, and Welfare's beginnings and are chronicled in Vanessa's work. She explains how the first HEW commissioner, Frances Keppel, advocated for equality of opportunity despite that not being popular view. Though his tenure was short lived, his efforts led to the passing of the Elementary and Secondary Education (ESEA) Act of 1965. His successor, Harold Howe, also was influenced by the work of GTEA and the Black Educators' goals to advocate for better schools and work environment for kids and educators. However, after Commissioner Howe, who was clearly an advocate for equality of opportunity, was removed amid virulent southern protests about his policies, the federal government at that time aligned its advocacy with the desires of White southerners, alas, thereby imperiling the agenda of supporting Black teachers and Black children.

In sum, Dr. Siddie Walker's historical research is America's history. Her research conjures up the quote, "The past is never dead. It's not even past." Clearly, her research reports of a time when we lived in legally separated words. However, past era is very much alive today,

as evidences by issues of equity in our schools today. Though legal segregation is gone, it still has implications in the current de facto segregation. Though Dr. Siddle Walker is a great historian, she also put her research into action and is currently working on the TITUS project in Atlanta. This project takes lessons from the past to develop real opportunities for poor children of color in the present. Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker's research and its implementation by her and others have indeed made a significant impact on understanding the field of education. Hence, it is with great honor that I humbly nominate her for the prestigious Brock International Prize in Education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark A. Gooden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a stylized "G".

Mark A. Gooden
Associate Professor
Director of the Principalship Program

Brief Biographical Statement

Vanessa Siddle Walker

Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Educational Studies

Vanessa Siddle Walker's research has reshaped previous historical portraits of black segregated schools in the South. Unlike earlier accounts that focused primarily on inequalities, Walker has documented the unintended consequences of segregation by focusing on the resilience of black communities. Her seminal book, *Their Highest Potential*, depicted the commitment of black parents, leadership of principals and teachers, and ethos of care in the school climate. Its sequel (*Hello Professor*) uncovered the professional world of black educators that explains the striking similarity in beliefs and behaviors across southern black schools. The final manuscript in the trilogy (*Hidden Provocateurs*, Under Review) depicts black educators as passionate advocates who quietly challenged inequality and helped overturn *Plessy v. Ferguson*. For her revisionist historical portraits, Walker received the prestigious Grawemeyer award in Education, the Early Career Award from AERA, and 10 other national recognitions. Her articles appear in leading scholarly journals; she has lectured widely nationally and internationally, including delivering the 9th AERA *Brown* lecture; and has been featured in radio broadcasts, newspapers, and a PBS special. Walker also uses her findings to contextualize contemporary educational issues, including founding the school-community *TITUS* project, initiating cross-disciplinary conversations (*Race-ing Moral Formation*) and engaging legislative and community advocacy.

Full Bio Statement

Vanessa Siddle Walker is the Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Educational Studies at Emory University. For 25 years, she has explored the segregated schooling of African American children, considering sequentially the climate that permeated the schools, the network of professional collaborations that explains their similarity, and the hidden systems of advocacy that sought equality and justice.

For her first single-authored book (*Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South*, University of North Carolina Press), Walker was the recipient of the prestigious \$200,000 Grawmeyer Award for Education (2000). She is also author or co-author of *Facing Racism in Education* (Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series), *Racing Moral Formation* (Teachers College Press, *Hello Professor: A Black Principal and Professional Leadership in the Segregated South* (University of North Carolina Press), and *Living the Legacy: Universities and Schools in Collaborative for African American Children* (Rowan and Little, expected 2014). The research project to which she devoted 12 years, *Hidden Provocateurs: H. E. Tate and Black Educators Secret Struggle for Justice*, is in the review process. In addition to book manuscripts, her work has appeared in journals such as the *Harvard Educational Review*, *Review of Education Research*, *American Educational Research Journal*, and *Teachers College Record*.

For her research, Walker has received four awards from the American Education Research Association (AERA)—the AERA Early Career Award (1998), the Best New Female Scholar Award from the Research Focus on Black Education (1999), the Best New Book Award from the History Division (1999), and the Outstanding Book Award from the Moral Development Special Interest Group. She is also a recipient of awards from several other educational groups, including the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools and the American Education Studies Association. She is a former National Academy of Education Fellow (1990-92) and in 2009 was named a Fellow of AERA. Walker has lectured widely nationally and internationally, including delivering the 2012 Annual *Brown v. Board of Education* lecture in Washington, DC. That lecture has been rebroadcast to more than 500 listeners in countries throughout the world. Her work has also appeared in the PBS Special, *SCHOOL*, and she has consulted with journalists for the last eight years on issues concerning *Brown v. Board* and its implementation.

Walker completed her undergraduate training in education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; taught for four years at the desegregated Cummings High School in Burlington, North Carolina; and finished her masters and doctorate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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EDUCATION

Ed.D in Teaching, Curriculum, and Learning Environments, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA. June, 1988. Dissertation Chair: Courtney Cazden.

Ed.M in English Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA. June, 1985.

B.A. in Education, Certifications in Speech Communications and English. School of Education, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. May, 1980.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

Higher Education

2010 to Present	Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Educational Studies, Division of Educational Studies, Emory University Project Founder and Director, <i>Teaching in the Urban South (TITUS)</i>
2002 to 2010	Professor, Division of Educational Studies, Emory University
1996-2002	Associate Professor, Division of Educational Studies, Emory University
1990-96	Assistant Professor, Division of Educational Studies, Emory University
1988-90	Visiting Assistant Professor, Language in Education Division, Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania
Spring, 1988	Assistant Professor, Education and English Departments, Elon College
Fall, 1987	Adjunct Instructor, English Department, Wheelock College
1985-87	Teaching Assistant in Research and Teacher Training, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard University

High School

- 1986-87 English Teacher, Minority Students in Math and Science Summer Program, Phillips Academy, Andover, MA
- 1980-84 English Teacher, Cummings High School, Burlington, NC
- Spring 1980 English Teacher, Chapel Hill High School, Chapel Hill, NC

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- Siddle Walker, V. (proposal under review). *Hidden Provocateurs: Horace Tate and Black Educators In a Forgotten Quest for Educational Justice*.
- Siddle Walker, V. (proposal accepted). *Living the Legacy: The Historical African American Professional Network as a Model for University and School Collaborations*. Rowan, Little & Company.
- Siddle Walker, V., with Ulysses Byas, U. (2009). *Hello Professor: A Black Principal and Professional Leadership in a Segregated Community*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Siddle Walker, V., Snarey, J.(Eds.). (2004). *Racing moral formation: African American perspectives on care, justice, and moral education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Outstanding Book Award, Moral Development SIG, American Educational Research Association, 2006.*
- Siddle Walker, V. (1996). *Their highest potential: An African American school community in the segregated south*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Grawemeyer Award for Education Research (\$200,000), University of Louisville, 2000*
Best First Book Award, History Division, American Educational Research Association, 1999
American Educational Studies Association Critic's Choice Award, 1998
- Hidalgo, N., McDowell, C., Siddle, E. (Eds.) (1990). *Facing racism in American education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series.

Refereed Journal Articles

- Siddle Walker, V. (In Press). Black educators in an elusive quest for justice. *Educational Researcher*.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2013). Tolerated tokenism, or the injustice in justice: Black teacher organizations and their forgotten struggle for educational justice, 1921-1954. *Equity and Excellence* 46 (1), 64-80.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2009). Second-class integration: A historical perspective for a contemporary agenda. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79 (2), 269-284.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2005). Organized resistance and Black educators' quest for school equality, 1878-1938. *Teachers College Record*, 107(3), 355-388.

- Siddle Walker, V. (2005). After methods, when what? *Teachers College Record*, 107 (1), 30-37.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2004). Brown and its impact on schools and American life. *American Bar Association Focus on Law Studies*, 19 (2), 1-17.
- Siddle Walker, V., Byas, U. (2003). The Architects of Black schooling in the segregated south: The Case of One Principal Leader. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 19 (1), 54-72.
- Siddle Walker, V., Archung, K. (2003). The segregated schooling of Blacks in the United States and South Africa. *Comparative Education Review*, 47 (1).
- Siddle Walker, V. (2001). African American teachers in segregated schools in the south, 1940-1969. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38 (4), 751-780.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2000). Valued segregated schools for African American children in the south, 1935-1969: A review of common themes and characteristics. *Review of Educational Research*, 70 (3), 253-285.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1995). Research at risk: Lessons learned in an African American community. *Educational Foundations*, 9(1), 5-15.
- Engelhard, G., Gordon, B., Siddle Walker, E., Gabrielson, S. (1994). The influence of writing tasks and gender on quality of writing for black and white students. *Journal of Educational Research*, 87(4), 197-209.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1993). Caswell county training school, 1933-1969: Relationships between community and school. *Harvard Educational Review*, 63(2), 161-182. Reprint in G. Noya, K. Geismar, and G. Nicoleau (Eds.) (1995). *Shifting histories: Transforming schools for social change*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series. Reprint in T. Beauboeuf-Lafontant and D. Augustine (Eds.) (1996), *Facing racism in education* (2nd edition). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series. Reprint in G. Brion-Meisels, K. Cooper, S. Deckman, C. Dobbs, C. Francois, T. Nikundiwe C. Shalby (Eds) (2010). *Humanizing education: Critical alternatives to reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Educational Review Reprint Series.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1993). Interpersonal caring in the “good” segregated schooling of African-American children: Evidence from the case of caswell county training school. *Urban Review*, 25(1), 63-77. Reprint in D. Rich and J. Van Galen (Eds.) 1996), *Caring in an unjust world: Negotiating borders and barriers in schools*. New York: SUNY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1992). Falling asleep and African-American student failure. *Theory Into Practice*, 31(4), 321-327.
- Siddle, E. (1987). Just another Elizabethan Craze, *Notes Plus*, 15-16.

Book Chapters

- Siddle Walker, V. (2012). Black segregated schooling in the south. In James Banks (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education* (237-39). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2010). Foreword. In R. Irvine, *The African American Quest for Institutions of Higher Education Before the Civil War*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press.

- Siddle Walker, V. S. (2010). African American teachers in the old south and the new. In K. Buras, J. Randels, K. Y. Salaam, and Students at the Center (Eds.), *Pedagogy, policy, and the privatized city: Stories of dispossession and defiance*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2009). Foreword. In A. Stuart Wells, *Both Sides Now: The Story of School Desegregation's Graduates*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2008). Foreword. In M. Fisher, *Black literate lives: Historical and contemporary perspectives*. New York: Routledge.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2008). In search of Miss Steepleton. In F. Pajares and T. Urdan (Eds.), *The ones we remember: Scholars reflect on teachers who made a difference*. Volume 6 in the series *Adolescence and Education*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2007). A thought from another world: The professional development of Black Teachers in Georgia, 1930-1965. In M. Cochran-Smith, Sharon Feiman-Nemser, and J. McIntyre (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring issues in changing contexts*.
- Siddle Walker, V., Tompkins, R. (2004). Caring in a past time: How African Americans constructed care and countered injustice in southern segregated schools. In V. Walker and J. Snarey (Eds.), *African American Perspectives on care, justice, and moral formation*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1999). Teaching culture and commitment: Challenges in the training of educational researchers for the 21st century. In E. Lagemann and L. Shulman (Eds.), *Issues in education research* (pp. 224-244). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1996). Can institutions care? Evidence from the segregated schooling of African-American children. In M. Shujaa (Ed), *Beyond segregation: The quality of African-American schooling* (pp. 209-226). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1995). Theme introduction: Literacy in the home and community. In V. Gadsden and D. Wagner (Eds.), *Literacy among African-American youth*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Essays and Book Reviews

- Siddle Walker, V. (2009). Forum on Race, *Oxford American*, 64.
- Siddle Walker, V. (2004). A half century of challenge. *Emory Report*, 2.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1998). Focus on diversity: School desegregation. *American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Briefs*, 19 (12), 4-5, 8.
- Irvine, J., Siddle Walker, V. (1998). Treatment does not confer status. *Black Issues in Higher Education*, 15(5), 72.
- Siddle Walker, V. (1999). Essay Review of Liva Baker, *The second battle of New Orleans: The hundred-year struggle to integrate the schools* [Review of the book, *The second battle of*

New Orleans]. *The Journal of American History*.

Siddle, E. (1990). Pulling up by the Bootstraps: An essay review of *Maggie's American dream and Balm in Gilea* [Review of the books, *Maggie's American dream* and *Balm in Gilead*], *Minority Voices*, 6(2), 71-74.

Siddle, E. (1988). Review of Derrick Bell, *And we are not saved* [Review of the book, *And we are not saved*]. *Harvard Educational Review Special Issue: Race, Racism, and American Education*, 58(3), 412-413.

Siddle, E. (1988). Review of Thomas James, *Exile within: The schooling of Japanese Americans, (1942-1945)* [Review of the book, *Exile within*]. *Harvard Educational Review Special Issue: Race, Racism, and American Education*, 58(3), 412-413.

Siddle, E. (1987). Review of Thomas Newkirk (Ed.) (1986) *To Compose: Teaching writing in the high school* [Review of book, *To compose*]. *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 100-101.

Unpublished Research Reports

Siddle, E. (1989). *An Analysis of the Freshman Composition Program*. Technical Report for Caswell County Schools. Yanceyville, NC.

Siddle, E. (1986). *A Critical Assessment of the Natural Process Approach to Teaching Writing*. Unpublished Doctoral Qualifying Paper, Harvard University.

Holmes, J., Siddle, E. (1984). *The Teaching of English, 9-12*. Burlington: Burlington City Schools.

HONORS¹

Recipient, W. E. B. DuBois Distinguished Lecturer Award for Outstanding Leadership and Research Contributions to Black Education, Research Focus on Black Education, American Educational Research Association, 2010.

Fellow, American Educational Research Association Award for Distinguished Contributions in Research (Member of First Class of AERA Fellows), 2009

Winship Distinguished Research Professor for the Social Sciences, Emory University, 2001-04

Outstanding Reviewer Award for *Educational Researcher*, American Educational Research Association, 2004.

Best New Female Scholar, Research Focus on Black Education, American Educational Research Association, 1999

Raymond Cattell Early Career Award, American Educational Research Association, 1998

Leadership Award for Outstanding Leadership in Education, Spelman College, 1998

Young Scholars Award, Conference of Southern Graduate Schools, 1993

National Academy of Education Post-Doctoral Spencer Fellow, 1990-92

Distinguished Research Award for Eastern Educational Research Association (with Engelhard, G., Gordon, B., Gabrielson, S.), 1992

¹ This list excludes honors associated with particular books. These honors are listed in "Publications" under the book for which the recognition was received.

Phi Beta Kappa Influential Faculty Award, Emory University, 1992, 2006
Noyes Fellow, Principals' Center, Harvard University, 1984-86
North Carolina Outstanding Yearbook Advisor, 1983
Outstanding Young Educator, Cummings High School, 1983

RESEARCH GRANTS

Principal Investigator, Black Educators as Agents for Racial Equality, 1954-1971. Major Grant, The Spencer Foundation, 2006
Principal Investigator, Horace Tate Project, Discretionary Grant, The Spencer Foundation, 2002
Co-Director, The Southern Consortium for Educational Research in Urban Schools, University Grant Program, The Spencer Foundation, 2000
Principal Investigator, University Research Committee Regular Grant, Emory University, 1992
Principal Investigator, University Research Committee Summer Award, Emory University, 1991
Recipient, Post Doctoral Fellowship, National Academy of Education, 1990-92
Recipient, Lightfoot Fellowship for Doctoral Research, Harvard University, 1987
Recipient, Edmunds-Chung Fellowship for Doctoral Research, Harvard University, 1987

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Siddle Walker, V. (2013, April 2). A more effective way: An African American curricular model for education in the segregated south. Scholars of Color Visiting Faculty Lecture Presented at the Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania.

Siddle Walker, V. (Fall 2012). Original Intent: Black Educators in an Elusive Quest for Justice. American Educational Research Association 2012 *Brown v. Board of Education* Lecture. Ronald Reagan Center, Washington, DC. [According to "AERA Highlights," the webcast of this lecture has been viewed by more than 500 people in Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Japan, Peru, Qatar, South Africa, Taiwan, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States.]

Siddle Walker, V. (Fall 2012). The Divisions and Possibilities of Paths Trod in Addressing Contemporary Educational Problems. Finnish American Conference. Carter Center, Atlanta, GA.

Siddle Walker, V. (Spring 2013). Men of Thought, Men of Action, Clear the Way. The Sesquicentennial of the emancipation proclamation: AERA Pre-Conference, San Francisco, CA.

Siddle Walker, V. (Spring 2013). *When the Interview is Privileged: Reflections on Conducting Historical Ethnography*, Division F Mentoring Seminar for Graduate Students and Junior Faculty: San Francisco, CA

Siddle Walker, V. (Spring 2013). Absentee Mentors. Division F Invited Session, AERA, San Francisco, CA.

Siddle Walker, V. (Spring 2013). Rockefeller Filming Reimagined. AERA, San Francisco, CA.

Siddle Walker, V. (Fall 2012). From what we used to know: An African American pedagogical model for educating children. Redan High School, Decatur: Georgia.

- Siddle Walker, V. (Summer 2012). Retying the ties that bind. Summerhill Class Reunion, Summerhill Museum, Bartow County: Georgia.
- Siddle Walker (Fall 2011). Historical American Pedagogical Models of Education: Reclaiming the Vision. Invited Speaker for Annual Benjamin Mays Lecture, Alonzo Crim Educational Center, Georgia State University.
- Walker, V. (Fall 2011). In Search of the Ancient Paths: A Portrait of African American Parental Involvement and Implications for Today. Invited Keynote, Community Seminar on Parental Involvement, Decatur, GA: Crossroads Presbyterian Church.
- Siddle Walker, V. (Spring 2011). Reflections and Advice on Academe, Gradivity Luncheon, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2011). The Importance of and Approaches for Conducting Community-Based Research. Invited Session for the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2011). Brown, Desegregation and Its Aftermaths: Transition, Loss, and Accountability. Invited Discussant Paper, American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (June 2010). Black Parents and Black Educators United in the Quest for Social Justice for Black Children. Invited talk for A Long Train Towards Excellence SpiritHouse Project, Columbus, Georgia.
- Siddle Walker, V. (May 2010). In spite of this old devil segregation: Professors and professional development in the segregated south. Invited keynote for the Research Focus on Black Education, American Educational Research Association, Denver, CO.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2010). Black Schools Before Brown. Invited Lecture for the Academic Festival 2010, Teachers College Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2010). Once Upon a Time in a Forgotten World. Invited Lecturer for the Graduate School of Education Lecture Series, University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October 2009). *Hello Professor* Book Talk. Hall Book Exchange, Gainesville, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (September, 2009). After It Takes a Village. Invited Keynote for the Georgia Chapter of the National Association for Multicultural Education, Clayton State College, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2009). Grant Writing for Graduate Students: Considering an Interdisciplinary Lens. Invited Talk given to Division A Graduate Student Seminar, American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2009). Methodological Tensions in Educational History. Invited Division F Fireside Chat, American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 2008). Rethinking the Black School Legacy: Reflections on Nineteen Years of Segregated School Research. Invited Address for the Department of Sociology Conference on Race, Class, and Ethnic Divides, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.

- Siddle Walker, V. (September, 2008). Small Talk. Invited Speaker for Who's Who on Emory's Campus Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Student Night for Freshmen, Emory University, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (September, 2008). The "Association" Challenge to a New Generation of Black Scholars. Keynote Address at the Social Justice and Individual Responsibility Conference, Paine College, Augusta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (September, 2008). The Agents of What We Know. Convocation Address, Paine College, August, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March 2008). Continued conversations with Black Scholars: Tips on Publishing. Annual Invited Presidential Session. American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March 2008). Anderson's Challenge to Community Histories. Invited Division F Session, American Educational Research Association, New York, NY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 2007). Black School Segregation in the South: Lessons for Today. Invited Keynote Address. Boston Consortium of Colleges. Boston, MA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2007). Black Principals and Their Network of Professional Leadership, 1957-1967. Invited Lecture. Society for the Study of Curriculum History, Chicago, IL.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2007). Continued conversations with Black Scholars. Annual Invited Presidential Session, Chicago, IL.
- Siddle Walker, V. (August 2006). The enduring legacy of Black educators as advocates for Black school equality: Implications for today. Invited Keynote Address, National Association of Colored People Conference on School Desegregation, Louisville, KY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (February 2006). Black professionals and creating a "Professor" legacy. Invited Luncheon Address for the University of Georgia, College of Education Spring Conference, Athens, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2005). Black principals as community leaders. Invited Presidential Session, American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2005). Communicating with the press. Invited Paper for the Communications and Outreach Committee Symposium on "Tips on Talking with Reporters." American Educational Research Association Meeting, Montreal, Canada.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2005). Where do we go without the Network? Invited Lecturer for the "Confronting the Crises in Education" Conference. The Child Development Institute, Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, New York.
- Siddle Walker, V. (February, 2005). Jeanes teachers and Black education. Invited Lecturer for the Teacher Education Program Spring Assembly. Fort Valley State University, Fort Valley, Georgia.
- Siddle Walker, V. (January, 2005). Black educators and the role of organizational advocacy in the segregated schooling of African American Children. Invited Lecture for ECLIPSE. College

of Education, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida.

- Siddle Walker, V. (October 2004). Renewed vision: Brown through the eyes of Black educators. Invited Brown Lecture. Denison University, Granville, Ohio.
- Siddle Walker, V. (August 2004). Educators remember Brown. Presidential Invited Panel, American Psychological Association, Waki, Oahu.
- Siddle Walker, V. (May 2004). History and reform. Invited panelist for the New York University Conference: Brown at 50, New York, New York.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2004). The implications of the Brown decision for educational reform. Presidential Invited Panel, American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, California.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2004). Black educators and organizational advocacy. Invited Division B lecture, American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, California.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March 2004). Reflections on Brown. Invited Askwith Forum participant, Students of Color Alumni Conference, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (February 2004). Brown vs. Board 50th anniversary reflections. Invited Jones lecture, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November 2003). Covering the 50th anniversary of the Brown v. Board of education decision. Invited lecture, Hechinger Institute on Education and the Media, New York, New York.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March 2003). History of African American education and the achievement gap. Invited keynote, North Carolina Achievement Gap Conference, Greensboro, North Carolina.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April 2003). Horace Edward Tate. Invited tribute, Georgia Association of Educators Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2002). African American traditions of schooling. Invited, The Third Annual Learning Communities Network Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 2001). Resegregation: A backward look forward. Invited lecture, Conference on African American Education in the South, Dillard University, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (January, 2001). You don't say: Researcher issues in conducting educational research. Keynote lecture, Conference on Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies, Athens, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2001). Answering your questions. Division F Fireside Graduate Student Chat, American Educational Research Association Meeting, Seattle, WA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2001). Continuing the conversations with senior scholars on advancing research on black education. Invited panelist, American Educational Research Association Meeting, Seattle, WA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 2000). Teaching and the transmission of teaching ideas for African American teachers in Georgia, 1930-1960. Keynote lecture, League of Professional Schools

Conference, Atlanta, GA.

- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2000). Ethical research and personal integrity: *From dissertation to tenure*. Graduate student invited address, American Educational Research Association Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2000). Reaching their highest potential: What segregated schools teach us about our past and our present. Grawemeyer Distinguished Lecture, University of Louisville, Louisville.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March, 2000). From literacy to history and back again: How historical influences expand conversations on teaching African American children. Keynote lecture, Writing Classrooms: A Symposium on Language and Teaching. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1999). Tensions in segregated school research. Invited luncheon speech, New York University, NY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1999). Segregated schools in African American history: A trip down memory lane or a roadmap for educational reform? Raymond Cattell Distinguished Lecture, American Educational Research Association Meeting, Montreal, Canada.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1999). Culture and commitment in educational research. Invited paper, American Educational Research Association Meeting, Montreal, Canada.
- Siddle Walker, V. (January, 1999). Institutional caring in higher education. Invited address, Medgar Evers College, New York.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1998). The segregated schooling of African American children contributions and new directions. Visiting scholar lecture, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1998). On segregated high schools, segregated colleges and cultural continuity. Convocation address, Spelman College, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1997). Caring in a southern segregated African-American school, 1930-1969. Invited address, Conference of the Association for Moral Education, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March, 1997). What was so good about the southern segregated school, 1933-1969? Invited lecture, Wheelock College, Boston, MA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1997). Irish immigrant and African American parallels: Psychological damage or resilience? Invited panelist, Conference Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Irish Famine, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (June, 1996). "Good" black public schools in pre-integration North Carolina: Implications for research today. Invited talk, U.S. Department of Education OERI/ Spencer Foundation Invitational Conference on New Perspectives on Education Research, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March, 1995). Historical images of teaching: Reviving the perspective of African-American teachers. Invited lecture, University of Notre Dame, South Bend.

- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1994). Research at risk: Lessons learned in an African-American community. R. Freeman Butts keynote, American Educational Studies Association, Chapel Hill, NC.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1994). Beyond brown: Lessons in desegregation. Invited paper, Southern Regional council 75th Anniversary Conference, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1994). Rethinking African-American schooling: Then and now. Invitational address solicited by the president of AERA, American Educational Research Association Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1994). Ethical issues in conducting research in African-American communities. Invited paper, American Educational Research Association Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (May, 1993). Issues in validity in conducting qualitative research in African-American communities. Invited lecture, National Academy of Education Spring Meeting. Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1993). Looking backwards into the future: Lessons from the “good” segregated schooling of African-American children. Asa P. Spaulding Keynote lecture, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1992). Segregated schools speak to today. Keynote talk, University of North Carolina and North Carolina Central University Conference on Serving Poor and Minority Children, Chapel Hill, NC.
- Siddle Walker, V. (June, 1991). Alternative views of self and success. Commencement address, Bartlett Yancey High School, Yanceyville, NC.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1991). Teaching African-American Students in real time. Invited talk, National Alliance of Black School Educators, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1991). Literacy attainment in private schools. Invited talk, Theology School Conference, Emory University, Atlanta (October, 1991).
- Siddle, E. V. (March, 1990). Educational challenges in the African-American community. Invited talk, University of Pennsylvania Law School Conference on Minority Concerns.
- Siddle, V. (April, 1990). Urgent challenges for the African-American student. Keynote Address, Academic Achievement Awards Ceremony for Minority Students, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill.
- Siddle, E. V. (June, 1990). Visions. Keynote Address, North Carolina Scholars Luncheon, Bartlett Yancey High School, Yanceyville, NC.
- Siddle, E. V. (April, 1989). People of color in white institutions. Invited paper, Students Organized Against Racism Annual Conference, New York.
- Siddle, E. V. (June, 1989). The meaning in the moment. Commencement address, Cummings High

School, Burlington, NC.

Siddle E. V. (October, 1989). Made over. Keynote Address, Missionary Association Annual Banquet, Yanceyville, NC.

Siddle, E. V. (May, 1987). Expenses and investments. Keynote Address, National Honor Society Induction Assembly, Cummings High School, Burlington, NC.

REFEREED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Siddle Walker, V. (July 2010). Tolerated Tokenism, or the Injustice in Justice: Black Teacher Associations and Their Forgotten Struggle for Educational Justice, 1921-1954. Oxford Roundtable, Oxford England.

Siddle Walker, V. (October, 2009). Black, White, and Brown: Desegregation and its Dilemmas. Discussant Paper for the History of Education Society Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2009). Hello Professor: A Black Principal and the Role of Professional Leadership in the Segregated School Community, 1957-1968. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, CA.

Siddle Walker, V. (November, 2008). In Spite of This Old Devil Segregation. Paper presented at the History of Education Society Meeting, Tampa, FL.

Siddle Walker, V. (March 2008). The Segregated School Story: Ways to Move the Field Forward. Discussant Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, New York, NY.

Siddle Walker, V. (April 2006). Black Principals and Their Network of Professional Development, 1957-1969. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Francisco, CA.

Siddle Walker, V. (April 2004). Search for Brown in a Segregated and Unequal Society. Discussant Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, CA.

Siddle Walker, V. (March, 2003). After Methods, Then What? Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, Chicago, Ill.

Siddle Walker, V. (March, 2003). Black educators as Activists and Advocates for Black Education, 1945-1970. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, Chicago, Ill.

Siddle Walker, V. (July, 2002). The architects of Black schooling in the segregated South: The case of one principal leader. Paper presented at the International Standing Conference for the History of Education, Paris, France.

Siddle Walker, V. (April, 2001). African American educational links between schools and communities: An assessment of the state of the field. Discussant paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, Seattle, Washington.

Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1999). They try to teach you, but we tried to rear you: Teaching African

- American students in the segregated south, 1930-1969. Paper presented at American Educational Research Association Meeting, Montreal, Canada.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1998). What does history have to say to desegregation studies? Paper presented at the History of Education Society Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1998). African American teachers in southern segregated schools, 1940-69. Paper presented at the History of Education Society Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Siddle Walker, V. (July, 1998). The segregated schooling of blacks in the United States and South Africa: An exploratory study of parallels. Paper presented at the 10th World Congress of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies, Cape Town, South Africa.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1998). Creating institutions that care: A model from African American school history. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1998). Their highest potential: An African American school community in the segregated south. Book talk presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1998). Oral history on race and gender: Discussant paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (November, 1997). African American educational history in re-View. Discussant paper presented at the Georgia Educational Research Association Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (December, 1996). The variable of culture in educational research. Invited Talk presented at National Academy of Education Publication Series Meeting on Improving Educational Research, Chicago, IL.
- Siddle Walker, (October, 1996). Reflective researching: Listening to the “voice” of collected data. Invited session for Georgia Educational Research Association Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1996). Where do we go from here? Discussant paper presented at the Oral History Association, Philadelphia, PA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1996). If educational research were a moral enterprise. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, New York, NY.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1995). On wisteria vines and school reform: Challenges from the African-American past. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1994). A black scholar responds to Black scholar. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, New Orleans, LA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1994). Yes, but is it research? Invited Panel Presentation presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, New Orleans.
- Siddle Walker, V. (May, 1993). Institutional caring in the segregated schooling of African-American

- children. Paper presented at the Phi Delta Kappa Leadership Institute, Atlanta (May, 1993).
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1993). Can institutions care? Evidence from the segregated schooling of African-American children. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1993). Caswell county training school, 1933-1969: Remembering the “good” in segregated schooling of African-American children. Paper and film presented at the American Educational Research Association Meeting, new experimental format, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (January, 1993). Interpersonal caring in the case of caswell county training school. Paper presented at the University of Georgia Qualitative Conference, Athens, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (October, 1992). Interpersonal caring in the “good” segregated school. Paper presented at Georgia Educational Research Association Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1992). Relations between community and school: Learning from the “good” segregated schooling of African-American children. Paper presented at the American Education Research Association Meeting, San Francisco, CA.
- Englehard, G., Gordon, B., Siddle Walker, V., & Gabrielson, S. (April, 1992). The Influence of Writing Tasks on Quality of Writing for Black and White Students. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Distinguished Paper Session, San Francisco, CA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (February, 1992). Issues in the use of ethnography to explore literacy acquisition. Paper presented at the Penn Ethnography Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (May, 1991). Caswell county training school, 1933-1969: Relationships between school and community. Paper presented at the National Academy of Education Meeting, Stanford University, Palo Alto, California.
- Siddle Walker, V. (February, 1991). The case of “good” pre-integration schooling for African-American children: On relationships between home and school. Paper presented at the University of Pennsylvania Conference on Urban Ethnography, Philadelphia, PA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (April, 1990). Double-edged sword: The losing battle for junior African-American academics. Paper presented at American Education Research Association, Boston, MA.
- Siddle Walker, V. (March, 1990). Issues in the planning and teaching of a multicultural seminar for students in predominately white institutions. Paper presented at Conference on College Composition and Communication, Chicago, IL.
- Siddle Walker, V. (February, 1990). Neither voice nor vision: On hidden obstacles influencing literacy acquisition in writing classrooms. Paper presented at the Literacy Research Center’s Speaker’s Series. University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.
- Siddle, E. V. (October, 1989). Perspective of minority students on interventions in writing classrooms. Paper presented at Boston University Language Development Conference, Boston, MA.
- Siddle, E. V. (May, 1989). Same identical thing: Problems of black academics at entry-level positions in white institutions. Paper presented at the National Conference on Blacks in Higher Education,

Video Presentation Links

Of

Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker
Brock International Prize Nominee

Please click the first link below to see a brief video clip of Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker being interviewed about her research. Please click on the second link to see an extended and engaging lecture about her research.

- a. [Conversations with Dr. Vanessa Siddle Walker](#) (AERA video clip, 3:20)
- b. [Twenty-Third Annual Benjamin Mays Lecture](#) (Full-length presentation, 1:11:34)

Second-Class Integration: A Historical Perspective for a Contemporary Agenda

VANESSA SIDDLE WALKER

Emory University

In this essay, Vanessa Siddle Walker invokes the voices of black educators who challenged the diluted and failed vision for an integrated South after the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision mandating school desegregation. Through collaboration and activism, these educators fought against the second-class integration implemented in the southern states and instead advocated for true equality and empowerment for black children entering integrated schools. Walker demonstrates that these educators' critiques are strikingly applicable to the present U.S. educational system, as they highlight our country's failure to provide educational equity despite decades of debate about its necessity and reforms to address the injustices. She advises President Obama's administration to incorporate these original visions of black educators in efforts to craft and advance a new vision for integration and racial equality in schools.

The stories of black educators who taught during U.S. government-enforced racial segregation have been systemically excluded from the vast number of narratives of school desegregation (Baker, 1996; Beals, 1994; Davison, 1995; Harlan, 1958; Kluger, 1977; Martin, 1998; Payne & Strickland, 2008; St. James, 1980; Tushnet, 1987). Where their voices collectively do enter into the story, theirs is a portrait of a lack of participation, fear of job loss, and general antipathy toward the noble cause of acquiring civil rights for all citizens (Tushnet, 1987). When their voices individually appear, their educational affiliation is minimized or they are elevated as anomalous among their peers (Charron, in press; Kluger, 1977). Even scholarship that cites black educators' financial support of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) fails to recognize the dogged collective commitment that defines black teachers' organizations over time or the myriad activities in which they engaged to ensure an

equitable school integration policy (Fairclough, 2007; Tushnet, 1987). The reasonable conclusion from such omissions, though never stated in the narratives, is that the ideas and sacrifices of black educators at the cusp of the elimination of de jure racial segregation were of little consequence.

No wonder contemporary educators fail to import the ideology of black educators into current discussions about racial desegregation in our schools. Beguiled by a historic account that excludes their agency, today's educators have little basis to imagine that black educators—long dismissed from public service—would contribute anything that adds complexity to past or present desegregation accounts. Moreover, the resurrection of black educators' focus on the advancement of black children in particular could be misconstrued as affirmation of the Supreme Court's recent retreat from its commitment to school desegregation (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2008; Thomas, 2007). Although such omissions and concerns are understandable, they function to suppress a comprehensive account of the vision for school desegregation that black educators championed. They also aid in silencing the voices of black educators in the current conversation—an omission that may be as invidious an action as the firings of these educators in the years after *Brown v. Board of Education* (Tate, 1954b).

This brief expedition into a complicated past explores the perspective and role of black educators—specifically through their organizational structures—as advocates for equality before and after the *Brown* decision. Drawing on a larger study that uses the archival records of black educators' professional organizations to interrogate traditional desegregation accounts, I offer a thematic overview of their activities couched in the commentary of one of their leaders and then use the perspective of black educators as a lens through which to examine the present state of racial desegregation in schools. At its root, this juxtaposition of the past and present is designed to provide some context for a new vision of educational justice for African American children and to elucidate the moral imperative that was somehow lost along the way in the quest for racial desegregation. The election of President Obama and the selection of his administration present an opportunity to reimagine a racial and ethnic integration in the United States that comes closer to realizing the vision of black educators who long fought for desegregation: first-class citizenship for all students.

School Integration: A Glimpse into the Activity and Beliefs of Black Educators

When Dr. Horace Edward Tate commanded the podium in Atlanta, Georgia, in June 1970, he carried with him the conviction and anger of a man on a mission to educate a community. This speech, presented to members of the religious black community, was not unlike the many others he had presented in his nine years as executive director of the Georgia Teachers and Education

Association (GTEA), an organization for black educators that was conceived in 1878 to protest inequality in Georgia's distribution of school funding. As executive director, Tate was responsible for representing the collective interests of black educators in promoting educational opportunities for black children. Paid by black educators and responsible solely to them, Tate fulfilled the mandate of his office with vigor, enthusiasm, and insightfulness, sometimes placing his life at risk as he endured long hours building on the legacy of leaders who had preceded him (U. Byas, interview with author, November 2008; C. Hicks, interview with author, July 2008).

"There is evil in the land," Tate began. His voice was even and compelling, luring listeners into his slow rhythmic cadence. "And wherever there is evil, it must be perseveringly and vigorously pursued until it no more exists" (Tate, 1970a). The beginning was odd. He was giving this speech in the year in which the federal courts were finally enforcing the integration that had been commanded in *Brown* (1954) sixteen years earlier—a victory that represented the end of a fight he and his predecessors had waged against racial inequalities. Despite this, after dispensing with the obligatory commendations to program sponsors and participants and elaborating on the responsibility of all living creatures to eliminate evil, he announced the provocative title and subject of his talk: "Some Evils of Second-Class Integration."

Tate's Forewarnings about Second-Class Integration and Its Associated Evils

Tate and the other executive secretaries of the black teachers' organizations throughout the South—a group collectively known as the National Council of Officers of State Teachers Associations (NCOSTA)—had been advocating for "real integration" instead of "second-class integration" (NCOSTA, 1968; H. E. Tate, interview with author, February 14, 2002). He and his colleagues imagined schools where the conditions for blacks would be better after integration than they had been before. They believed the opening of democratic opportunities represented by integrated schooling would be accompanied by a continuation of the vision and agency black educators had used to construct educational opportunities for black children in the past (H. E. Tate, interview with author, February 14, 2002). They did not expect integration to mean the "elimination, annihilation, liquidation of everything initiated, developed or directed by the Negro" (Tate, 1970a). In a memo to his colleagues in 1968, Tate had expressed the sentiment clearly: "Everyone senses that integration is not what is happening" (Tate, 1968). Rather, "outergration" typified the current reality of a desegregation agenda that was disposing of black educators, their ideas, and their organizations. That evening in Atlanta, Tate described a "second-class integration," illustrating the failure of school desegregation policies to meet the expectations of black educators and, further, to point out that their voices were being diminished.

Horace Tate was never known to mince words. "I've lived in this society for forty-seven years," he began, "and thirty-one were spent in an atmosphere per-

plexed with the evils of legal segregation. Ever since I was old enough to know what it was, I have detested it and made every effort to help eradicate it” (Tate, 1970a). As he spoke, Tate no doubt remembered childhood experiences of racism, but the address also captured the intersection of his personal history of undeserved professional oppression with his and other black educators’ long-standing organizational advocacy for equality of opportunity for black children (Perkins, 1989; Picott, 1975; Porter & Neyland, 1977; Potts, 1978).

By the time Tate had become a school principal in 1943, the fight for educational equality in Georgia was fifty-four years old. Among the GTEA’s past activities had been a push for a more equitable agenda for black children in 1918 (using monies available through the Smith-Hughes Act) and its campaign in the 1920s to use philanthropic funding from the Rosenwald rural school-building program to construct elementary schools for black children throughout the South (GTEA History Committee, 1966). By the 1940s, the GTEA’s ongoing strategy of petitions, letters, publications, and formal appearances before local authorities to advocate for change was expanding to embrace litigation (Walker, 2005). As a young principal, Tate drove the executive director of the GTEA, Charles Harper, back and forth between Atlanta and Greensboro, Georgia, through the dead of night. The two would be met on a lonely road just beyond the Oconee River by parents who would later pretend that neither man was behind their requests to the local school board for school bus transportation and better facilities for the local black high school. Harper would repeat the trip in countless communities throughout rural Georgia, often employing that strategy of silence to prevent local officials from knowing who was circulating the petitions for formal legal protest (GTEA, 1947–1949; H. E. Tate, interview with author, February 14, 2002).

Tate’s understanding of the role he and other black educators had played in the fight against educational inequality made his next words more ominous:

But, in trying to wipe out segregation, it is not my desire and it must not be your desire to substitute second-class integration for segregation, for second-class integration is evil no matter who thinks otherwise. In a manner, second-class integration is more evil than was segregation because second-class integration has a way of [entering into] the psyche and penetrating the fibers of the brain and of the soul. (Tate, 1970a)

Tate’s concern was based, in part, on the firings and dismissals of black educators during desegregation.¹ He viewed their dismissals as a means of diminishing the qualifications of black educators in the public mind, and he understood that their absence in the implementation of desegregation would open the way for second-class integration.² Many black segregated schools were characterized by self-efficacious, committed, and well-trained black teachers; extracurricular activities that encouraged students to utilize their multiple talents; strong leadership that engaged parents in the support of the children’s

education; and institutional and interpersonal forms of caring that encouraged students to believe in what they could achieve. Despite the daily insults of a segregated environment, black educators characteristically restructured negative societal messages and reminded students that they should be prepared to assume their places as citizens in a democracy (Davis, 1996; Foster, 1997; O. Hill, interview with author, July 19, 2003; Jones, 1981; Morris & Morris, 2002; Walker, 1996, 2000, 2001; Walker & Tompkins, 2004; Walker with Byas, 2009).

Thus, the firing of black educators, as much as the individual job losses, represented the destruction of a system that both sought to eradicate injustice and foster psychological resilience in the face of overt oppression within black boys and girls. In schools without black teachers, Tate worried that no one would tell black children that they could “be anything [they] wanted to be, that it was [their] brains that made the difference” in their success (H. E. Tate, interview with author, November 10, 2000). He wondered who would call the “aunts, uncles, parents, whoever” to reinforce the message that they had a child who “could ascend to the highest height” but who needed their support.

Tate wanted to be sure his audience understood the implications of the destruction of a school-based commitment to the development of black children:

Second-class integration is evil because it is designed to steal from the Negro boy or girl that black image which has motivated boys and girls and made them to roll up their sleeves and carve out a new role for what we call democracy in this country. Second-class integration is evil because it is designed to make the Negro feel he is not good enough or trained enough or qualified enough to be the head of anything with which whites are involved. Second-class integration is evil because it does not consider the desire, the customs, the mores, the traditions, or feelings of black people as important in the scheme of our society. There can be no first-class citizenship with second-class integration. I say to you again that second-class integration is evil. (Tate, 1970a)

Importantly, Tate was not protesting integration. Like others of his colleagues, he had anticipated the *Brown* decision and celebrated its announcement. As a principal in 1954, he had spoken in laudatory and anticipatory language to his black student body, explaining to them the ways they would be “the beneficiaries of the new endowment,” noting firmly their capacity to “survive in mixed schools,” and speaking of the hope of the race for a “brighter future” (Tate, 1954a). With confidence, he had asserted that he knew they would not fail.

However, many twists had occurred in the integration agenda since those words were spoken. On that evening in 1970, the sharp language in his speech captured the frustration that had accumulated over the years as he watched those who should have helped ensure a more equitable system retreat into a desegregation that was not what he and other black educators had sought.

The Costs of Collaboration

To understand some of Tate's disillusionment, it is essential to explore the GTEA's collaboration with three other agencies—the NAACP, the National Education Association (NEA), and the federal government, particularly the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW)—and the divergence in agendas that resulted.³ Before NAACP attorneys began in the 1930s to litigate suits for equalizing teachers' salaries, the GTEA was advocating a broad agenda for black education, including political issues, such as school bus transportation, facilities, teacher salaries, and lunchrooms, as well as professional schooling issues related to curriculum development, leadership training, testing success, and school dropouts (GTEA History Committee, 1966; Walker, 2000; Walker with Byas, 2009). When black educators first joined with the NAACP in the 1940s to seek racial equality, the collaboration focused on areas of mutual interest: inequality in school facilities and salaries (Harper, 1947; Williams, 1947). For the NAACP, focusing on school inequality, easily measured and documented, represented a strategic way to challenge the structural inequalities in the society; for the GTEA, legal support was the only viable solution in southern settings consistently rejecting the petitions, letters, and personal visitations that characterized the advocacy of black educators (Fairclough, 2007; Walker, 2005).

Although the NAACP's school agenda was not as broad as the GTEA's, the early collaboration served both organizations. The NAACP needed the financial support, plaintiffs, and systemic structures of black educational organizations to achieve success in the school campaign and to increase its strength in the South (Tushnet, 1987). Unlike the GTEA, which had an organizational structure that connected every rural area and city throughout the state, NAACP chapters numbered few, in part because of the danger membership posed to blacks in southern rural areas. For the GTEA's part, the NAACP provided strategic advice, legal expertise, and a shield behind which the GTEA could advocate for schools. The fact that some leaders were members of both groups allowed individuals to don either organizational mask to suit the particular needs of individual school situations.

In contrast to historical accounts that unilaterally hail school initiatives as the NAACP's strategy, the communication between the two organizations suggests that black educators viewed themselves as equal partners in the quest for justice in schooling opportunities for black children and that this view was reciprocated by the NAACP legal staff. GTEA letters frequently used terms such as "giving assistance to the NAACP and others who will support *our* [italics added] cause" (Harper, 1947). Elsewhere the GTEA noted its plan for "moving in on several Boards of Education in this State who are discriminating against Negroes in the matter of length of school term, transportation, salary, and housing" (Harper, 1947). GTEA representatives continued, "If the Association does not get satisfactory results through these petitions, the board of directors in cooperation with local NAACP branches and patrons

plan to take these superintendents and Boards of Education into the Federal Courts.” Although the NAACP national office expected its affiliates to be part of litigation, the letter highlighted the initiative of the GTEA.⁴ This language, which consistently captured the idea of a mutual venture, was utilized even after the *Brown* decision. Daniel Byrd, a representative of the Department of Teacher Welfare and Security of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, emphasized to NCOSTA that the NAACP stood “ready to assist and cooperate in whatever manner state associations desire” (GTEA, 1956).

However, in later years a divergence in agenda emerged. While the opening of doors to white schools served the political ends of both the NAACP and the GTEA, the force of southern resistance drew the NAACP into multiple suits aimed at forcing desegregation in additional settings. The NAACP continued to represent the interests of black educators in dismissal suits, but the number of suits decreased by 1970 as massive desegregation occurred and school boards dismissed black educators. In the same period, black educators attempted to generate a focus on the *type* of desegregation that would occur. In the words of a fired Georgia principal, D. F. Glover, black educators had wanted structures that would create “a favorable atmosphere of respect for the dignity and worth of all races” (Glover, 1968, p. 9). Consistent with the ruling in *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, which had mandated integration across a range of school variables, black educators had imagined that white students would go to black schools and vice versa—that faculty, staff, custodians, and activities would all be merged. They had believed that integration would maintain the best of the activities of their schools *and* give them the monetary and social benefits of being schooled with whites. After calling on governors to convene conferences to implement a fair integration plan (Tate, 1969), GTEA members compiled a booklet, *An Inclusive Guide to School Integration* (GTEA, 1970), which summarized the organization’s beliefs, including their adamant concern that school boards, 99 percent of whose members were white and who were responsible for maintaining segregation, could not be trusted to implement fair integration policies. As the GTEA sought to focus attention on its agenda—justice within the schools—these concerns were summarily ignored by school boards, state officials, and the national press. With this divergence of agendas, NAACP activities became a matter of national memory and support, while the GTEA agenda was muffled by a historiography that narrowly focused on its concern over black educators’ firings and dismissals.

As with the NAACP, the GTEA’s admission into the NEA in 1951 began as a promising collaboration. Despite knowing its prior history of exclusion and the reluctance of its executive director to advocate for equality (Carr, 1965), black educators believed affiliation with the NEA would provide support for additional professional development in their schools. They intentionally rejected the solicitations of the American Federation of Teachers and instead focused on becoming full participants in the NEA’s representative assemblies and using a variety of strategies to build an active coalition (NCOSTA, 1957;

Threat, 1958). Through closed sessions on black college campuses, late-night strategy sessions at NEA conventions, phone and written correspondence with other state associations, and a bevy of telegrams, they garnered support for integrating NEA's governing board and eliminating the dual professional associations—one serving whites and the other serving blacks—that characterized teacher associations in the southern states (Byrd 1958; Greene, 1958). In 1959, they still held the hope that the merger of black and white teacher associations would honor the needs and interests of both groups as equal professionals. However, the expectation for similar visions for integration was short-lived. White teachers' associations removed the restrictive membership clauses they held and invited blacks to become members, but when black teachers' organizations accepted the invitations of white teachers' associations, they compromised their capacity to represent the interests of black children (H. E. Tate, interview with author, February 14, 2002).

As the 1960s progressed, the GTEA engaged in an increasingly bitter battle with the white Georgia Education Association (GEA) over these issues. It was a battle that NEA sought to manage but did not handle to the GTEA's satisfaction (Tate, 1964, 1966; H. E. Tate, interview with author, February 14, 2002). The GTEA protested the proselytizing of its membership by the GEA and decried the GEA's professional ethics because of its willingness to seek the money from black teachers while benefiting from their dismissal. As the two groups were pushed toward merger by an all-white NEA board, one that Tate noted was not integrated, the GTEA believed its interests were willingly being sacrificed to the NEA goal of unification.

Instead of protecting the interests of its black affiliated groups, the NEA circulated kits on intergroup relations, made copies of the "Study on the Status of Negroes," supported some cases of teacher dismissal, elected its first black president, and agreed to sponsor histories of each of the former black associations (NCOSTA, 1960a). These activities helped increase membership and possibly furthered the NEA's long-held agenda of leveraging federal money for schools. However, the NEA complied with a form of desegregation that appeased southern white teachers' associations. It consistently opposed the proposed Powell amendments that would have ensured equitable desegregation policies in the South, and it exhibited little interest in assuming the protection for black children that had been characteristic of the black organizations (NCOSTA, 1960b). As was the case in the GTEA's relationship with the NAACP, what had begun as an anticipated collaboration ended in a divergence of agendas. The NEA agenda prevailed, and the collective influence of black teachers was mitigated in the new structure.

The GTEA collaboration with federal government agencies concerned with education also eventually eroded. In 1962, John F. Kennedy appointed Francis Keppel to the rather low-status job of commissioner of education. Although Keppel was advised by his new colleagues that "civil rights in the sense of race

relations was absolutely unconnected with education and that [he] should stay out of it," Keppel "did the opposite" (Killacky & Conroy, 1985–1986, p. 5). His efforts to address inequality were unpopular with his peers, but, spurred by the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, the education office soon took on "one of the most significant roles in education" ("Mr. Howe Meets the Press," 1965). Although Keppel would shortly resign from government service, his successor to the office, Harold Howe, was equally committed to the federal agenda. Appointed in December 1965, Howe announced at his first news conference that it was his duty to enforce the provisions that flowed from the Civil Rights Act, an act that prohibited discrimination in the distribution of federal funds. In response to a direct query about whether the government should force white students to accept black teachers, Howe conceded that "it's illogical to talk about a move toward the integration of students and not talk about a move toward the integration of school staff" ("Mr. Howe Meets the Press," 1965). He conceded that school systems certainly had some right to decide who would teach the children but emphasized that "school systems do not have the right to say that someone should be prevented from doing that because he is a member of a race or of any other particular group."

Strong federal support for equality in schooling, with federal purse strings attached to the prohibition of discrimination, suited the purposes of the GTEA and assisted in achieving measurable progress for black educators in Georgia, where black educators used the federal climate to accomplish long-held ends. For example, although black teachers had finally been awarded a salary scale in 1951 that entitled them to salaries comparable to those of their white counterparts, at least thirty-eight systems in Georgia "allowed 'white' teachers and principals to receive salary supplements while denying a like salary supplement to Negro teachers and administrators" (Tate, 1965). Four times in the early 1960s, the GTEA decried this practice before the state board of education to no avail. Not until 1964 did the state legislature approve a Senate bill that allowed the state board wider powers to influence unequal practices throughout the state—a victory linked, as the GTEA understood, to the federal climate in Washington.

However, after Howe was removed amid virulent southern protests about his policies, the federal government aligned its advocacy with the desires of white southerners (Anti-Howe letters, 1966–1968; Cecelski, 1994; Killacky & Conroy, 1985–1986). D. F. Glover (1968) depicted the disdain the Georgia black community held for HEW policies, arguing that HEW was, in part, to blame for the public perception that made "inadequate and inferior education . . . synonymous with Negro education" (p. 10). HEW, he emphasized, knew that there was "an unyielding determination of some superintendents and boards of education throughout [Georgia] to subjugate Negro teachers and pupils" (p. 10). Yet, it had abandoned its earlier principles and was willing to sacrifice black

schools and black educators. This new federal agenda served the interests of white school boards but was no longer useful in the GTEA's quest.

In each collaboration, the other group eventually accepted the removal of black educators and subordinated the GTEA's beliefs about necessary practices for integration. As Tate's 1970 address indicated, the vision of black educators for integration was degenerating into a powerless desegregation where black children would be left with little support to forge new educational terrains. Black children now lacked the support of black educators and the organizations they had used to lower dropout rates and boost college attendance rates and literacy rates. Clear on that evening was that neither the people nor the structures of the GTEA would maintain power in desegregated settings. Tate concluded, "We must work to hasten the day when second-class integration is no longer in existence" (Tate, 1970a). He ended the speech with a phrase he had used in its opening, reminding the audience that "what man has made bad, he can make good—if only he has the desire and the will so to do." He sat down to thundering applause.

School Outergration: New Questions Emanating from the Black Educators' Narrative

Is the previous account a romantic portrayal of disgruntled educators perturbed because they and their voices were quieted upon desegregation, or does it offer a necessary contextual critique of school desegregation that challenges the norms commonly accepted today? Black educators sought real integration, integration that maintained the power of black educators and continued the curricular initiatives that were part of their schooling. How might their vision inform the contemporary dialogue about desegregation?

The comparison might begin by calling us to reenvision integration itself, a principle in which black educators believed so strongly that they willingly voted their own organizations out of existence as a means of advancing it. In the current climate, many black children have been returned to segregated schools, or they never left them. Schools today reflect challenges not unlike those that the GTEA fought: unequal resources, teacher credentials, teacher attendance, and parental support (Orfield & Eaton, 1996; Orfield & Lee, 2006). Children who were part of desegregation experiments in the 1970s and 1980s have grown into adults who value their experiences in desegregated schools but fail to support policies to ensure similar experiences for their own children (Wells, Holme, Revilla, & Atanda, 2009). Meanwhile, school districts across the country employ *Plessy v. Ferguson* methods to address the gaps rather than seek opportunities to continue desegregation policies. By every measure, black educators' dream of integrated schools has not been realized in this generation. Indeed, even the second-class integration they rallied against is being aborted in a climate that refuses to allow student assignments based on race.

Where desegregation has been maintained, the result is unsatisfying when evaluated against the measure of the original dream. Although some black children do benefit from access to wider networks of upward mobility, too many others are stuck in classrooms with poorer-credentialed teachers who focus on state curricular mandates rather than motivating children, infusing teaching with care, and inspiring aspiration (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Irvine, 1990, 2002; Kober, 2001). Some educators, black and white, exhibit characteristics reminiscent of the teaching values of the previous generation of black teachers, but their beliefs and activities are not valued in a climate that rewards measurable achievement (Irvine, 2003). In numerous settings, black children are disproportionately placed in special education and disciplined more frequently than their white counterparts, even when they have committed the same offense (Blanchett, 2006; Witt, 2007). As black educators foreshadowed, desegregation has gained black students access to facilities and resources, but it has ignored school climate, involvement of black parents, equity, and inspiration in the formula for success.

An examination of the forms desegregation has assumed has led some members of the African American community to retreat from the principle of integration. Frustrated with chasing desegregation dreams, these parents emphasize that black schools do not have to mean “inequality” (Schmidt, 1991). But this way of thinking fails to consider the network of black organizational support and advocacy that seeded the development of black schools during segregation (Walker with Byas, 2009). Few communities understand the kind of activities in which people like Horace Tate were involved, nor do they understand how these structures functioned cohesively to deliver the educational experiences some remember. Without the power wielded by organizational structures, the capacity to leverage mutual interests across communities will be mitigated. Furthermore, accepting the continued presence of racially segregated schools neglects the painful historical truth that the segregation of black students has consistently yielded inequalities in personnel, facilities, or resources. Finally, resegregation ignores the dream for which educators fought; integration was supposed to accomplish citizenship ideals that would create a better form of democracy (Walker with Byas, 2009). To retreat from the vision of equality for all citizens indicts America’s ideals.

The contemporary relevance of the GTEA’s role in advocating for real integration compels a new conversation about education and desegregation that is broader than the current focus on testing. The unfortunate truth for federal policymakers blindly convinced that No Child Left Behind (NCLB) will solve the ills of education is that NCLB testing will never produce the kind of just education black educators had hoped for. It focuses on a public report card as a substitute for supporting school leaders and teachers in the kind of ongoing school-based professional development that would help them teach children. Moreover, continuing such policies will do little to address the deep structural inequalities embedded in failed integration and desegregation efforts.

New Opportunities under the Obama Administration

President Obama has a unique opportunity. The president's personal experiences and heritage allow him to understand why all the black kids sit together in the cafeteria in desegregated schools (Tatum, 2003). He understands their struggles to belong in a racially segregated society and the rejection of a system that does not value personhood (Obama, 1995). He likewise understands the success to be gained when black children are able to tap into the benefits of an integrated world. Though his shared perspective and ethnic identification will not be sufficient to discount the myriad barriers black children face in their daily school encounters, he has demonstrated a capacity to inspire the nation to refocus its agenda, and that agenda should include black children.

Obama is a master of language, communication, and hope. With these capacities, his administration has the tools to ignite a new conversation about racial and ethnic integration in schools and to address how failed strategies can be reinvented in ways that honor the needs of all constituents. This new conversation should be informed by a revisionist history that values the practices and beliefs of the black educators who had the most experience motivating success among black children, even during difficult circumstances. President Obama should acknowledge frankly the previous policies that failed to produce equality and evaluate honestly the ways current school structures are linked to local school board priorities that intentionally subordinate black children's educational needs. He should applaud the possibilities of desegregation evident in the rise in test scores among black children after desegregation, while also recognizing that the generation whose test scores rose had both desegregated facilities *and* some oversight from black teachers from formerly segregated schools. Since student success could be attributed to a combination of these variables, he might intentionally advocate the findings of current research demonstrating the way educators can teach content while simultaneously creating culturally sensitive classroom climates. As president, Obama might also modify the current educational model that champions competition and individual success to instead encourage collaborative ventures across constituents. Above all, he might inspire the hope that a partially implemented desegregation plan does not have to be America's twenty-first-century legacy.

History, of course, will not provide a road map for the action that needs to follow the conversation. In a country still jittery about race, owning our past failures and suggesting a new vision of justice in American education will be, as Obama's mother might have put it, "no picnic" (Obama, 1995). However, in his 2008 speech on race, Obama demonstrated that he is not daunted by the challenge. Indeed, this unique moment in history provides an opportunity to respond to the challenge posed by Horace Tate so many decades ago: "What man has made bad, he can make good—if only he has the desire and the will so to do" (Tate, 1970a). Perhaps in this new era, Americans might find the desire so to do.

Notes

1. Tate's papers include a stapled collection of references that support the contention that "advocates of segregation are spreading this propaganda to scare Negro teachers and liberals of both races who want an end to Jim Crow schools." The clippings include "Negro Teachers May Lose Jobs If Segregation Ends," *New York Herald Tribune*, January 10, 1954; and "Future of State's Negro Teachers Found Uncertain," *Topeka Kansas State Journal*, January 14, 1954 (Tate, 1954b).
2. Tate was not alone in his concerns about the loss of black educators. Tate was vice chairman of NCOSTA and was actively involved in its varied efforts to utilize press conferences, telegrams to the president, meetings with black parents, bus charters to the NEA headquarters, and communications with the Office of Civil Rights to heighten public awareness about the form integration was assuming throughout the South. NCOSTA leaders hoped to reshape the national agenda and preserve the people and ideas they believed helped serve black children (GTEA, 1956, 1969; NCOSTA, 1957; Palmer, 1968; Picott, 1975; Tate, 1968, 1970b).
3. In naming these three agencies, I omit the GTEA's collaboration with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to compel southern districts to respond to ongoing school inequalities (H. E. Tate, interview with author, February 14, 2002). I also omit its efforts to leverage federal monies to address economic issues confronting the black community.
4. Follow-up communications to Thurgood Marshall—referred to as "My dear Attorney Marshall"—outlined the GTEA's request that Marshall or someone on his staff "draw up for us a rather general letter which we might use to send to the several boards of education" (Brown, Cranberry, & Harper, 1947). With precision, they provided detail on the several components needed in the letter and provided a draft of one section in "skeleton or suggestive form in which we might fill in the details." The letter ended, "Thanking you for your very fine cooperation in the past and soliciting your support in this effort."

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Caswell County Training School, 1933–1969: Relationships between Community and School

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The history of education has many references that depict the inequities African-American children experienced during the pre-integration era, but few studies that describe the positive interactions in segregated school environments. In this article, Emilie Vanessa Siddle Walker discusses the case of Caswell County Training School of North Carolina. In this study, ethnographically approached, the author explores the relationships between school and community as they existed in a segregated Black school in the South that was defined by its community as a “good” school. Specifically, Siddle Walker considers: 1) the ways in which the community supported the school; 2) the ways in which the school supported the community; and 3) the implications of these relationships both in their historical context and in informing the current school reform debates.

When court-ordered school desegregation plans were announced in 1969 for rural Caswell County, North Carolina, the local newspaper recorded the reaction of one White parent:

We have no animosity toward the Board. They have done all they can to stall. However, we now feel that this reorganization of our public schools will destroy our high standard of education, depriving our children of the quality of education they deserve and what we all want.

What they wanted, the parent continued, “was the highest standard of education in [the] county” (“Eighteen-Member Board,” 1969).

That parent’s implicit denigration of the county’s one Negro school was ironic.¹ The county high school for Negro children, the Caswell County Training

¹ The terms “Negro,” “colored,” “Black,” and “African-American” are used interchangeably in this article. In general, the term used reflects the appropriate label given to those of African descent during the particular era being discussed.

School (CCTS), was a three-story, immaculately kept brick structure that included a gymnasium and a 722-person-capacity auditorium with a balcony.² The principal, Nicholas Longworth Dillard, who held a master's degree from the University of Michigan, was esteemed locally by both Black and White educational leaders for his knowledge of national educational issues. By 1954, 64 percent of the school's teachers had graduate training beyond state recertification requirements, and during Dillard's thirty-six-year tenure from 1933 to 1969, the school offered more than fifty-three extracurricular clubs and activities to enhance student leadership and development. Moreover, the school's educational programs had been on the approved list of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools since 1934, and were formally accredited in 1955 after that agency began accrediting Negro schools. In contrast, the area high school for White children was smaller, older, had fewer facilities, and was not accredited.

Yet this White parent's belief that White educational systems were superior to Black, and that Negro educators could have nothing to offer White children, is an accurate reflection of many White Americans' perception, both during that era and into the present. Indeed, the history of U.S. education documents so well the inequities African-American children experienced during the pre-integration era — specifically the lack of resources, the substandard facilities, and the poor response of school boards to the needs of schools (see Anderson, 1988; Brown, 1960; Clark, 1963; Clift, Anderson, & Hullfish, 1962; Kluger, 1977; Newbold, 1935) — that these images of uniform deprivation have become the dominant picture at the center of most thinking about the segregated schooling of African-American children.

This perception of inequality, while not totally inaccurate, is, however, one-sided. It highlights the need and struggle for equality, but overlooks any suggestion that not all education for African-American children during segregation was inferior. Sowell (1976), for example, in his description of six "excellent" historically Black high schools and two elementary schools, lists some traits common to these good schools. These traits include, but are not limited to, the commitment and educational levels of the teachers and principals, and the support, encouragement, and rigid standards that characterize the schools' atmospheres. Similarly, in Jones's *A Traditional Model of Educational Excellence* (1981), the segregated school environment is described as "one's home away from home, where students were taught, nurtured, supported, corrected, encouraged, and punished" (p. 2). These and other studies (Adair, 1984; Foster, 1990; Irvine & Irvine, 1984) suggest the presence of a positive sociocultural system in which "uniquely stylized characteristics" reflective of the student population developed independently of White control (Irvine & Irvine, 1984, p. 416), and in which African-

² During the last decade of segregation, the name of the school was changed to Caswell County High School, even though it continued to maintain an elementary department for the local township until 1967. In the early years, it was referred to as the Yanceyville School and, after integration, the name was changed to Dillard Junior High School. For purposes of consistency, this article consistently refers to the facility as Caswell County Training School, the name by which it was known for the longest period of time.

American youth were successful because of the school environment in which they were taught.

The degree to which such descriptions of segregated Black schooling might also apply to other undocumented cases is further suggested by the numerous voices in southern African-American communities, which today speak forcefully of the “goodness” of their pre-integration schools. These voices do not speak of test scores and/or any measured success of school graduates in defining “goodness.” Rather, they fondly recall a time when, in the words of one eighty-year-old grandmother, “colored children learnt something in school.” Cecelski (1991) has captured some of this appreciation as he chronicles a little-known political struggle in which Negro parents and students boycotted their school system for a year, rather than sacrifice their schools in a locally proposed desegregation plan. Though other voices remain undocumented, the fact that they are heard so frequently in many small-town communities suggests that schooling that was valued by parents, students, and school personnel may have been more common than has been realized.

However, little is known about these unidentified good community schools. Even the paucity of literature that exists on pre-integration Black schooling focuses almost exclusively on good urban high schools, so defined because of their success with standardized test scores, the number of doctoral degrees earned by graduates, or some other easily measured outcome variables. Educators understand little of the emic perspective — that is, how and why communities considered their schools to be good. Educators also do not understand the nature of the schooling in those community-defined good schools. This lack of knowledge not only denies that there are valuable lessons to be learned from principals and teachers who successfully schooled African-American children in the past (Foster, 1990), but it also ignores the fact that the communities were pleased with that education. Perhaps more significantly, this lack of knowledge also results in ahistorical approaches to school reform that deprive reformers of important contextual information that could directly impact the success or failure of select school programs. Such oversight could well decrease opportunities for African-American children to succeed in today’s schools.

I premise this article on the idea that segregated schools that were valued by their communities did exist, and that understanding more about the nature of those schools is important for historical accuracy and for educational reform. As I discuss below, I believe that understanding the history of education in these schools, as well as the types of parent and community participation that were present, will facilitate our ability to ask the right questions as we tackle current reform issues. This is preferable to focusing on questions that are premised on negative assumptions about African-American communities.

With this in mind, I present the case of CCTS, the segregated Negro school described earlier. Situated in North Carolina’s rural Caswell County, CCTS was a self- and community-defined “good” school. The belief that their school provided a good environment for learning was shared by its graduates, parents, and teachers. This belief is documented in the school’s written and oral history, and

remains generally consistent throughout most of its existence. In this article, I accept the community's evaluation of CCTS as a good school. I make no effort to argue that by traditional criteria, such as test scores or college attendance rates, CCTS represents the best in segregated schools in the South, or even in its region. Importantly, my description of why CCTS was perceived as a good school is not meant to validate the inequities or minimize the discrimination that existed in this and other segregated schools, where parents were overly burdened to create for themselves the educational facilities and opportunities school boards often denied them (Anderson, 1988; Bullock, 1967). Rather, I offer this case as representative of the many other southern African-American schools whose communities were also pleased with their schools, but whose histories have been lost and whose value is understood now only by former teachers, principals, parents, and students.

This case, ethnographically approached, uses eighty open-ended interviews with former teachers, students, parents, and administrators, to uncover the themes of the school's goodness, and also to explore the nature of the relationships within the school environment that explain that goodness.³ To reduce the influence of interviewee nostalgia, school documents such as yearbooks, school newspapers, handbooks, and so forth, as well as newspaper accounts, minutes of school board meetings, Southern Association reports, and other archival materials are used to corroborate emerging themes. The knowledge base derived from a triangulation of documents with interviews is used in this article to analyze one area little explored in segregated schooling — that is, the nature of the relationship between community and school. Within the context of this discussion, "community" refers to all of the African-American adults who lived within the forty-square-mile county and who shared a real or imagined bond with CCTS. While some of the adults lived within the town in which the school was located, and thereby had more than the usual informal contact with the principal and teachers at the churches, stores, and other incidental meetings places, this discussion is not confined to their relationship with the school. It also incorporates the feeling of relationship and perspective of those adults who lived outside the town. Thus, the community was not defined by physical proximity. In this article, I focus specifically on the ways in which this community and CCTS supported each other. I further explore the significance of these activities, both in their historical context and in their implications vis-à-vis current advocacy for more involvement of African-American parents in their children's education.

The Case in Historical Context: African Americans in Traditional Modes of Support

CCTS did not always boast the facilities or programs it enjoyed in 1969, the year it ceased to operate as a high school. Indeed, like most other segregated schools,

³ "Open-ended interviews" is a term used to describe a questioning format that allows the researcher to ask for facts about the matter under discussion, as well as to ask the interviewee's opinion about the facts. This method was used in conjunction with Spradley's (1979) suggestions for the "ethnographic interview," which describes specific procedures to tap the knowledge base of a participant in a culture scene. Interviews lasted usually from 60 to 90 minutes; participants represented varying regions of the community and varying degrees of involvement in the school.

its history was one of financial struggle, broken promises, delayed response from White school authorities, and financial burdens on its students and parents. It began as a small elementary school in a two-story house purchased by several prominent Negro citizens in 1906.⁴ In the 1924–1925 school year, it expanded to a four-room “Rosenwald” structure, which teachers and community patrons had contributed \$800 to complete⁵. Having previously been denied permission to expand the school beyond the seventh grade, community patrons, under the leadership of newly arrived Principal Dillard, were able in 1934 to add a high school attended by seventy-seven students, many of whom had to travel twenty miles to school on an open-air truck. The truck was donated by a parent, Ulysses Jones, who operated it at a loss for two years, before finally donating it to the state as collateral for the new truck the PTA promised to supply. Meanwhile, another parent, T. S. Lea, paid the electric bill, and others who had dug an unauthorized well were not reimbursed by the school board for their expenses.

Although by 1938 the over-crowded school housed six hundred children in fewer than ten rooms, and a “colored citizen [had] offered to donate to the county nine-and-a-half acres of land as a site for a new school” (Newbold, 1935), the community was forced to wait thirteen years before the new facility was completed.⁶ This delay can be attributed in part to the school board’s self-description of being “hindered in the making and completing of their plans by lack of sufficient funds” (School Board Minutes, November 3, 1941). However, the minutes also suggest that the county was initially unwilling to use local resources for the building of a Negro school. Further, even after local resources were appropriated, the building needs of the Negro children were merged with those of two other schools for White children.

In the meantime, while the school board passed four resolutions affirming its commitment to build a new school, Negro parents continued to provide resources for the twenty-two teachers and 735 pupils who were part of the school by the 1948–1949 school year. The 1949 yearbook notes that “while the building does not yet satisfy our patrons, they are proud of its equipment.” This equipment included modern tablet arm chairs; instructional supplies, including audio-visual aids such as radios, a movie projector, a 35-mm projector, and a wire recorder; and other items they considered important for education, but which

⁴ Under a fund set up by Julius Rosenwald in 1917, Negro patrons received matching funds for any monetary or other contributions they could make towards the building of schools for Negro children. Records indicate that Caswell County school patrons participated in this program, and that their school, like the 5000 others built in the South before 1948, was known as a “Rosenwald” school. This name, of course, detracts attention from the numerous contributions made by Negro parents and educators. This emphasis on the program rather than the parents is more fully discussed by Anderson (1988).

⁵ Although I refer here to the first known building, the education of Negro children in the area precedes the purchase of a school building in Yanceyville in 1906. The North Carolina Session of 1897, for example, notes the incorporation of the “Yanceyville Colored Graded School” for the education of the colored children. Moreover, the oral history records the existence of church schools throughout the area in the late 1800s.

⁶ This information is based upon a letter recorded in the school board minutes from N. C. Newbold, director of the Negro Division of Education, to Holland McSwain, Superintendent of Caswell County Schools. The letter itself is dated August 29, 1938; the letter is recorded in the school board minutes under the meeting for September 5, 1938.

the school board refused to supply. The academically oriented school curriculum was complemented by an award-winning debate team, a band (the first in any Caswell County high school), a newspaper, and other student organizations (Caswell County, 1949).

In March of 1951, when the students and teachers finally moved into the twenty-seven-room facility described by the local paper as “modern in every respect,” the new building reflected the tremendous community support that was part of its history. While the county contributed \$80,000 toward the cost of the \$325,000 state-funded project, the Negro citizens themselves added close to \$8,000 in equipment, almost a tenth of the cost the county expended, to create the kind of facility they had envisioned in 1949 — “a physical plant second to none in the state” (Caswell County, 1949). Among the items added were an \$1,800 stage curtain and colored footlights, \$3,000 worth of venetian blinds for the windows, a \$400 time clock to regulate classes automatically, and a \$2,000 public-address system (“Dedication,” 1951). The money for these items was contributed by students, parents, and other community supporters.

Between 1951 and 1969, parents continued to support the financial needs of CCTS, supplying such items as band uniforms and instruments, science equipment, a piano, and workbooks. While they engaged in many fundraising activities during those years, the most consistent and most remembered was the Popularity Contest. In this annual event, each high school class nominated a king and queen; members of the class, with the participation of parents and other community leaders, then raised money to support their nominees. In the heyday of this event, records indicate that the winning class alone contributed as much as \$1,410.35 to support the school. In February of 1969, however, things began to change: Principal Dillard died unexpectedly in the midst of planning desegregation, and that fall the school was reorganized as a fully integrated junior high. After these two events, Negro parents ceased all such financial assistance to the school.

Considering a rural community where, in 1953, 58 percent of the parents were farmers, 23 percent homemakers, 6 percent laborers, and 8 percent service and domestic workers, there is a temptation to view the CCTS community’s financial contributions to the school as exceptional. Their self-reliance, sacrifice, and sense of community responsibility not only created ongoing support for the school, but also provided their children with a model for the role interested parents should play. Their commitment insured that continuous resources would be provided for the education of Black children, despite the lack of adequate support from the all-White school board. Yet, the sacrifices, self-help, and support of these CCTS patrons were typical of Negroes in many communities in the South during this era. This story of self-help for segregated schools has been most notably described and analyzed by Anderson (1988), who emphasizes the fact that, although such help was helpful in improving school conditions, it also was oppressive in that it imposed a “double taxation” on Negro citizens. According to Anderson, “rural Blacks in particular were victims of [this] taxation without representation” (p. 156). They were often forced to “take from their meager

annual incomes and contribute money to the construction and maintenance of public schools for the Black child because southern state and local governments refused to accept responsibility for Black public education” (p. 176). In other words, Black parents paid taxes for services they did not receive. The history of CCTS lends additional evidence to Anderson’s thesis.

What has been less often discussed, however, are the other avenues of parental support that existed in segregated school environments. Although CCTS grew significantly between 1933 and 1969, the nature of the relationship between school and community remained consistent. In addition to providing financial support, parents at CCTS 1) maintained a physical presence in the school, primarily through the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and other events to which they were invited; 2) played an “advocacy” role for the school in soliciting funds from the school board; and 3) provided invisible home-based support for the principal and teachers.

Parents in the School: Other Avenues of Community Support

In the CCTS environment, the PTA functioned as an umbrella organization that took the lead in providing financial contributions to the school, and also provided other opportunities for parental involvement in school activities. Perhaps the most obvious facet of this involvement was parents’ attendance at PTA meetings. While exact attendance figures are not available, former teacher Helen Beasley remembers:

I don’t know how many folks we *didn’t* have at PTA! Good gracious. If the auditorium wasn’t filled up, it was maybe like three-fourths. That great big auditorium would be three-fourths full with the mamas and daddies and the brothers and the sisters and the grandmamas and the aunts, and the uncles and whoever.

Though not all informants are as enthusiastic in their memories of the number of people attending and often focus instead on whether there should have been even more, they do report that the auditorium was frequently filled to capacity as Beasley relates. In absolute numbers, PTA attendance was less in earlier years, when parents were more likely to sit around a pot-bellied stove rather than gather in a formal setting; nevertheless, participation was reportedly high, especially given the distance parents had to travel and the lack of automobiles. When parents did not attend, it was usually because of transportation problems or conflicting work schedules. Lack of interest in the school or a feeling of alienation were seldom the reasons given for their absence.

Several activities were consistently part of the business portion of the PTA meeting. First, parents received reports about the school’s financial and educational status. Since one of the PTA’s primary missions was to help supply the school’s needs, the financial report often involved the president or the principal outlining the most pressing needs. Based on these reports, parents organized collaborative plans of action with teachers and the principal, and actively engaged in completing the projects. These activities typically included overseeing a teacher’s homeroom activities and reporting on that class’s participation, or

joining in a parent-teacher basketball game. Parents who were not active in planning often provided support by attending an event, and supplying or buying items on sale there.

The principal also regularly used a portion of the meeting to report to the parents about education, what was going on in the school such as problems drivers were having on buses, or ways in which parents could help their children succeed academically. He also reviewed his expectations for the children, the school policies, and the events planned for the year. Parents who recall Dillard's PTA reports remember how interested he was in the children. Says one parent: "[Having every child succeed] — that was his main priority."

Dillard also shared with parents his experiences at any national or regional meetings he had attended. His teachers, who were required to join their professional organization and urged to attend non-local meetings, were also expected to report to parents during this segment of PTA meetings. Today CCTS parents describe little about the educational trends that were discussed during those times, but they still remember the jokes Dillard was famous for collecting and sharing with them.

In addition to the PTA business reports and discussions, parents could also expect entertainment and refreshments. This entertainment came from various high school groups or elementary classes, who were assigned a time in the school year to make a presentation to the PTA. Teachers often repeated for the PTA the assembly programs they were periodically scheduled to have in Chapel.⁷ Since few parents saw these programs during Chapel, they usually played to a new audience. The refreshments that were served afterward to cast, teachers, and parents were supplied by the PTA.

When the formal portion of the PTA meetings ended, the informal talk between teachers and parents began. According to parent Dorothy Graves, these informal talks, during which the parents could find out how their children were doing in school, was one of the primary reasons they went to PTA. She explains:

You didn't go to the schools during the day or after school to talk about your children. You didn't go in unless there was a problem and the principal called you in. The time during the school day was allotted for the teaching of the student. Parents just didn't go in to school and disturb a teacher. [The teachers would say], tell your parents to come to PTA.

These informal conversations between teachers and parents sometimes took place in the classrooms, at other times in different areas of the auditorium. Most conversations began with the parent's single question: "How is my child doing?" If the teacher responded "fine," little else would be said, other than the parent perhaps saying, "Now you let me know if there's a problem." Or if there was a problem, the teacher might consult her rollbook and say, "Jeff is doing fine in

⁷ Chapel was a weekly gathering of the principal, teachers, and students, where student talent was showcased and where the principal used the time to talk to the students about pressing issues, such as life, discipline, or any other topic he felt compelled to address. While religious services were not the focus of the gathering, talk often emphasized moral values that were consistent with the values held by the community.

English; however, he needs to work on his math.” Such informal conversations continued until each parent had the opportunity to speak to every teacher he or she wished to see. Since teachers were required to attend PTA meetings, said one parent, “there was never any worry that [your child’s teacher] wouldn’t be there.”

Besides attending the regular monthly meetings, some PTA members implemented planned tasks, such as preparing appreciation dinners for the teachers or continuing their ongoing fundraising activities. They referred to this as “working along with the teachers,” and valued the time as an opportunity to get to know each other. Parents also attended major school functions, filling the auditorium for the concerts held by the high school choir and band every Christmas and spring, and the annual “operettas” held by the primary and upper elementary schools. A few parents were also involved in some classroom functions, such as providing food and setting up for a class Christmas or end-of-year party, supervising the Maypole dances in preparation for field day, or, in the case of at least one teacher, assisting in classroom instruction by playing educational games with the children. Reports indicate that parents on all socioeconomic levels were likely to participate in the events, if they were asked.

What is central to the nature of this parental presence at CCTS is the key phrase, “if asked.” For example, Nellie Williamson, the teacher who had parents play educational games with the children, emphasizes that “not many did this”; those who did, she says, did so “because she had a conversation with them individually.” Thus, parents who helped in the classroom or assisted with other events, were responding to teachers’ notes or oral invitations. PTA meetings and student performances were other events to which parents had invitations. Says Janie Richmond, a former student and later an elementary school teacher, “the parents supported the school” and came whenever you asked them, but they didn’t schedule parent-teacher conferences, or volunteer to assist with tutoring, or concern themselves with other areas of classroom instruction. Long-time English teacher Chattie Boston concurs that “parents left curricula concerns to the teachers.” The data suggest both are correct, as parents never describe themselves as having initiated visits to the school to observe or to discuss any curricular concerns. Some parents, however, did assume a political role that might be termed “working for the school.” This role of advocate was historically associated with the PTA leaders. These advocates positioned themselves between the school’s needs and the oversight of the school board, and on numerous occasions lobbied for additional funding for the school. No records indicate that the White school board was hostile to the Negro patrons who sought their assistance; they were generally polite, even as they postponed and denied repeated requests for funding.⁸

⁸ The board’s receptivity did, as may be expected, increase in the 1950s and 1960s. This may be attributed in part to the aftermath of the *Brown* decision, when the county sought to be certain that all its Negro schools were “equal.” However, the parents also credit the efforts of a new superintendent, Thomas Whitley, who they characterized as a “fair” man who was willing to go “as far as he could go” to promote equity.

The leadership role these parent advocates took in going before the board to lobby for the school is termed “working” for the school because the teachers and principal seldom appeared before the board. In the political climate of the era, those employed by the school system could expect to lose their jobs if they involved themselves in questions of equity. As one parent advocate recalls, “Dillard himself couldn’t afford to come out. He was a very smart leader who knew how far they would let him go.” A second parent recalls, “Mr. Dillard provided prompting on preparation, who to speak to. He would give you an idea. Usually [men] would go. They would go as a group and usually have one spokesman.” This behind-the-scenes prompting most often occurred with farmers who owned their own land, preachers, or private business owners. While in the earlier years these were primarily men, documents and interviews from later periods indicate that women also assumed an advocacy role. What all advocates generally had in common was that they relied on other Negroes for their income, and thus did not need to fear repercussions from the White school board.

The role of parent advocates also extended beyond the county level. Records indicate that these citizens, like Dillard, made numerous trips to the state capital to seek assistance when their requests were denied on the local level. This was particularly true of their efforts in the early years of CCTS to see that a high school be established, and later, that a new one be built. In response to these visits, and as a part of his push to get the county to build a new school, the Director of the Division of Negro Education wrote the Caswell County school board requesting that an “adequate brick building be supplied” for the Negroes. He freely admitted that his urging was the result of having been “approached by a group of very intelligent colored citizens from [Caswell] County.”⁹

The importance of this advocacy role over the years was recognized and appreciated not only by other parents, but also by the students. Consider their commendation of three parents in the opening pages of the 1960 yearbook:

The annual certainly would be incomplete if the seniors failed to salute the successful efforts of these three patrons in obtaining a modern physical education building for the school. Over a three year period they continuously appeared before the Board of Education in behalf of a new physical education building. Time and time again they made appeals and, needless to say, at times they were disappointed, but not enough to ever cease their efforts. Soon, thanks to them, this facility will be available. The students and patrons of C.C.T.S. shall ever remember with gratitude their untiring efforts. Again we salute you, Mrs. Bigelow, Mrs. Saylor, and Mrs. Little. Words will never express our appreciation.

The passage is accompanied by a portrait of the three women. While other CCTS yearbooks do not contain such elaborate expressions of appreciation, special

⁹ In 1921, the Negro Division of Education was established by Legislative Act in the state of North Carolina. Although headed by a White agent, the director, N. C. Newbold, has been credited with helping to “set in motion the development and standardization of secondary schools” in North Carolina (Brown, 1960, p. 49). The school board minutes in Caswell County indicate that through both letters and meetings with the board, Newbold was instrumental in pressuring the county to address the needs of the Negro community.

thank you's to parents for their assistance frequently appeared in dedications and in class histories.

Perhaps the most consistent way parents supported the school — even those who never participated in PTA or related activities or assumed the role of advocate — was accomplished without the parents ever leaving home. They instilled in their children a respect for teachers, which carried with it an expectation of obedience. Says parent Nannie Evans, “I would always tell my child, ‘when you go to school, remember you are supposed to obey your teachers just like you obey me at home.’”

These attitudes about obedience led students to believe that if they were punished at school for an offense, they could expect additional punishment at home. In the words of one student: “I knew not to get sent home for anything. If I did, I knew my daddy was going to whoop me good — not spank — but whoop me. I knew not to try to get into trouble.” And if a child did get into trouble at school, the parent's likely response to the teacher was, “Well, if he doesn't do well, you just let me know again.”

This “home training,” as southern African Americans are likely to call their parents' expectations of them, reinforced school policies and provided a solid mechanism of invisible support. While the disciplinary skills of the CCTS principal and teachers will not be discussed in this article, I will point out that demands on their disciplinary skills were lessened by this seldom-articulated, yet forceful parental support. Thus, parent and school were united in their expectations of the students. As one student described the relationship: “My mommy and daddy are pushing me and my teachers are pushing me . . . oh well, I got to do good.”

School Supports Community

CCTS parents provided financial and physical support, advocacy, and home-front support. From the vantage point of current advocates of parental involvement (see, for example, Henderson 1987, 1988; Rich, 1987), the parents' degree of activity might not be considered unusual. However, given the current lack of involvement of many African-American parents in schools (Henderson, 1987), the degree of their support is exceptional. To what might their level of involvement be attributed?

Several explanations are possible. As Lightfoot (1978, 1981) has noted, African Americans have traditionally believed in the importance of education, and have made sacrifices to be certain that their children had opportunities to achieve in school. That parents valued education and therefore contributed to the support of CCTS is corroborated by records from other elementary schools scattered throughout Caswell County, where parents were also active in PTA and other school events. Thus, the parental response at CCTS might well have been the public manifestation of the parents' private beliefs about the importance of education. Another equally compelling reason for the relationship between CCTS and parents in later years might relate to existing community ties. As many parents point out, they had known Principal Dillard themselves as children, when they attended school under his leadership; they had also gone to school

with some of the teachers. Therefore, school personnel were not strangers, but rather people with whom they already had a relationship.

Though parents' belief in education and the existence of community ties are both important factors in understanding the parents' relationship to the school, they offer an insufficient explanation for the levels of support provided by parents. Teachers who had not grown up in the county, for example, were equally accepted, supported, and welcomed by parents, as was Dillard, even in his early years. According to Inez Blackwell, a parent and former student, this was because new teachers quickly made themselves known to the community. "They were never stuck up," she says. "Within months," Blackwell notes, "it seemed like they had been here all the time." Thus, teachers who had previous ties with the community had little advantage over those who came into the county. Moreover, though African-American parents today still believe in the power of education, their belief does not evoke the responses described at CCTS. Perhaps a more compelling explanation for the consistency of support from parents at CCTS lies in the manner in which the school reached out to and supported the parents.

For example, in his weekly Chapel talks with the students, Principal Dillard was heard to say on more than one occasion: "I'm not going to let you come up here and wear your mama and daddy's clothes out and they're out there working hard for you and you're up here doing nothing." The band director, Leonard Tillman, recalls the admonishments students received in the classroom:

I used to tell my kids — Miss Ann doesn't need anyone to cook for them anymore. ["Miss Ann" was a term used by Negroes to describe White women who had servants.] They got frozen foods. All they got to do is throw them in the oven. Don't you think you need to stay here and get this education?

In their talks with students, the principal and teachers assumed the posture of protectors of the parents' sacrifices, and their frequent reminders of the need to get an education echoed parents' aspirations for their children.

The school also actively assisted parents. For students who wanted to go on to college, this assistance included helping them fill out forms, providing financial aid, traveling with students to campuses, and in some cases giving advice on what would be expected in college. As Aleane Rush, former student, and later president of the state teachers' association remembers:

[Mr. Dillard] would try to help students. . . . He would refer them personally to college contacts, friends; he was very helpful in trying to see that they would leave Caswell County with the appropriate kind of clothing. Remember I said he knew his students. So, he would not feel intimidated, nor would the student if he said, "Now Vanessa, you can not go to Shaw with those kind of shoes on. . . . You will be in college and you are coming from CCTS, remember that. And you've got to represent yourself, your family, and your community." And when he spoke of community, he was speaking of Caswell County. And parents of those students were very, very appreciative.

In some cases, as in that of teacher and former student Deborah Fuller, the principal actually accompanied the student and parents on their first trip to a campus, functioning as mediator between the family's aspirations and the un-

known expectations of college admissions. Teachers also engaged in these sorts of supportive activities, providing financial assistance through their teachers' clubs and, more frequently, offering the encouragement a student needed to go to college. Irvine and Irvine (1984) have characterized this behavior most succinctly:

Black schools served as the instrument through which professional educators discharged their responsibility to their community. Black educators labored to help students realize their achievement goals. In this role both principals and teachers were mere but profound extensions of the interests of the Black community. (p. 417)

In effect, the authors note, parents and school had a "collective stake in the educational process of the youth in the community" (p. 419).

But the school's support was not only available for college-bound students. The principal and teachers also assumed responsibility for students who were having difficulty in school by working with the child and contacting parents about any problems. One parent remembers Principal Dillard telling her about her son's school behavior: "Well, he just loves to sometimes stand out in the hall and have a chance to go uptown." ("Uptown" is a local slang term used to refer to the town's small business district, which was located approximately one mile from the school.) Of Dillard's disciplinary approach and contact with her, this parent says, "I felt good because I felt like he was there with him and he was paying attention [to my child]." After describing the events of mischievousness that accompanied her son through his school years, she concludes, "But anyway, he finally finished . . . and I felt like Mr. Dillard had a great hand in that."

The school's protectiveness toward the children — going the extra mile to see that students succeeded — instilled in parents an adamant conviction that the teachers and principal really "cared about those children." In the words of Rachel Long, a farming parent who sent nine children through high school and college, "I think all those teachers were really close to those students. I know they were to my children." Her conviction echoes the sentiments of many. A former student, the Reverend Cephaus Lea, remembers Principal Dillard:

He was never too busy to talk with you about your problems. Not only was he interested in you in school, he was interested when you left school. He knew all the children by name. He wasn't like some other people I've known. He loved people and he was concerned about you. And that's the kind of principal Mr. Dillard was.

While the influence of the school's ethic of caring is a story that I cannot explore fully in this discussion, I must note that parents' belief that the school cared about the success of their children might help explain the "respect" and "trust" that parents had toward CCTS and their support of it. In essence, in supporting the institution, the parent were directly supporting those responsible for the success of their children.

Principal Dillard's particular style of interacting with parents is another way that parents were drawn to CCTS. In effect, Dillard created a sense of "us" that

helped to forge the collaboration between school and community. Though he was clearly the visionary, “he did not boast [about] what he did,” says one parent. “He used to always say, ‘we’re working together. See what we can do if we work together.’ But he never did say what *he* did.” This style of interaction was probably carefully chosen. In the traditional African-American community, the “educated” are often viewed with suspicion if they are perceived as “above” the other members of the community; thus Dillard’s approach represented an important way of reaching out, and conveyed to community members his respect for their contributions.

Perhaps the most striking way in which the school reached out was in its willingness to meet the parents on their own turf. Dillard, for example, was an avid member of community organizations and would often walk to town after school was out and take the time to talk with farmers gathered on the corner. He sang in the local choir, attended both the Methodist and Baptist churches, and frequently visited the rural churches and the homes of parents who lived out in the country. Says one parent:

He visited my home a lot of times. He would get around. Then another thing he would do — if his children’s [relatives] or somebody passed, he would try to make it to the churches to the funerals. He had a closeness to people.

Valuing community members apparently was an important part of Dillard’s philosophy. Even “from the beginning, he worked with the community,” reports teacher and former student Janie Richmond, whose mother worked actively in the creation of the first PTA. “Whatever project they put on, he was very diligent in working with them — picnics, fishing trips, etc. His being present helped to draw other people.”

It is important to note that Dillard also used his visits in the community as opportunities to communicate. Often when invited to speak in area churches, he would speak about his belief in the value of education. Thus, parents were apprised of the goals of the school and the needs of the children in their own communities, churches, and homes. These visits and talks were supplemented by frequent notes that children brought home with information about school events or classroom needs.

Dillard expected no less community involvement from his teachers. “I would hope you would be broad enough to attend some of the area churches,” he was known to tell new faculty members. In essence, he expected that if they worked in the community, they should make themselves known and become part of it. He wanted teachers who were accessible to the average parent. He also expected teachers to visit the students’ parents in their homes, whether or not a disciplinary problem had arisen. “If you could see the circumstances out of which the children have come,” many teachers remembers him saying, “you would understand better how to teach them.”

And the teachers did go — both to the churches and the homes. Fifth-grade teacher Betty Royal remembers telling parents who opened the door to her knock, “I just happened to have been in the area and I thought I would just stop

by and say hello.” The parents generally responded positively to these unannounced visits, having been told to expect them at PTA meetings.

Reaching out to support parents occurred in other ways, too. The school offered adults classes in agriculture, typing, and sewing, and provided guidance and counseling for adults. The school also ranked itself highly on “providing community use of the school and facilities” (CCTS Faculty, 1950). From the parents’ perspective, however, the school’s interest in their children’s development and the teachers’ community visits are the ways of reaching out that are most remembered and most valued.

Significance of School and Community Interactions in the Historical Context

Long-time residents of this Caswell County community who participated in the CCTS culture remember the interaction between school and community as a collaborative relationship, a kind of mutual ownership in which the community and school looked out for each others’ needs — the parents depended on the school’s expertise, guidance, and academic vision, and the school depended on the parents’ financial contributions, advocacy, and home-front support. They were united in a common mission to provide a quality education for their children.

This relationship provides several important ideas to consider. While school and community members moved easily in and out of each other’s domain, the participants were clear about the boundaries of their relationships. The parents’ role was to attend school events, reinforce discipline at home, and to get their children to school. They also made economic sacrifices to allow their able-bodied offspring to go to school rather than keeping them home to help “take in the crop.” When the students went home in the afternoon, parents made sure the children had time to do their lessons. As one student remembers, “[Our] parents didn’t have any education, but after you finished your work and chores, they knew to tell you to sit down and get your lesson.” The teachers’ and principal’s reciprocal role was to exercise authority in the school environment and address issues of curriculum and instruction.

The strength of the respect for these boundaries was reinforced by its presence across economic and class lines. For example, even teachers who had children in the classrooms of other teachers did not discuss curriculum or help their children with homework. In fact, the attitude that the teacher was completely in charge of the child once in the classroom was reflected in private conversations with their coworkers. Said one teacher, “I’ve got my classroom to see to. If anything happens, you do the punishing. I don’t have anything to do with it.” Like other parents, these teachers did support the punishment given by their child’s teacher by reinforcing discipline at home. However, they did not interfere with the teacher or class activities within the school.

Unlike current situations in which parents and schools disagree about how they should support one another (Henderson, 1987), in the CCTS environment, participants shared common expectations. The distinct roles minimized conflict

between school and community, as all interaction was defined by mutually accepted boundaries of authority.

Also significant are the opportunities for, and the positive nature of, the communication that was possible in the CCTS environment — unlike interaction today, in which talk between teachers and parents is almost uniformly negative, and parents indicate that they only hear from the school when there is a problem (Lightfoot, 1978; Swap, 1987). The school's fund-raising activities, for example created opportunities for parents, the principal, and teachers to discuss how to achieve their common goals. Moreover, during some fund-raising activities, opportunities existed for role-reversal between administration and members of the school community. For example, if parents were assigned to oversee participation in a particular classroom, it meant that the teacher looked to the parents for assistance. This created a sense of teamwork and reinforced the idea that parents and teachers could both be authorities — even if they exercised power in different domains. Thus, the creation of teamwork between teacher and parent was a direct outcome of the fund-raising activity.

Also important to the school-community relationship were the informal interactions maintained outside of school. When teachers visited the churches, parents were likely to invite them to other services, such as a revival or church homecoming, and teachers in turn used these opportunities to invite parents to particular activities at the school. Students' work was not necessarily discussed in these incidental interactions.

The opportunity to engage in dialogue both in the school environment and in the community was important to the community-school relationship, but it would not have succeeded had not the principal and teachers known how to talk to the parents. Parent Marie Richmond confirms this:

I heard [Mr. Dillard] say it so many times. He would say, "When you are in a situation, you don't go in there using a lot of big words and you know the people can't understand you." . . . He wasn't one of these people that kept so high up that he couldn't get in where a person was and understand him. I think that's why people loved him so. You could relate to him. But when you go into a place . . . and are so high and mighty, parents would stay away from you, because they feel like you think you are better than they are because maybe they didn't get any schooling. But if you know how to mix, and they feel comfortable with you, they will work with you.

The ability to adapt his language to the demands of a situation is a talent for which Dillard is consistently credited; he told his son he learned it in his job as an insurance salesman after graduating from college. Of the teachers, parents also said, "They knew how to talk to you, and that made a big difference."

The "difference" was that, when parents had the opportunity to talk with teachers and the principal, both in and out of school, they were positive exchanges in which teachers and principal communicated with language parents could appreciate and respect. That is, they used the language of the parent, adopting informal forms of language and styles of communication that created an atmosphere in which parents did not feel intimidated to speak.

This atmosphere of respect also created a positive environment for handling more sensitive problems. Teachers or the principal could begin a difficult discussion with positive comments about a child, because they knew the children so well, understood their family circumstances, and likely had some interaction with someone in the family. Moreover, because of the opportunities for positive informal talk and the school's proactive role in its relationship with parents, the parents did not view the teacher or principal as always being the bearer of bad news about their child, which diminished the potential for hostility or animosity.

The nature of the community-school relationship, strengthened by the principal's personal characteristics, eased tensions when differences did occur. English teacher Chattie Boston recalls that, if a parent came in upset over a perceived injustice done to his or her child, "Mr. Dillard didn't get excited. If the parent was excited, Mr. Dillard listened and let them talk. He let them get it off their chest." Then, she says, "he would explain the situation and when [the parent] left, everybody would be buddy-buddy."

This personal style of settling conflicts was impossible when the disagreement involved larger concerns, such as choosing a location for the new school. Such differences were resolved through an open meeting where both sides had opportunities to air their concerns, and the final decision was made by voting. But even when the community-school relationship was not completely tranquil, the dissonance did not destroy their working relationship or the individual respect between parents, the teachers, and the principal.

Segregation in Retrospect: Issues and Challenges for Today

The nature of the relationship I have described between CCTS and its community suggests some valuable lessons for education today. One suggestion is a possible change in the definition of parental involvement. Although parental involvement has been defined by researchers in a number of ways (Henderson, 1987, 1988; Rich, 1987; Swap, 1987), for purposes of this discussion, consider a definition offered by Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1987), who define parent involvement in their child's school as including: 1) parent-teacher conferences; 2) parent involvement in classroom volunteer work; 3) parent involvement in tutoring at home, such as assisting with homework; and 4) parent involvement in carrying out home-instruction programs designed or suggested by teachers to supplement regular classroom instruction (p. 423). In each of these cases, parents initiate and/or are involved in complementing the curriculum and instruction provided by the teacher.

Current definitions of parent involvement, however, do not explain the kind of support the CCTS parents demonstrated. They did not have formal parent-teacher conferences as they are now defined; they did not volunteer unless they were specifically asked; and they did not tutor at home or carry out home-instruction programs.

By current definitions, then, these parents could be deemed failures. One wonders, then, if African-American parents and White teachers and school leaders are operating out of different frameworks for parental involvement. Perhaps

schools apply dominant cultural definitions of good parental involvement, such as those described by Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1987), while African-American parents lean towards more traditional perceptions and modes of interaction, such as those practiced at CCTS.

To explore this possibility, consider the comment of Dorothy Graves, a Black parent who observed the CCTS parents when they first attended PTA meetings after court-ordered integration began in Caswell County in the fall of 1969:

You just didn't see any teachers hardly. What few teachers came said, "you don't walk up to teachers and ask how your child is doing; you have a conference." They said we were not supposed to ask about any [concerns] about our children [in the presence of] anyone else. We were used to when we were there at the PTA meeting, we could just talk.

This parent further explains that PTA meetings after integration seemed to focus more on bringing in resource people than dealing with the problems of the students. She notes that before integration, the students were the primary focus for PTA meetings — either discussing their needs and jointly devising plans of action, and/or watching their performances before the PTA. After integration, she remembers that less attention was paid to students and that there was more of a focus on procedures. She sums up the differences by adding, "I guess this was their method. [It seems] when we integrated we went into using their pattern and not our pattern."

This difference in handling the PTA meetings suggests that after integration a cultural mismatch occurred between school personnel and parents on at least two levels. First, for parents accustomed to using the PTA to talk informally with teachers, the absence of many teachers and the directives by those present to schedule a conference represented a system for interacting with teachers that was not familiar to Black parents. While the data are not available to document the response of Black parents to this new system, it is worth noting that Dorothy Graves, the parent quoted above, recalls scheduling only one conference after integration, as compared to monthly meetings with teachers before integration.

In addition to creating new expectations of the appropriate way to relate to teachers, the focus of the PTA in the integrated system also was perceived by Black parents to change. At the segregated PTA meetings, parents expected to discuss the needs of the school and to see their children perform — both activities that contributed to the importance of attending PTA meetings. In the integrated system, they describe a system where "your part was already outlined and you just went through the procedure." PTA was thus transformed from a parent-school gathering where meaningful input was expected, to meetings that became the "contrived occasions" that Lightfoot (1978) describes.

The data are not available to argue that the failure of African-American parents today to volunteer, to schedule parent/teacher conferences, and so forth is the result of historical differences in definitions of involvement. However, the forms of support demonstrated at CCTS suggest that it is at least possible that historical models of parental involvement may differ from current definitions, and that this may be one area to consider in efforts to understand African-Amer-

ican parents, failure to conform to expectations about school involvement. The failure to consider the possible influence of conflicting expectations about roles may result in parents, especially African-American parents, being labeled deficient and uncaring.

Consider further the current literature on parental involvement, which emphasizes the parents' desire to be involved in school decisionmaking. According to Henderson (1987), "Educators, tend to relegate parents to insubstantial bake sale roles, leaving parents feeling frustrated, belittled, and left out" (p. 2). Yet the CCTS parents did not express a desire to have input in the school's curriculum decisionmaking. The same is true in Sowell's (1976) descriptions of other historically Black schools:

The interest of the teachers in the students was reciprocated by the interest of the parents in supporting the teachers and the school. . . . Parental involvement was of this supportive nature rather than an actual involvement in school decision making (p. 36).

Sowell's finding is consistent with the type of support CCTS parents offered, and their parallel lack of discussion of curricular matters. This is not to say that parents should not now be involved in such decisionmaking. However, making decisions on curricular matters may not be a traditional parental role valued within the African-American community, where community and school shared similar values and where parents trusted the teachers and principal to create the best learning environments for their children.

Moreover, while the current literature on parental involvement denigrates the bake sale and the ritualistic PTAs (Henderson, 1987, 1988), CCTS parents found comfortable avenues of support through such activities. Perhaps the value of these activities, especially their ability to create ownership and pride in the school, should be explored before they are unilaterally dismissed as trivial functions. Swap (1987) has advocated having refreshments at PTA meetings and using children in the program as examples of incentives that schools might use to help initiate parental involvement in school functions. Both of these activities made useful contributions to the CCTS PTA meetings, so perhaps the CCTS examples suggest extending the parent-school relationship beyond some current practices.

Two other ideas should also be briefly considered. The data suggest that the community-school relationship is a two-way process, that involvement should not be defined simply as how to bring the parents into the school, but also how the school can be "in" the community. It was CCTS's outreach to the community that prompted the parents to "reach in" to the school. While some studies have considered the positive results of home visits (Olmstead, 1983, cited in Tangri & Moles, 1987), too little has been done to create schools with positive attitudes toward the community, both in terms of the school's general outreach and the attitude of individual teachers. School reform leaders might do well to remember the CCTS example, and to consider ways that teachers and principal can become advocates for, rather than adversaries in, their students' communities.

Schools might also consider the benefits of implementing activities that communicate to parents a sense of caring about their children. The response of CCTS parents to their school should not be considered atypical; people generally respond well to those they believe are concerned about their loved ones. When people, or communities, perceive that this caring is no longer present, they respond with mistrust. Thus, it should not be surprising that many African-American parents are now distrustful of schools in which their offspring are the ones most often punished, most frequently on the lower tracks (Braddock, in press), most likely to have the least successful teachers (Darling-Hammond, in press), and most likely to feel alienated and drop out of school. This care ethic would seem to be as crucial to conversations about how to induce parental involvement as is advocacy for parental voice on curricular matters.

Can all ideas applied at CCTS transfer simply and easily to today's schools? Indeed they cannot. CCTS functioned in a uniquely closed society in which the school for the Black community was one of the two major social, cultural, and educational centers, the church being the other. Together these centers served to counteract the effects of racism in a segregated society. Since that era, the nature of problems confronting children has changed, as has the structure of families. The 1990 U.S. Census Bureau, for example, indicates that Black children are less likely to live with two parents today than they were in 1967, and that families are now more likely to be polarized between the well-educated and the poor. Moreover, crack, AIDS, and guns are the serious issues confronting school personnel, as compared with alcohol, smoking, and truancy during the era of CCTS.

What we can gain from the case of CCTS is a deeper understanding of what African Americans valued in their schools during legal segregation, an understanding of the community-school relationships that allowed for the school's successful operation, and a series of ideas about school-community interaction that might spur thinking on how to achieve similar ends in new contexts. Moreover, the CCTS case provides an important framework within which to consider current problems of school reform. For example, understanding the various possibilities for parental involvement may lead to more appropriate questions when considering how to link schools and communities. A question asked frequently about African-American parents in reform meetings I have attended is, "How can we get them to become involved with the school?" a question that suggests that parents have never been involved and are generally uninterested. Yet, as the evidence demonstrates, these poor, rural parents were very much involved, when one applies their definition of involvement. They only ceased to be so when the schools integrated. Thus, perhaps a more appropriate question is, "Why did they stop supporting schools and what can be done to eliminate the barriers so they will come back?" These different questions suggest a variety of different answers and strategies. Only by asking the right questions, however, are we likely to find answers that will result in meaningful and lasting solutions.

The CCTS case also suggests an agenda for new research questions: for example, how do African-American parents currently view the schools? Are there still

“invisible” ways they support the school that are generally unknown and unappreciated? Are African-American parents and schools operating from the same expectations about appropriate community-school interactions? To what extent has the advocacy role ceased, or is it operative in other ways? For example, at the school level, do African-American parents have a mode of advocacy that creates dissonance, rather than collaboration, between parents and administrators? Is it possible that the level at which they protest treatment of their children has moved from the school board to the teachers and principal in the school itself?

Serious consideration of these and other questions about the relationship between African-American parents and their children’s schools is important for enlightened educational policy and agendas. Seeking answers to these questions is also important in restoring voice to African-American educators and parents, whose knowledge has been devalued and whose opinions have been silenced since the onset of integration (Foster, 1990; Irvine & Irvine, 1984). Most importantly, documenting the nature of community-school relationships in the segregated school is important because it begins to correct the commonly held misperception that those schools were without any merit, and that educators have nothing to learn from them. The correction of this misperception is long overdue.

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THE ARCHITECTS OF BLACK SCHOOLING IN THE SEGREGATED SOUTH: THE CASE OF ONE PRINCIPAL LEADER

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with
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ABSTRACT: Contrary to earlier historical studies that focused almost exclusively on inequities in facilities, bus transportation, and equipment in segregated Southern black schools, recent scholarship has also included a focus on the climate, resilience, and beliefs of black educators within segregated schools. This article focuses specifically on the role of the principal in one black school, describing how he interacted with the superintendent and the black community to create educational opportunities for black children.

Anyone who knew Ulysses Byas could have predicted the confrontation occurring in the superintendent's office in May of 1968. Although he had been born poor and black in Macon, Georgia, on June 23, 1924, Byas had risen to positions of respect and leadership in the U.S. Navy, as an undergraduate student on the GI bill at the historically black Fort Valley State College, and as a graduate student at Teachers College, Columbia University. Now, 11 years into the principalship at Gainesville's segregated E. E. Butler High School (previously known as Fair Street High School), Byas's characteristic refusal to accept any form of injustice fueled his response to the superintendent. "I'm a high school principal," Byas pointedly told the superintendent when he realized that his job would be sacrificed on the altar of desegregation and that a white principal would assume the leadership of the desegregated high school when school opened the following fall. "I know I'm the best in this county," he

Author's note: The themes presented here are derived from taped interviews that I conducted with Ulysses Byas in 1998, 2000, 2001, and 2002. In addition, Byas's perspective was gleaned through the speech he gave at the reunion of his former school on April 2, 2001, and a GTEA reunion luncheon that he chaired on November 16, 2001. I attended and taped these functions.

continued, his temper rising. "Hell, I'm the best in the state. And I'm glad to know what you are going to do, because as soon as I can write you an acceptable letter of resignation, I'm leaving."

The plans that the superintendent had for implementing desegregation in the city of Gainesville, Georgia, were typical of the plans of other superintendents across the South and were the final stage in an evolution of at least three forms of white resistance to school integration. Like other Southern states, instead of preparing for the inevitability of desegregation, Georgia first sought to anticipate and undermine the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954. In 1951, the state approved a new sales tax that provided the funds to equalize expenditures between black and white schools. This tax was necessary according to then Governor Herman G. Talmadge, a staunch segregationist, because the state needed as much as \$100 million in order to "equalize" black schools and, thus, to have a legal defense against its violation of the separate but equal laws that had governed the land since the 1896 Supreme Court decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Even after *Brown* became law, Southern educators and politicians ignored the desegregation mandate and continued to pour resources into the equalization effort.

Along with the equalization plans, whites throughout the South simultaneously engaged in a second form of resistance in which individual citizens and political structures were the agents. The demonstrations that occurred in Little Rock and New Orleans when black children attempted to attend schools with white children provide the best examples of the resistance of individual citizens.¹ However, resistance also occurred in more structured, political responses. For example, the White Citizens Council of Georgia led the state in the consideration of a massive resistance plan that would have shut down the public schools before allowing black and white children to attend school together. This plan was similar to the Pearsall Plan in North Carolina and followed the example of school closings in Virginia. Not until 1961 did moderate voices prevail and citizens uphold the continuation of a public school system.²

When Byas confronted his superintendent in 1968, he was participating in the third form of resistance. With the apparent inevitability of desegregation, whites employed a series of deliberate strategies to preserve their superiority in the planned new desegregated system. In this system, blacks would become a part of the

¹Liva Baker, *The Second Battle of New Orleans* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996).

²Thomas O'Brien, *The Politics of Race and Schooling: Public Education in Georgia, 1900–1961* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999).

schools, but power necessarily was expected to remain in the hands of whites. In other words, blacks would be accepted into a white system, but blacks would not have control, or even equal voice, in the system. Although black periodicals attempted to assure black teachers that massive job loss would not occur as a result of efforts to desegregate, desegregation plans and realities nonetheless confirmed the extent of whites' intent to retain control.³

Byas's blatant refusal of his superintendent's offer to accept the position of a powerless assistant superintendent was an overt rejection of a system that refused to respect his training, his skills, and his knowledge about education. Like the positions offered to other blacks who did maintain administrative roles by being demoted to become principals of junior high schools or elementary schools, or by becoming assistants to a white principal or another white administrator, the job offered to Byas was one that held title but no influence. Ironically, in a previous year, when Byas had supervised the desegregated summer school that he reports to have been 85 percent white, his superiors had characterized it as the best summer school that had ever been conducted in Gainesville. Now, in Byas's view, although both he and the white principal in the town held comparable degrees, the job of high school principal was being given to a white man whom Byas believed he had helped teach how to be a principal. That the "best" could now be ignored and he could be displaced because of race was an insult Byas could not overlook. "I don't care how much money anybody paid me," he recalls. "I wouldn't have stayed."

Upon resigning his job, Byas became one of the 31,504 black educators who would be displaced by 1970 while white educators were hired. Black high school principals, in fact, became almost nonexistent. In North Carolina, for example, between 1963 and 1970, the number of black principals in secondary schools plunged from 160 to fewer than 10. Three years later, only 3 of the 10 had survived. The Georgia Teachers and Education Association (GTEA) described the massive erosion of black educators, their ideas, and their power as a blatant example of "outer-gration," instead of integration.⁴

But who were the community leaders who were "outer-grated" by integration? What were their goals as principals? What experiences and beliefs drove their goals? How do they characterize their success and failure? These are questions that, like the black princi-

³Michele Foster, *Black Teachers on Teaching* (New York: The New Press, 1979).

⁴Georgia Teachers and Education Association, *Guide to Developing an Inclusive Integration Plan* (Atlanta, GA: 1970); Horace Tate Papers, Private Collection.

pals themselves, have been largely lost even in the most contemporary scholarship. In focusing on the nature of leadership that was embodied in the black principal, this article provides a close look at what Cecelski has called the “decimation” of black leadership in the wake of desegregation.⁵

This story draws upon approximately 20 hours of interviews with Byas and a document collection that includes items such as school newspapers, survey forms, city newspaper articles, schedules and other school forms, pictures, yearbooks, the Southern Association school self-study report, the Southern Association evaluator’s report, the Gainesville City School self-study report, the Gainesville City School evaluator’s report, principals’ reports, letters, and other miscellaneous school-related materials. In addition, the documents include extensive community materials and professional materials, items such as letters, minutes, reports, and professional program copies. To date, the Ulysses Byas papers represent one of the two most extensive private collections of documents on black segregated schools in the South that have yet been uncovered.⁶

Byas’s story is one that continues the scholarship of the black segregated school in the South that emerged in scholarly debate in the early 1990s with the advent of such books as Michele Foster’s *Black Teachers on Teaching* and Vanessa Siddle Walker’s *Their Highest Potential*.⁷ Contrary to earlier historical studies that focused

⁵David Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

⁶The other extensive collection is housed by Horace Tate as part of his personal papers.

⁷The studies examining the structure of schooling in the segregated black schools consist of three types. The earliest studies appeared in the two decades after desegregation, frequently in black or less well known presses. See A. Adair, *Desegregation: The Illusion of Black Progress* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984); M. G. Hundley, *The Dunbar Story (1870–1955)* (New York: Vantage Press, 1965); Russell Irvine and Jackie Irvine, “The Impact of the Desegregation Process on the Education of Black Students: Key Variables,” *Journal of Negro Education* 52 (1983): 410–422; Faustine Jones, *A Traditional Model of Educational Excellence: Dunbar High School of Little Rock, Arkansas* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1981); F. Rodgers, *The Black High School and Its Community* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1967); Thomas Sowell, “Black Excellence: The Case of Dunbar High School,” *Public Interest* 35 (1974): 1–21; Thomas Sowell, “Patterns of Black Excellence,” *Public Interest* 43 (1976): 26–58. More recent scholarship emerged in the 1990s. Generally, it has been more widely disseminated and discussed. See Tamara Beauboef-Lafontant, “A Movement Against and Beyond Boundaries: ‘Politically Relevant Teaching’ Among African American Teachers,” *Teachers College Record* 100 (1999): 702–723; David Cecelski, *Along Freedom Road: Hyde County, North Carolina and the Fate of Black Schools in the South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Michele Foster, “Constancy, Connectedness, and Con-

almost exclusively on inequities in such areas as facilities, bus transportation, books, and so forth, these recent accounts of the schools focus on the climate, resilience, and beliefs of educators within the schools. Although not discounting the inequality and injustice in distribution of resources, the revisionist literature employs the perspective of Henry Bullock; that is, it considers the “unintended consequences” of segregation, or what the schools became that whites never intended them to be.⁸ Specifically, throughout the South, these schools became places notable for their exemplary teachers, their curriculum and extracurricular activities, their parental involvement, and the leadership of school principals.⁹

Ironically, however, although descriptions of individual schools consistently praise black principals, this literature has given little voice to the principals’ roles in shaping the schools. Indeed, the literature provides carefully detailed descriptions of the created schools but fails to delve deeply into *how* the schools were created. This emphasis has occurred despite the fact that the understanding of the

straints in the Lives of African American Teachers,” *NWSA Journal* 3 (1990): 233–261; Michele Foster, “The Politics of Race: Through the Eyes of African American Teachers,” *Journal of Education* 172 (1990): 123–141; Michele Foster, *Black Teachers on Teaching* (New York: The New Press); Rhonda Jeffries, “The Trickster Figure in African American Teaching: Pre- and Post-Desegregation,” *The Urban Review* 26 (1994): 289–304; A. McCullough-Garrett, “Reclaiming the African American Vision for Teaching: Toward an Educational Conversation,” *Journal of Negro Education* 62 (1993): 433–440; Vivian Morris and Curtis Morris, *Creating Caring and Nurturing Educational Environments for African American Children* (Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 2000); George Noblit and Van Dempsey, *The Social Construction of Virtue: The Moral Life of Schools* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996); Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Vanessa Siddle Walker, “Caswell County Training School, 1933–1969: Relationships Between Community and School,” *Harvard Educational Review* 63 (1993): 161–182; Vanessa Siddle Walker, “Valued Segregated Schools for African American Children in the South, 1935–1969: A Review of Common Themes and Characteristics,” *Review of Educational Research* 70 (Fall 2000): 253–285; Vanessa Siddle Walker, “African American Teachers in Segregated Schools in the South, 1940–1969,” *American Educational Research Journal* 38 (2001). In addition to these scholarly descriptions are a number of locally published histories that span both time periods. See L. Davies, *A History of Queen Street High School: 1928–1968* (Kingston, NY: Tri State Services, 1996); W. Edwards, P. Royster, and L. Bates, *The Education of Black Citizens in Halifax County: 1866–1969* (Springfield, VA: Banister Press, 1979); T. Tilford-Weathers, *A History of Louisville Central High School, 1882–1982* (Louisville, KY: Central High School Alumni Association, 1996).

⁸Henry Bullock, *A History of Negro Education in the South from 1619 to the Present* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967).

⁹Vanessa Siddle Walker, “Valued Segregated Schools for African American Children in the South, 1935–1969: A Review of Common Themes and Characteristics,” *Review of Educational Research* 70 (Fall 2000): 253–285.

perspective of the black principal is central to explaining how the segregated black schools were able to fight the demon of racism by helping black children believe in what they were capable of achieving. As currently constructed, the accounts of the schools provide descriptions of activities but are missing powerful descriptions of agency. This article fills this gap.

The story of the black principal leaders also expands the narrow lens through which black leadership historically has been viewed. Although scholarship has focused on the visible national educational leaders, such as W. E. B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, and Thurgood Marshall, and their contributions to racial uplift, the literature generally has ignored the ways in which local leaders propelled community development.¹⁰ In most communities, the influence of national leadership was distant and removed from the daily struggles. Instead, the leader to whom Southern black communities looked was the black high school principal. According to Rodgers, who has written the only book-length manuscript providing some detail on the black principal of public schools in the South, the principal was

. . . the man who ran the school and, in many cases, the Black community. His influence in community affairs was almost without exception great. He was, therefore, central in community life and was indeed more knowledgeable about what was going on than anyone else.¹¹

These stories of local leadership provide a powerful lens through which to view the core structures that facilitated black community development. As such, the role of the black high school principal far exceeded that of the administrative head of a school. Indeed, he was the architect behind community development.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF THE BLACK PRINCIPALSHIP

When Byas arrived in Gainesville in the fall of 1957, he had moved from being a rebellious child disinterested in education to being an accomplished, well-prepared, and well-mentored principal. As a child, he consistently had challenged his mother's desire for him to complete high school. Twice he was retained, both times at

¹⁰A useful overview of black leadership is provided in John White, *Black Leadership in America 1895–1968* (New York: Longman).

¹¹Frederick Rodgers, *The Black High School and Its Community* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1967). For a brief discussion of the importance of the black school principal in the development of the community, see Edward Redcay, *County Training Schools and Public Secondary Education for Negroes in the South* (Westport, CT: Negro University Press).

his mother's insistence. Once he dropped out. Always, he found making money to help his single mother support the family more useful than conjugating Latin verbs. Still, his mother made the world of work so demanding that he begrudgingly obtained a high school diploma despite teacher reports of him as a student who was "mischievous" and "playful."¹² Perhaps his service in the U.S. Navy was his salvation. Here Byas learned that he could achieve. To the surprise of almost everyone, this Georgia boy outscored most of his peers on the mental aptitude tests. It proved to him the truth of what his mother had told him: he was "smart in book learning." Elected chief of the watch during his naval service, he left the navy to attend Fort Valley State College, a historically black institution in Georgia, on the GI Bill. From Fort Valley, he did what seemed to be the unthinkable. Turning down an offer to become an elementary school principal, he instead chose to attend Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York.

He was only 33 years old when he arrived in Gainesville to be the principal of the local black high school. He had two years of teaching experience gained in Elberton, Georgia, after he finished Columbia's Teachers College and four years as a high school principal in Douglasville, Georgia. Gainesville's Fair Street High School, later to be rebuilt and renamed E. E. Butler High School, represented the most challenging setting in which he had been hired.

People in the community thought he was a bit young. "I thought they were sending us a professor," one parent, a deacon at a local church, reportedly quipped. "But you ain't nothing but a boy." In the African American community, "professor" or "fessor" was the term consistently given to principals in the South. Although whites sometimes used the term to avoid saying "Mr.," blacks used it with reverence and respect. A "professor" was expected to carry the weight of school and community leadership. He was to be someone whom students and parents could look to for leadership and could emulate. Indeed, President Horace Mann Bond at Fort Valley had taught his students that they were expected to assume leadership responsibilities in the communities where they worked. In this parent's mind, however, Byas did not look the part.

Gainesville in the late 1950s was a small town in northwestern Georgia. In the middle of the 1930s, the school system had begun offering high school education through the 11th grade to the black students at Fair Street School, where Byas eventually became principal. By the late 1950s, the total black population in the area exceeded

¹²Bibb County Report Card. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

4,000, and the value of the school's physical plant and equipment was \$85,000.¹³ By 1965–66, in part because of the second wave of resistance to desegregation, the value of its physical plant was close to that of the white school.¹⁴

Fair Street High School was among the 37 accredited high schools for blacks in the state of Georgia in 1957 and had been accredited since 1946. It stood as one of the earliest schools in Georgia to be accredited, with only nine schools having been accredited before 1946. The year it became accredited, five other schools also received this status.¹⁵ Although Byas could now enjoy the distinction of being one of the principals of an accredited school, including attendance at the regional meeting of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (ACSS) and the prestigious "Masters Club" meetings of principals who were ACSS members in Georgia, he silently questioned how the school had maintained its status.¹⁶ Fair Street offered 16 academic courses to its students, only 4 courses in each grade, 9 through 12. The school had no chemistry, physics, commercial courses, foreign languages, and no advanced mathematics courses.¹⁷ However, like other segregated schools of the era, the school is remembered for its caring, dedicated teachers and principal. Students recall that the previous principal asked for an array of subjects but was unable to get them approved.¹⁸ The school had been accredited before the first phase of desegregation resistance, and the money that would be more readily available to black schools in Byas's era was not available to Fair Street in the earlier decade.

Adding to the difficulties, the politics of the educational situation were heated. The previous black principal of Fair Street had been demoted to become principal of Fair Street Elementary School. Byas reports that attempts to get information from him on scheduling were unsuccessful. As a result, Byas developed a document called "Input-Process: Flow Chart of Necessary Steps for Developing High School Schedule," which formed the basis of scheduling

¹³Principal's Message, E. E. Butler High School, December 1965. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

¹⁴A Self-Study of Gainesville City Schools, Gainesville, GA, 1965–66. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

¹⁵Association of Schools and Colleges Minutes, 1957, p. 11. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

¹⁶By-laws and photo from the School Masters Club, Georgia. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

¹⁷Principal's Message, E. E. Butler High School, December 1965. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

¹⁸Author interview with Patricia Hudson, 19 October 2001.

throughout his years at Fair Street.¹⁹ He would also later use it in presentations around the state.

In addition to the administrative challenges, Byas also faced a black community that was upset with the school's attendance problem and that was demanding a truant officer from Superintendent J. R. Callison. Superintendent Callison, whom Byas later decided was a "blatant racist," was unresponsive. His sympathies supposedly lay with the demoted black principal, in part because he, too, had been demoted the year before by the school board. He had become superintendent only after changes in the board. Those making his new administrative job difficult were the black parents. A former Fair Street student described these parents as a very "alert community that was highly interested in the welfare of the children." She remembers that they had "standing room only" at PTA meetings and school programs, and the parents would "band together at the drop of a pin" if they had concerns about what was going on.²⁰

This situation created the first challenge to Byas's leadership. To be successful in this school, he would have to find a way to work around the superintendent to build the school and to establish rapport with the community in order to receive their support. Simultaneously, he had to build a school program that would inspire student success, to build a faculty capable of teaching students in the manner he believed they should be taught, and to continue his own professional development. Each of these attributes would characterize his principalship. In this portrayal, however, the focus is upon his leadership in maneuvering the community and the superintendent for the good of black schooling. In this role, he stands apart from his white counterparts, who functioned primarily as administrators without the constraint of a racist society that overtly sought to discourage black education. Undeterred by the immensity of the task, Byas began his job as the principal leader of the black high school.

"Leapfrogging" Obstructionist Superintendents

As Byas considered the situation, he was concerned that the community was not asking for enough. He understood that the parents were right to be concerned about dropouts and average daily attendance. In a 1960 survey of Georgia schools, the state average reported 31 percent attendance for blacks, compared with 69 percent attendance for whites. Additionally, in 1958 only one-sixth of

¹⁹"Input-Process: Flow Chart of Necessary Steps for Developing High School Schedule." Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

²⁰Author interview with Patricia Hudson, 19 October 2001.

all black students in Georgia attended high school.²¹ As demonstrated by his activities in Douglasville to keep students in school, Byas understood the importance of the parents' requests. In Douglasville, Byas had ridden behind the truck of a white farmer who routinely hired black students during school days; Byas had so intimidated these students that they refused to get on the truck, and the previously belligerent farmer had to make arrangements for student work schedules that met the approval of the black principal. However, in Gainesville, Byas believed the parents were focused on the symptom of the problem and were not considering the underlying educational needs. "Now mind you," he remembers, "the science lab was a sink in the corner. And the only reason you knew it was a science lab was that we told you, 'This is a science lab.'"

Moving into a leadership mode, Byas met with some of the black citizens. He acknowledged the need to address school attendance but explained that the community might need some other things more than it needed a truant officer. He then met with the superintendent and asked permission to conduct a curriculum survey. Although Byas does not relate his efforts to the influence of his professional associations, it is worth noting that one ACSS speaker, Dr. Alonzo G. Moron, president of Hampton Institute, speaking after the *Brown* decision, challenged principals to "make efforts to interpret to our local communities what we are doing as educational institutions."²² In implementing the extensive survey he completed, Byas was also reflecting black leaders' professional thinking at the time.

"How long will it take?" Byas remembers the superintendent asking. The principal explained that implementation would take the rest of the year. "What about the people screaming for this truant officer?" Using language very similar to that of other superintendents who sought to use the principal leader to forward the white administrative agenda and to undermine the needs of the black community, he asked, "Can you hold them back?" As in other cases, the superintendent knew this request was a convenient way to usurp black authority and to use one of their own to shield his delay.²³

"I think I can," Byas informed him, without acknowledging that he had already talked with the black community and that the curriculum survey was simply part of their larger plan to get what the

²¹"Georgia's Divided Education," p. 3. Horace Tate Papers, Private Collection.

²²Leland Stanford Cozart, *A History of the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, 1934-1965* (Charlotte, NC: Heritage Printers, 1967), p. 79.

²³See Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

school needed. His behavior was consistent with that of Horace E. Tate, who, in the days before assuming leadership as executive director of the local GTEA, was a young principal in Georgia who met with the parents at his school, gave them a strategy to present before the board, and then waited at a local restaurant for their report.²⁴ It is also reminiscent of the behaviors of N. L. Dillard in Caswell County, North Carolina, who found ways to work “around” the superintendent to get what the school needed.²⁵ Ostensibly pleased at his own creative genius for problem solving, the superintendent gave his permission for the curriculum survey.

In his first year as principal, Byas divided his faculty into three groups. Collectively, they studied (1) dropouts and graduates, (2) present school population, and (3) adult population. The faculty, along with community volunteers, worked intensely. Committee One, for example, decided to meet every day after school. Tuesday evening of each week was the time set for meetings with the committee’s adult volunteers.²⁶ According to the newspaper’s account, one committee met 35 times to plan the questionnaire and then evaluate it. Volunteers spent months scoring and tabulating achievement tests.²⁷ At the conclusion of the analysis, the results showed, among other things, that most students had achieved at levels from two to four grades behind their current grade assignment.

In light of this and other findings, the committee developed a series of recommendations for action that were grounded in their survey of the community.²⁸ They asked for guidance counselors, a minimum of \$5,000 to establish a commercial and personal typing program, a chemistry class, the addition of physical education into the curriculum, continued testing of students, and other facility and curricular needs that they believed would directly support student development. The school’s PTA gave Byas money to print 300 copies of the results of the curriculum survey (the superintendent had turned down Byas’s request for funds for distribution, saying that he did not have enough money).

²⁴Author interview with Horace Tate, September 2001.

²⁵Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

²⁶Curriculum Survey Conducted by the Fair Street Junior and Senior High School, Gainesville, Georgia, 1957–58, U. Byas, Principal, p. 3. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

²⁷“Fair Street Curriculum Study: Students Rate Poorly in Biological, Physical Sciences,” *The Daily Times*, 2 May 1958. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

²⁸Curriculum Survey Conducted by the Fair Street Junior and Senior High School, Gainesville, Georgia, 1957–58, U. Byas, Principal. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

At the end of the year, when Byas delivered a copy of the 32-page typed document, with its accompanying charts and table, the superintendent was dismayed by the findings. He immediately wanted to know if Byas had “given this thing out.” He reprimanded Byas by telling him that the poor results were a “reflection on you and your predecessor.” Undeterred, Byas responded, “Mr. Callison, with all due respect, you and your predecessor have been in charge of the schools. And you all have to accept some of the blame if blame is to be given out.” He then told the superintendent that he had delivered some copies of the report to the press. Although the statement was not true when he made it, he did take copies to the press as soon as he left the superintendent’s office.

As Byas had hoped, the curricular survey became the major school news in Gainesville. The local newspaper ran a series of front-page articles. A headline in the May 2, 1958, edition of *The Daily Times* in Gainesville reported “Students Rate Poorly in Biological, Physical Science.”²⁹ One editorial noted that this was “the most thorough curriculum survey that had ever been done by a local school.” As Byas had also hoped, the paper publicized the requests of the African American community.

The strategy Byas used with the superintendent is a good example of how black principals had to, in Byas’s words, “leapfrog” the superintendents they worked with in order to get materials and to implement curriculum they needed for their schools. Other principals in Georgia and throughout the South confirm similar approaches.³⁰ They had to find ways to placate their bosses or they might lose their jobs. The challenge was to think a step or two beyond the superintendent to creatively find ways to deliver to the black community what they perceived it needed—without the superintendent determining what they were doing. When, as was his routine, Byas would not accept old or “used” equipment or textbooks, instead sympathetically telling the superintendent that he would wait until he had the money to buy new things, he was engaging in “leapfrog.” While cursorily implying an understanding of the limited financial resources of the school district, he was simultaneously maintaining a high-profile focus on the materials his school completely lacked. He also used memos to document the school’s inadequacies, thereby skillfully laying the paper trail should the black teachers association, the GTEA,

²⁹“Fair Street Curriculum Study: Students Rate Poorly in Biological, Physical Sciences,” *The Daily Times*, 2 May 1958. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

³⁰Principals’ Joint Interview, Principals’ Meeting, December 2000. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

choose to pursue litigation regarding inequalities.³¹ In the post-*Brown* context, this lack of resources eventually would have to be addressed by the superintendent. The compromise principals had to make, Byas notes, was to satisfy the boss and keep their jobs “without losing your soul.”

Byas’s plan worked. By the fall of 1958, just months after the completion of the survey, the board spent \$6,800 for typewriters, desks, and equipment, and 124 Fair Street students enrolled in their first typing class.³² After receiving everything they had asked for, the community gave Byas credit for the strategy he had used in conducting the curriculum survey. He explains frankly that his plan was a way of getting the necessary background data to influence the board to give him what he wanted. The report was a means of “bypassing the superintendent.” He knew that once the results were publicized, the larger community would be looking to see what happened. Of course, his work during the phase of resistance to desegregation when whites poured money into the schools in order to preserve racial segregation immeasurably added to his ability to exploit the system. As he had in Douglasville, Byas figuratively used the weapon of the master to dismantle the master’s house.

“Leapfrog” had to happen in other ways as well. Principals had to be creative in not directly challenging their boss while at the same time working around his agenda. As Tate has argued, the white school board of the state of Georgia functioned to maintain the status quo. White superintendents performed a similar task. In contrast, the task of the black principal was oppositional. He covertly sought to dismantle the structures that preserved inequality. For some of these principals, this meant finding ways to get what was needed, as previously described. However, sometimes it also meant their refusal to bow to political pressure. For example, when Byas was a member of the GTEA and the organization supported desegregation plans, his superintendent directed him to disavow his association with the professional group. The superintendent wanted to know if it were true that he supported the organization’s desegregation stance. Byas responded by noting that the events of a professional

³¹According to articles in the *Herald*, the GTEA litigated for school equality; the NAACP was called in as an ally. The same situation occurred in other Southern states. See, for example, Rupert Picott, *History of the Virginia Teachers Association* (Washington, DC: NEA, 1975). The primacy of teacher organizations in seeking school equality is also confirmed in a series of interviews by the author with Horace Tate, former executive secretary of the Georgia Teachers and Education Association and with E. E. Palmer, former executive director of the North Carolina Teachers and Education Association.

³²Winfred E. Pitts, *E. E. Butler High School: A Victory of Sorts* (doctoral dissertation, Georgia State University, 1999), p. 140.

meeting were appropriately discussed with its members, not those on the outside seeking information. Unlike a neighboring principal who capitulated to his superintendent's request that he organize blacks against the proposition, Byas stood firm. "Mr. Superintendent," he recounts, "you and the school board all have been in charge of the administration of the schools and I of running my own school. I would prefer to let you and the board work this out."

Garnering Community Support

Equally important as his skillful maneuvering of the superintendent was the principal's ability to gain parents' support. Black parents throughout documented history in the United States strongly supported school initiatives. A review of black parental involvement since the Civil War indicates that blacks supported the schools in at least six different ways. These include beginning their own schools, providing financial support for existing schools, using the church and other institutions to promote education, lobbying white school leaders for school reform measures, organizing local meetings and state conventions to plan strategies for improving education, and engaging in a variety of direct protest measures.³³ Through history, their willingness to support the schools seems directly related to their perception of need and their support of a local leader. The same was true in Gainesville. Byas had to know how to lead them.

Using a strategy that was widespread among principal leaders in Southern states, Byas consciously worked to develop a language that parents understood, rather than using the more formal English of which he was capable. He recalls:

But I wouldn't go out there talking about your "children," giving [the teachers] difficulty. I'd say your "chillen" . . . because the purpose of speech is to establish rapport with people. . . . After all, we're talking about 50 years ago and most [black people] did not have very much education. If you go out there fresh from Columbia University . . . pronouncing all your syllables in a word . . . and all that stuff and making your subject and verb agree, folks would wonder, "What's dat man talking 'bout?" "

In addition to building rapport with parents through language, Byas also adhered to community understandings about appropriate behavior. He describes how he visited with parents, even as a teacher delivering his letters describing student performance, and deliberately assumed the posture of those he was visiting. "I always

³³Vanessa Siddle Walker, "Creating Institutions That Care: A Model from African American School History" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Diego, CA, 1998).

wore the kind of clothing so that if I found people sitting on the step, I could sit on the step, too." He emphasizes that the mere act of turning down a chair, even though people would run to get one when they saw the professor coming, helped to build rapport. "Folks would say, 'He's alright, you know, 'cause he's not sitting in a chair like a king and everybody else is sitting on the floor.'" In the African American community, this act of not being above others was highly valued. His behavior was also important because fewer than 25 percent of black parents in Gainesville had a high school diploma.³⁴ To have the professor with a graduate degree from Columbia interact with them on an equal basis was important.

Reaching out to the community, however, extended beyond home visits. Byas met people in their churches, too, and, as occasion dictated for a professor, made the obligatory "remarks" when called upon to do so. As he had learned while a principal in Douglasville, sometimes he had to be rather artful. At a very small church, for example, the congregation used loudspeakers and microphones and, as Byas recounts, "did such screaming and hollering like you never heard." The Byas's only child at the time, still a baby, became frightened, started screaming, and his wife took the child outside.

So I'm sitting there thinking to myself, now it's going to come to a point where they are going to call on me to speak. Well, I said to myself, you can't tell a lie in church. But I've got to say something that the people can relate to. So, when they finally called on me . . . I said, "Those of you who may have seen me when I came in may have noticed that I was sitting on the end of the pew." And I said, "I want you to know something moved me here tonight."

Assuming that he meant he had been moved by the spirit, the crowd went wild. As Byas concludes, still thanking "the Lord for looking out for his own," he notes that he "could never tell them" that what moved him was the loudspeaker placed by the pew next to him.

The ability to understand the nuances of what should and should not be done in the black community had its roots in his own involvement in another black community. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University in Washington, D.C., summed up the relationship of the educated black leader to the students he or she was attempting to inspire in an address to the Association in 1957:

What is the meaning of the Negro sitting in this room? We have come from the humblest segment of the human race. Men have measured our heels

³⁴"Fair Street Curriculum Study: Students Rate Poorly in Biological, Physical Sciences," *The Daily Times*, 2 May 1958. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

and said what was in our brains because our heels were long. Men have measured the thickness of our lips and limited our minds because our lips were thicker than theirs. Men have measured our heads and because some of them shoot up this way and some of them go up that way, and told their children what are the limits of the possibilities of those brains . . . Our existence here tells not only what is possible for us, but it tells about the nature of human nature because we have come from the bottom of humanity and we have climbed every stairway that is capable for the human foot to trot. . . . We know, don't we? We must be the agents of what we know.

Relating to these leaders who had themselves come from the circumstances in which their students lived, Johnson captured the sentiment of many black educators who could bring their own community knowledge to bear in interactions with their school communities. Listening to Johnson reinforced Byas's ideas about community involvement. Byas could be comfortable in an impoverished home because he had come from poverty. Likewise, he could speak with parents using the language of the community because this was the language he had spoken since childhood.

In addition to his comfortable presence among them, Byas also developed other forms of communication with the black community. He notes that he never could trust the press to tell the community what he wanted them to know. Thus, in every school where he was principal, he started a school newspaper. To be sure, these glossy publications covered the usual aspects of high school life, including prize essays, sports news, and honor roll stories. However, in his "Principal's Message," Byas clearly aimed his remarks at an audience that included parents as well as students. In one essay, for example, Byas writes of his concern with the national dropout rate. He recounts the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, quoting Chief Justice Warren's statement on the importance of education, then turns his attention to his own setting:

Of course, the decision above was specifically concerned with legal denial of an educational opportunity. There are other forms of denial of which this article is immediately concerned.

The first such denial of which I speak is parental denial. It is the responsibility of the parents to see that the child acquires, through schooling and otherwise, the tools which are necessary to live a good life. This is his basic civil right. If the parent does not insist that he get this right and get it now, he will not be able to claim other rights throughout his entire life. There ought to be a march of students, pushed by parents, to the school each day. Their song could very well be, "We march and study today in order to enjoy the fullness of citizenship tomorrow."

I heard a minister once say that "God had a plan when he made adults and when he made children. He did not make the two to think alike—for when they do, the family and other institutions are shattered." Many times

when the going gets rough, some students want to give up. It is at this point that children need not only the parents' encouragement, but whatever forces which may be necessary. This, I believe, was part of the master's plan.³⁵

The belief that parents held a responsibility in their children's development, even when the child might want to drop out of school, bears striking similarity to his own experiences. After all, he received his high school diploma because of the persistence of his mother. His later statements indicating his understanding of the difficulty students confront in being able to attend school are also reminiscent. "There are many excuses parents and students give for educational denial by choice," he writes. "Some had to go to work, keep the children, pay a bill . . ." Surely, penning these words, he must have remembered the times he wanted to drop out of school to go to work and help his mother pay the bills. He could write with such clarity to parents and students because he well understood their perspectives.

In other editorials, Byas focuses on the need for better schools, the need for good jobs, and the need for institutions to support development.³⁶ Most of his comments were directed to students. Yet, the admonishments were constructed with a style that recognized the parents and expected them to be an audience for his commentary as well. An example recorded in the March 1964 issue reflects this belief: "For a better school, all of *us* must rededicate *our* lives, time, and talents to the end that *our children* will see the importance of taking full opportunity of the advantage now offered" [emphasis added].³⁷ As noted earlier, his school newspaper was a way of getting a message to parents that he could not expect the local white newspaper to do. In addition to his statement of this belief, his very language confirmed his intent.

Still, Byas's community responsibilities did not end with his educative role as it related to high school students. As a community leader, Byas also engaged in activities that would directly benefit the larger community. Over the years, he served on boards so that he could lobby for benefits for the elderly, constructed houses that helped to raise the standard of living among blacks, and generally became the conduit through which Gainesville concerns could be channeled to the black community. One poignant example was his effort to help blacks become officers in the Gainesville police force. According to the police, blacks were unable to pass the police apti-

³⁵*The Clarion*. March 1967. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

³⁶*The Clarion*. March 1964; 18 December 1957; December 1962. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

³⁷*The Clarion*. March 1964. Ulysses Byas Papers, Private Collection.

tude test even though they passed the academic portion of the test. Asked if he could help, Byas reviewed a copy of the test. Immediately he could see why blacks were failing:

They had questions like "When dealing with a suspect, the policeman should be (a) mean, (b) kind, (c) hostile, (d) firm, (e) indifferent. . . ." Invariably, the blacks would answer from their experiences with police officers. It was always "hostile," "mean," or, at best, "indifferent." They never would put "firm." Once I drilled into them . . . forget what happened to you. I have to forget about it because the same thing happens to me as a black man. Forget about that and think about what he ought to do. He ought to be firm and he ought to be fair.

Byas's work with nine applicants resulted in eight of them passing the test. It also unquestionably situated him as a leader among blacks in the community. When the parent who initially questioned whether he was capable of being a professor declared, "You are a professor after all," Byas knew he was succeeding in providing leadership to the black community.

ENHANCING THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS

The dual effort of manipulating the superintendent and building rapport with the community had one purpose: to create the best learning environment possible for students in his school. Byas constructed a program at Fair Street similar to those in schools that have been described in the literature on segregated schools, shaping the curriculum and extracurricular activities to encourage students to believe in what they were capable of achieving. This effort is described elsewhere.³⁸

This account, however, provides a glimpse of the ways that the principal leader had to masterfully feign submission to an educational regime that was overtly designed to discount the abilities of his students, while simultaneously building community support to nullify the plans of his boss and the school board. In this role, the black principal's job description went well beyond that typically associated with an administrative leader. When the black principal leader had completed the administrative tasks of running a school, such as establishing procedures, outlining tasks, planning school routines, and hiring, observing, and evaluating teachers, his work as advocate for black children was just beginning.

³⁸Vanessa Siddle Walker, Adah Randolph, Marcia Owens, and Judith Gibson, *Principal Leaders in the African American Community* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming).

The principal leader in black communities bore the burden of designing black education for the community in which he worked. Gaining the confidence of the community did not occur merely because a new “professor” arrived. Rather, the new professor had to engage in the activities that would build the community’s confidence. Likewise, the new professor had to analyze the political situation of the time in which he operated and develop a strategy for relating to his boss. Although relating to superiors and parents is certainly critical for all administrators’ success, the context of oppressed educational opportunities in which the black principal operated required a form of leadership distinctly more nuanced than that of his white counterparts. Because white principals were aligned with a system that already supported their development, less was at stake than was the case for black principals. The black principal leader was engaged in the building of a race.

Ulysses Byas knew the record on which he stood when he quit his job in May 1968. By the time he left Gainesville, the value of the school’s physical plant had increased from \$85,000 in 1948 to \$1.5 million. Working with parents and the materials available during his era—when whites would give money to black schools rather than have their children go to school with blacks—he had accomplished an “intellectual revolution” in Gainesville. During his tenure, 400 students graduated from Fair Street and E. E. Butler High School, an average of approximately 44 graduates per year. Many of them entered colleges such as the University of California at Los Angeles, Morehouse, Emory, Howard, Fort Valley, and other well-known historically black and white institutions. This number well exceeded the total of 130 students who had graduated between 1947 and 1956. Records also indicated yearly gains on standardized achievement test scores throughout his tenure.

The superintendent had no idea just how much the community lost when he accepted Byas’s resignation rather than allow him to become the principal of a school with white students. For too long, historical scholarship also has not understood this loss.

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