

Black Education in Miami, 1921-1940

by Doug Andrews

Michael W. Homel in his essay “Two Worlds of Race? Urban Blacks and the Public Schools, North and South, 1865-1940¹,” reports that in both systems blacks were disadvantaged by lower curriculum offerings, overcrowding, poor facilities and inferior materials, and lower salaries for teachers. Additionally, both systems experienced high levels of segregation though the legal system did not require such in the north. Differences also existed among blacks concerning integration versus segregation; northern blacks tended to be slightly less favorably disposed toward integration. Even though these differences are known, Homel states that much research on black urban education remains undiscovered. Thus he identifies four areas that historians might consider when researching urban black schooling: (1) funding differentials, (2) differences in the physical accommodations, (3) the relationship between the schooling provided and the efforts of whites to keep blacks at the bottom of the job ladder, and (4) the process used to deny blacks a meaningful voice in the governing of public education.²

What is specifically missing according to Homel is a detailed analysis of individual school systems to demonstrate the scope and depth of the inequality. This article begins to address these issues for Dade County, Florida, by examining the way blacks were treated with regard to the issues Homel identified for the years 1921³ - 1944 in Miami, Florida. To accomplish this end this essay will focus primarily on one black school, Goulds Colored School,⁴ and use other schools, black and white for comparison. For this paper the Goulds Colored School will be referred to by its current name, Mays Middle School except when cited otherwise in source material.

Prior to examining the main issues studied here, a brief early history of the Dade County Public Schools and Mays Middle School is in order. Asterie Baker Provenzo and Eugene F. Provenzo, Jr., in their *Education On the Forgotten Frontier: A Centennial History of the Founding of the Dade County Public Schools*, wrote that the statutory basis for the public schools were the federal regulations which created the territorial government for Florida and the Florida school law of 1849, which “. . . designated that the Registrar of the Land Office was to act as State Superintendent of schools and the county probate judges as county superintendents.”⁵ The law also provided for Trustees to be elected by the taxpayers of each of the school districts in the counties. The Provenzos also observed that under the Presidential Plan of Reconstruction (1866-1868) a separate State System of Common Schools for Freedmen was established. In 1873, the Florida Legislature passed a Civil Rights Law which held that, “. . . [t]hat no citizen of this state shall, by reason of race, color, or previous condition of servitude, be excepted or excluded from full enjoyment of any accommodation, facility, or privilege . . . supported by moneys derived from general taxation or authorized by law . . .”⁶ The establishment of schools in sparsely populated Dade County took place in 1885⁷; at that time, the county was already forty-nine years of age. It appears that the first school for black children in today’s Miami-Dade County was established 1896 in Coconut Grove.⁸

The original school in Goulds was organized by Arthur and Polly Mays along with D.D. Cail in 1916 as part of the Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church, which they had founded in 1914.⁹ Mays was motivated to provide a school for the black children of his community by his own lack of an education; he “. . . had only six weeks of schooling . . . [while] . . . his wife Polly [had] completed fourth grade. They knew the value of education and helped each other learn by reading from the Bible and working out mathematics problems.”¹⁰ The first teacher, who taught reading, writing, arithmetic and geography, part-time, was Missionary B.F. James. Talmadge Roux and his family moved to Goulds in 1918 and found eighty-two children attending the school with one teacher. Roux joined forces with the Mays and D.D. Cail in an effort to persuade the Dade County School Board to provide another teacher. When the School Board agreed to this request in 1920, the men turned to the newly built New Bethel A.M.E. Church

for a second classroom.¹¹ Lidia Walker, the local historian of Goulds, reported that “Miss Maude Roux . . . took over Grades 4, 5 and 6. Miss Mattie Parrish taught Grades 1, 2 and 3.”¹² “Grades one through three were taught at Mt. Pleasant; grades four through six attended New Bethel.”¹³

Funding Differentials

Funding problems for urban black education began shortly after the Civil War. Philip N. Racine, in his essay “Public Education in the New South: A School System for Atlanta, 1868-1879,” traces the establishment of Atlanta’s public education system and the struggle to support that system with adequate funding. The issue of funding for the schools was a result of the disagreement between the school board and the city council, over how much money should be allocated for public education¹⁴. This issue also surfaced in Memphis, Tennessee and was partially centered around the question of free education for the black population, and a “mixed” school system. The reason the issue of public funding surfaced only after the Civil War was due to the fact that education was illegal for the black majority of the Southern antebellum population¹⁵.

Due to the loss of records, it is still not possible to state the early source for funding of the original Goulds school created through Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Based upon Dade County School Board records, it appears that the school prior to 1923, was receiving money from a source other than the public educational system since the men who referred to themselves as “the committee of the public school of Goulds Florida” offered to turn over schools funds to the Dade County School Board.

“The following communication was received from the colored people of Goulds:

“To the Bord [sic] of Public Instruction Miami Florida

“We the committee of the public school of Goulds Florida wish to render this as our statement we have on hand one hundred and eighty seven \$187.00 which we will turn over to the school board at any specific time,

“and we will clear and scarify [sic] the land,

“and we have investigated the matter of concerning the two lots which was mentioned before the board and owner of said agreed to exchange two lots and sell tow[sic] or three which ever the board decide. the same will be explained on land map by the committee.”

(signed) A. Mays

D.D. Cail

Talmage Roux”¹⁶

One can speculate on at least three potential sources of support: the local citizens, the Church, and/or some third party, e.g., a national foundation. Jean Taylor, who authored a history of South Dade recorded verbal reports of local donations and fund raising activities among the black citizens living in the Goulds area.¹⁷ Taylor’s history is cited as the authority in other sources that discuss black education in Goulds. As regards national foundations, the School Board Minutes reflect two such national foundations that supported black education, which were operating in Dade County, the Julius Rosenwald Fund and the Slaten Fund; the extent of their involvement in black education in Dade County does not appear to be recorded in local sources.

Graduating class at Perrine. HASF Jean Taylor Collection.



James D. Anderson in *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860 - 1935*, describes “a crusade for black education in the rural South. This crusade, known by contemporary observers and historians as the Rosenwald school building program, was launched officially in 1914, the same year the migration started in full force.”¹⁸ Anderson is of course referring to the movement of black laborers from the farms of the rural South to the southern cities and eventually to the North prior to and during World War I. Julius Rosenwald was a Chicago philanthropist and president of Sears, Roebuck, and Company, who became involved in assisting rural black communities in developing an educational system. The first reference to the Rosenwald Fund appears in 1929 when

Mr. John L. Butts, Vocational Supervisor for the County, and James U. H. Simms, colored teacher of agriculture were present and discussed the matter of establishing a canning school at Goulds colored school. The matter will be held in abeyance until it is known to what extent the State Agent for the Rosenwald and Slaten funds will aid.¹⁹

The Rosenwald Fund support required blacks and the local school system to contribute money and/or labor. It appears from the following quotation that the School Board members and the Superintendent did not fully understand the process used by the Rosenwald Fund for contributing money to black education.

Mr. Dan Roberts and Mr. J. L. Holferty, Trustees of Tax School District No. 7 appeared before the Board and requested that, if possible, transportation be given to the colored children from Naranja and Princetson to the Goulds school. Mr. Holferty stated that a good many children have to walk along the highway and that some walk almost five miles; that there are eighteen children coming from Naranja now and should be quite a few more but they do not come on account of being unable to walk; that the Julius Rosenwald Fund has offered to pay the cost of transportation up to \$500 for the first year, one-third of said transportation cost the second year, and one-fourth the third year, after which time the Board will have to take care of it alone.

James U. H. Simms, Principal of Goulds Agriculture School, advised that practically all the Rosenwald Funds are a matter of promotion, and that if the matter of transportation is carried on for a period of three years by that time its value will become established in the minds of the authorities and they will carry it on; that nothing is stipulated about going ahead after the third year.

“On motion duly made and carried, action in the foregoing request was deferred for two weeks.”²⁰

James Anderson wrote that the funds for the second black common school movement were generally allocated according to a formula: “the Julius Rosenwald Fund gave 15.36 percent, rural black people contributed 16.64 percent, whites donated 4.27 percent, and 63.73 percent was appropriated from public tax funds, collected largely, if not wholly, from black taxpayers.”²¹

The final part of the above quote reflects a belief that blacks were not only cheated by denial of a free public education but that they were cheated out of something they in fact were paying for through their tax dollars. Indeed, there are several examples of black citizens being given what appears to be less than they deserve from the tax dollars they paid, either directly on property they owned or indirectly through rent when they leased. At Mays Middle School, the School Board denied assistance for the purchase of a “Rosenwald Library.” According to School Board Minutes, “The Board declined to aid in the purchase of a Rosenwald Library for the Goulds colored school.”²² Later, during the period covered by this study, the Board did contribute one-third of the \$120.00 cost of a “Rosenwald Library.” The citizens of Goulds and the Rosenwald Fund each contributed one-third.

On motion duly made, seconded and carried the Board voted an appropriation of forty dollars towards the purchase of a Rosenwald library for the Goulds Colored School. It is understood that the library is worth \$120.00 and is to be paid for as follows \$40.00 from the Board, \$40.00 from the community and \$40.00 from the Rosenwald Fund. The forty dollars from the community has already been raised and turned into the Finance Department of the Board.²³



Arthur and Polly Mays. HASF Jean Taylor Book Five.

Other examples include the Board's rejection of funding request for improvements, as well as offering blacks less funds in response to request for reimbursements.

Mr. James U. H. Simms, colored teacher of agriculture, requested reimbursement of \$129.27 for the expenses of the car furnished him. The Board agreed to pay \$70.00 of the amount asked and set his allowance for the future at \$20.00 per month.²⁴

D. F. Goodman offered to furnish transportation for five colored pupils from Hialeah to Booker T. Washington colored school for \$21.00 per month, \$14.00 to be paid by the Board and \$7.00 to be paid by the pupils. Franklin Stirrups, Jr., offered to transport eight colored pupils from the Coconut Grove colored school to Booker T. Washington colored school for \$20.00 per month to be paid by the Board [sic] and \$10.00 per month to be paid by the pupils.

The Board decided to offer each bidder \$10.00 per month for its share of the transportation.²⁵

The above quote offered no justification for the decisions to provide only partial reimbursement or funding but demonstrates a consistent pattern of under funding services for blacks. In addition, the record reflects a consistent pattern of spending less on the education of black Board declined to approve the arrangement as it does not feel that it citizens. For example, on January 18 1930, the principal of Perrine Colored School appeared before the Board to request funds to match a

Rosenwald grant for the transportation of children to that school. "The should set a precedent for the transportation of colored children."²⁶

The Board also declined to establish high school classes at Homestead Colored School and the Goulds Agricultural School when petitioned by citizens. In the case of the Goulds community "[t]he Board replied that it had no funds with which to provide the necessary teacher."²⁷

Salary differentials for white and black teachers represent another example of how black citizens were given less. In 1926 salaries for white teachers ranged from \$125 to \$180, while salaries for black teachers ranged from \$90 to \$130. The typical reason given for the disparity was that blacks teachers had less formal education or a substandard education. While this may have been the case, the Board also employed white teachers with less than a bachelor's degree, as seen from the minutes of April 1, 1936, when the 1936-37 white teachers salary scale includes a notice that all teachers will be required to have a bachelors degree by the summer of 1940. Nonetheless, the 1933-1934 salary scales reflect a fifty percent difference in pay for blacks, even if they held a bachelors degree, which continued through the period covered by this study:

"The New Single Salary Scale adopted for the year 1933-34 is below - compared with the old Elementary Scale"²⁸

Old Elementary Scale:

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$1050	\$1080	\$1110	\$1140	\$1170	\$1200

New Single Salary Scale:

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$900	\$960	\$1020	\$1080	\$1140	\$1200

Old High School Scale:

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$1080	\$1140	\$1200	\$1260	\$1320	\$1400

Revised Salaries of High School Teachers:

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
	\$1140	\$1200	\$1260	\$1290	\$1290

Salary Schedule for colored Teachers 1933-34

1st Class:

Bachelor Degree from a University, College or Normal Training School. Graduate State or Special Certificate

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$504	\$528	\$552	\$576	\$600	\$624

2nd Class:

L.I. Degree from Two-Year college or Normal Training School. First Grade Certificate or Primary Certificate

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$456	\$480	\$504	\$528	\$552	\$576

3rd Class:

Less than two years of college training but with First Grade or Primary Certificate

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$420	\$444	\$468	\$492	\$516	\$540

The above scale and differential represents a greater disparity for black teachers in 1933-34 than the year before when the above pay rates were approximately \$125 less than comparable white salary pay rates for each of the categories below:

Colored Teacher Salary Scale 1932-33²⁹

1st Class

Bachelor Degree

1st yr.	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$648	\$672	\$696	\$720	\$744	\$768

2nd Class

Normal graduate or two years of college with first grade or primary certificate.

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.	6th yr.
\$576	\$600	\$624	\$648	\$672	\$696

3rd Class

Less than two years training with first grade certificate

1st yr	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	5th yr.
	\$528	\$552	\$576	\$600

It appears from the above two scales that black teachers actually took a pay cut that was not as great as the pay cut experienced by white teachers. Also, it is worth noting that School Board members were paid \$100 per month for their service.

Differences in Physical Accommodations

Marcia E. Turner in her essay "Black School Politics in Atlanta, Georgia, 1869-1943," identifies adequate facilities as one of the three issues that blacks worked for in Atlanta.³⁰ Differences in the physical accommodations provided for blacks and whites are easily demonstrated in the case of Mays Middle School. Following the 1923 request for a school building, the Board directed Mr. S. E. Livingston, one of the three School Board members, to meet with citizens requesting the school for Goulds.

A delegation of colored citizens from Goulds came before the Board, asking aid for the erection of a colored school building at that place. This matter was referred to Mr. S. E. Livingston with power to act. Mr. Livingston set the following Friday for these men to meet with the Redland Trustees and himself at his office in Homestead to arrange final details.³¹

Following the request of the citizens of Goulds and their meeting with the trustees, the Board received the following in a letter from William Anderson, S. J. Davis and W. H. Cast:

The local Trustees of district No. 7 recommend that the County School Board erect a Colored School building of two rooms 20X36 and 20X20 not to exceed in cost to County School Board of \$1250.00
“(signed) Wm. Anderson, Sec.”³²

The Polly Mays School Bus. HASF Jean Taylor Book Five.



A Bond election was scheduled for March 2, 1926 for District 7 which included, “. . . [f]or construction and furnishing of a colored school building at Goulds,”³³ What is not clear from the available record is why it took almost three years (June 1923 to January 1926) to move from the decision to provide a school to the decision to ask voters for the funds to build said school. Mr. J. F. Umphrey was awarded the right to build a “. . . new colored school at Goulds, Florida . . . for the amount of his bid \$13, 754.00.”³⁴ This figure when compared with the \$22, 442 for the Redland High School addition and repairs seems equitable until one realizes that the bond election was for \$130,000 and that a similar pattern of spending differential existed in other school districts. For example, in Larkins (South Miami) the Board accepted bids for an addition to the white school in the amount of \$16, 497 and for the construction of a black school in the amount of \$3,855.³⁵

The Board Minutes do not explain exactly why the Goulds school building was still in the discussion stage in 1930, but Ms. Lidia Walker’s history of Goulds School may offer some insight: “Mrs. Johnnie Mae Everett Mitchell recalls the Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church was destroyed by the 1926 hurricane. Classes and church were held in a tent and in New Bethel A.M.E. Church.”³⁶ Two years later New Bethel was destroyed by the 1928 hurricane and Mt. Pleasant Church hosted the school and the New Bethel congregation. This information along with the discussions of repairs to school buildings and the economic depression during the late twenties and early thirties may account for the delay in starting the permanent building.



Elijah J. Granberry, Principal of Booker T. Washington High, 1928. HASF 75-34-14.

Mr. W. H. Mobley, Trustee for District No. 7, was present and asked if the Board could have temporary buildings moved to the colored school site at Goulds. He also asked if that the school might be open in August. The Board asked that the negro church continue to be used as a school house, and said that the school might open in August if the patrons so desired.³⁷

What is difficult to understand is the 1930 discussion of the cost of building a school after the 1926 awarding of a contract to Mr. J. F. Umphrey.

The Superintendent reported that upon looking at the Goulds Colored school plans provided by the Rosenwald Fund the cost would be \$40,000-50,000. "He recommended that this plan be dropped indefinitely and that the Board use certain plans and specifications prepared for this purpose some years ago or employ an architect to provide new plans and specifications, provided the Board wished to proceed with the project. On motion of Mr. Pardon, it was voted that Mr. Fisher be authorized to take the matter up with the Rosenwald Fund and ascertain whether if the School Board erects a building costing approximately \$12,000.00 which will meet the local needs, they will aid one-third of that amount and, if not that plans previously drawn be looked over to see whether they



Dade County Council of Parents and Teachers with its Staff of Officers. HASF 76-1-25

meet the present need; also that the Board determine whether it is advisable to construct the building at all at the present time.³⁸

In August of 1929 James U. H. Simms, principal of Goulds colored school, stated the need of additional facilities for the accommodation of increased attendance. The Board responded by first authorizing an additional teacher and then two weeks later authorizing the Superintendent to move a portable to the Goulds school site. Seven years later the Board authorized the building of “. . . four toilets, two at Perrine Colored School and two at the Goulds Colored School, the cost not to exceed Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00).³⁹” One must assume from this that those attending the Goulds School were using outhouses. The following November the minutes note that a \$2,088 bid was awarded for the installation of a complete plumbing system and septic tank. One suspects that Redland school, consisting of grades one through twelve, located in the same special tax district did not rely on outside toilets.

Another example of difference in facilities was reflected in the provision of cafeterias: A list of building projects was developed for a period of six years. Goulds Colored School was on the list to receive eight rooms at a cost of \$12,000 and a cafeteria at a cost of \$4,000. The white school cafeterias ranged in cost from \$12,000 to \$24,000 with \$15,000 being the modal cost.⁴⁰

A major practice in the education of black children in the United States has been the use of churches as schools. Marcia E. Turner in her essay “Black School Politics in Atlanta, Georgia, 1869-1943,” discussed this trend which usually involved leasing the church for a nominal amount.⁴¹ This practice started after the Civil War when large numbers of black freemen sought an education. The following quote suggests that the practice was also necessitated by the lack of options for black communities:

A letter was written from Daniel Iverson, under the date of October 13 one paragraph of which stated that ‘The Negro Ministerial Alliance has heartily approved the use of their churches and six have been obtained for six teachers.’ In order to relieve the overcrowded condition in the Negro schools, Mr. Filer moved and Mrs. Walker seconded the motion that the proposition be accepted and that Superintendent Fisher

be instructed to employ six teachers for the colored churches mentioned in Rev. Iverson's letter. They are to begin work Monday, October 19. Unanimously adopted.⁴²

It should not be assumed that people were indifferent or unaware of the differences between the education provided for blacks:

Mrs. J. Avery Guyton protested against the inadequate facilities of the Negro schools and requested the Board to include enough money in next year's budget to properly house the indefinite number of children who are not now in school. She also protested against the unsanitary conditions existing in the colored schools and requested a fairer distribution of salaries for colored teachers. Mrs. Walker thanked her for her interest in their schools and assured her that the Board would do all in its power to relieve their situation next year.⁴³

As we will see in the next section the differences in the facilities provided for blacks was only part of a "catch 22," which prevented them from advancing.

Education and Economic Disadvantages

Blacks were also limited by the quality of schooling provided. Homel suggests that there was a relationship between the schooling provided and the efforts of whites to keep blacks at the bottom of the job ladder. There is ample evidence of this reflected in the Board minutes in numerous places. For example, the Board authorized the purchased of maps at a cost of \$1,727.78 for junior and senior high schools and a few elementary schools, but there was no mention of



Booker T. Washington's second graduating class, 1929. HASF 76-1-27.

“colored schools” on the list.⁴⁴ Compared with “[u]pon recommendation of Superintendent Wilson and Mr. Conroy, it was moved and seconded that \$1000.00 be appropriated for library books for the three negro senior high schools. Unanimously adopted.⁴⁵” Or, “[i]t was moved and seconded that Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) be allocated for the purchase of equipment for science laboratories in the Negro high schools.⁴⁶”

In addition to instructional material differences, school operating hours [differed] for black children:

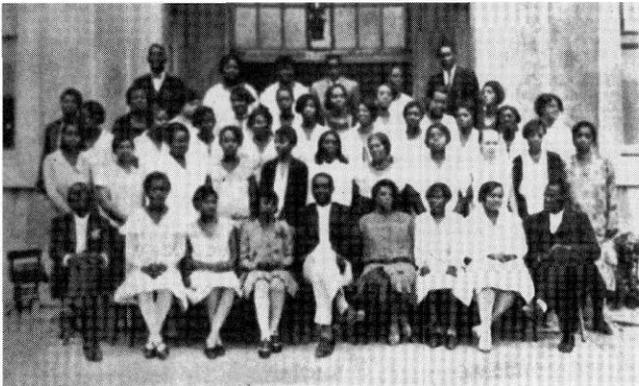
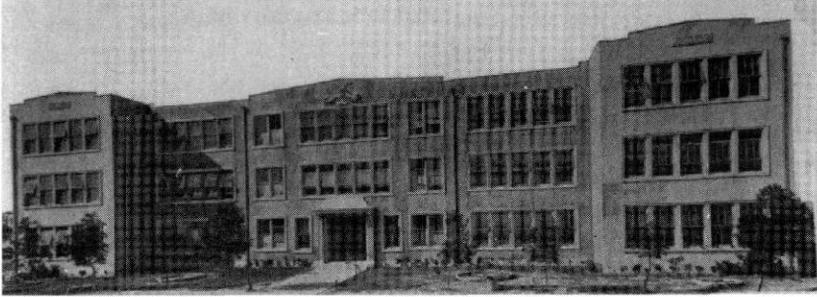
Upon recommendation of the Trustees of District No. 9, Mrs. Walker moved and Mr. Banton seconded the motion that Superintendent Wilson be authorized to set the time for the opening and closing of the Homestead Colored School so that their three month vacation comes during the harvest season, which would be approximately January through April and that the school operate during the summer months.⁴⁷

In 1939, the calendar was changed back only to be changed again in 1943.

Upon recommendation of the Superintendent and the Supervisor of Negro Education that changes be made in the opening hours of some the colored schools, both to facilitate transportation and to make it possible for the pupils to have a longer afternoon so that they may have time to work in the harvest season after school hours, it was moved and seconded that the following schools be open at 8:30 and dismissed at 3:00 o'clock p.m.: Homestead, Goulds Perrine, South Miami, Hialeah.⁴⁸

While the last example might be viewed as an attempt to adjust to a wartime shortage of workers, the offering of a substantially different curriculum best supports Homel's charge that blacks were give an inferior education in order to keep them in a lower position on the economic ladder:

Superintendent Wilson then presented the curriculum for



Booker T. Washington, HASF 80-184-2, and its faculty, undated. HASF 75-34-19.

Booker T. Washington High School which gives pupils four years of home economics or four years of trade study instead of the regular high school subjects, pointing out this would necessitate the revamping of our whole teaching set up at that school and the building at a cost of \$6,000, in order to equip the classrooms, but it would save the cost of four teacher at from \$800 to \$900 a year each.

Mrs. Walker moved the adoption of a resolution to appropriate \$6,000.00 to equip the Booker T. Washington High School for a vocational school rather than a college preparation school. Unanimously adopted.⁴⁹

A vocational course of study would limit the future employment possibilities for the students of the black school and thus reduce any competition for white citizens in employment. In other words, whites would have an advantage and find it easier to accept the fact that blacks were not qualified for employment in the professional fields.

Denial of a Meaning Voice in Governance

The process used to deny blacks a meaningful voice in the governing of public education in much of the South was disenfranchisement. The poll tax, the grandfather clause and literacy test are well documented devices employed for this purpose. The Dade County School Board minutes also demonstrate other tactics such as the establishment of "an auxiliary board for the colored schools," claiming to have no money for requests, and deflecting requests by offering less expensive options.

"The subject of appointing a committee of colored citizens to act in the capacity of an auxiliary board for the colored schools of Dade County was brought up by Dr. Holmes and discussed. On recommendation of prominent and influential citizens of both races the Board appointed the following negroes; D.A. Dorsey, Dr. W.A. Chapman, and Dr. John P. Scott. *This committee has no power under the law* but is created by the School Board as a go-between to facilitate the proper supervision and regulation of the colored schools of the entire community.⁵⁰" (*emphasis added*)

While the above quote is from 1921, later minutes from the thirties indicate some willingness to take suggestions from the members of the auxiliary board. D. A. Dorsey went before the Board in 1934 to request funds for transporting children to Booker T. Washington High School and was told to secure bids for such services and present them at a special meeting. When Dorsey appeared a month later to present the bids, he was referred to a special budget meeting and the Supervisor of Teachers, Mr. I. T. Pearson was instructed to work out some plan in order that the colored students could attend school in their respective communities and avoid being transported to the Washington School. Pearson recommended the construction of portables at a number of schools as a way of relieving congestion in the black schools. This solution might appear to have merit unless one stops to consider that a high school plant generally requires a more complex building than an elementary or junior high school plant; the original request was for transportation to B.T. Washington High School⁵¹. Additionally, this example demonstrates that the efforts of black leaders or citizens were deflected or limited, i.e., they were denied a meaningful voice in the governing of public education

The Board's claims of lack of funds when presented with requests

from black citizens do not hold up to a careful reading of the Minutes. It was not uncommon to read that funds were lacking when requested for the needs of blacks, and while money was usually available for the needs of whites:

Canary Robinson, Principal for Goulds Colored School, presented the following petition signed by the patrons:



Dana A. Dorsey, Millionaire and Philanthropist. HASF x-73-x.

We the patrons of Goulds and Homestead are sending you this petition asking you to please establish a senior high school at the Goulds Agriculture School. We do hereby promise our cooperation in sending our children to school. Goulds is the central place in this section of the county and we are not able to send our children away from home, yet it is our desire to have them continue their education.

The establishment of a senior high school will necessitate the assignment of another teacher, so please give us some consideration. (no signatures recorded)

The Board stated that it had no funds with which to provide an additional teacher.⁵²

One week later the Minutes show the Board agreeing to pay \$100 a month for an additional bus to carry white children from Hialeah to Miami Edison High School due to overcrowding on the existing bus⁵³. In addition, the records reflect the payment of \$50 a month to several administrators for car allowance.

That blacks received a substantially lower education in the South is an accepted fact in United States history. This essay has attempted to show four ways that this end was accomplished in one mid-sized Southern city. In the Dade County school system blacks were disadvantaged through funding differentials, differences in physical

accommodations, the level of education provided, and denial of a meaningful voice in the governing of public education. The School Board Minutes for the period 1921-1940, were used to demonstrate the process used to provide blacks with a substandard education. Other questions remain: Did this process continue in the period beyond this years of this study? And, if so, for how long? What was the extent of the work by the Rosenwald Fund in Dade County? What was the source of the early funding and land for the school in Goulds? Hopefully, additional scholarship will be forthcoming on this important topic.

Endnotes

1. Michael W. Homel, "Two Worlds of Race? Urban Blacks and the Public Schools, North and South, 1865-1940." In *Southern Cities, Southern Schools: Public Education in the Urban South*, edited by David N. Plank and Rick Ginsberg. New York: Greenwood Press, 1990. p. 144.
2. Ibid., p. 146.
3. The period examined for this study is the interwar period, an exciting time of boom, bust and boom for the black and white population of Dade County. There were references to Goulds Colored School in an index to the Board Minutes for the following dates: "August 1, 1916 - Patrons petition referred to Trustees (page 549);" "November 4, 1919 - Colored school to remain at Goulds (page 894)." "November 26, 1919 - Proposal that school be moved to Black Point (page 834)," "January 6, 1920 - Patrons petition for establishment of school (page 843)," "February 3, 1920 - Site and building donation by patrons (page 865)," "August 3, 1920 - Site donated (page 938)."
4. The Goulds Colored School has gone by various names during the years: Goulds Agricultural School, Goulds Junior High School, Arthur and Polly Mays Junior and senior High School, and Mays Middle School.
5. Asterie Baker Provenzo and Eugene F. Provenzo, Jr., *Education On the Forgotten Frontier: A Centennial History of the Founding of the Dade County Public Schools*. Miami: Dade County Public Schools, 1985. p. 21.
6. Ibid., p. 22.
7. Ibid., p. 26.
8. Ibid., p. 44.
9. "Designation Report Mays Middle School, 11700 S.W. 216 Street, Goulds, Florida." Metropolitan Dade County Historic Preservation Board, December 18, 1991, p. 3.
10. Jean Taylor, *Villages of South Dade*, St. Petersburg, Fla.: Byron Kennedy, [1985?]. p. 139
11. Designation Report. p. 4.
12. Lidia Walker, *Mays High School History*. Self published. p. 4.
13. Designation Report. p. 4.
14. Philip N. Rancine, "Public Education in the New South: A School System for Atlanta, 1868-1879" In *Southern Cities, Southern*

Schools: Public Education in the Urban South, edited by David N. Plank and Rick Ginsberg. p. 32.

15. Marcia E. Turner, "Black School Politics in Atlanta, Georgia, 1869-1943." In *Southern Cities, Southern Schools: Public Education in the Urban South*, edited by David N. Plank and Rick Ginsberg. p. 160.

16. Dade County School Board Minutes (SBM) 6/19/23 p. 1557 (special meeting) It appears from the minutes that three members of the Mt. Pleasant Missionary Baptist School Board, Mays, Cail and Roux, appeared before the Dade County School Board on June 12, 1923 to request a building and then returned to the Dade County School Board on June

17. Jean Taylor, *Villages of South Dade*. p. 139.

18. Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1914*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988.152

19. SBM 2/13/29, p. 2643.

20. SBM 1/8/31, p. 3200

21. Anderson, p. 153

22. SBM 3/7/30, p. 3004.

23. SBM 11/1/33, p. 4092.

24. SBM 2/20/29, p. 2648.

25. SBM 9/26/28, p. 2611.

26. SBM 1/18/30, p. 2910.

27. SBM 9/21/32, p. 3748.

28. SBM 7/28/33, p. 4024.

29. SBM 9/4/32, p. 3740.

30. Turner. p. 163.

31. SBM 6/12/23, p. 1554 (special meeting). The county was divided into 10 Special Tax School Districts with each district having three elected Trustees who served for two-year terms. These Trustees oversaw the operations of the schools in their district, making recommendations on hiring, rehiring teachers and other personnel, and seeing that the schools were maintained properly. The Recording Secretary Office of the School Board has some deteriorating notes from Trustees' Meetings which are illegible in addition to incoherent; other than this meager collection nothing exists to describe these bodies.

32. SBM 6/19/23, p. 1554 (special meeting).
33. SBM 1/26/26, p. 2114.
34. SBM 6/1/26, p. 2274.
35. SBM 7/14/24, p. 1762.
36. Walker p.4
37. SBM 7/25/28, p. 2589.
38. SBM 3/25/31, p. 3273.
39. SBM 12/30/36, p. 5526.
40. SBM 10/12/36, p.5482.
41. Turner. p. 163.
42. SBM 10/14/36, p. 5484.
43. SBM 3/10/37, p. 5597.
44. SBM 4/14/37, p. 5660.
45. SBM9/3/41, p. 6842.
46. SBM 10/22/41, p. 6872.
47. SBM5/19/37, p. 5822.
48. SBM 9/1/43, p. 7206.
49. SBM 8/4/37, p. 5951.
50. SBM 1/19/21, p. 1003.
51. SBM 7/18/34, p. 4462. "Mr. I.T. Pearson, Supervisor of Teachers, recommended by letter the construction of additional portable buildings at the following schools with the number of building required set opposite the name of the school:

Hialeah	1
Liberty City	6
Coconut Grove	6
South Miami	2
Allapattah	1

Franjo Frams 1

"Mr. Pearson further advised that if the facilities are provided as enumerated above, the need for transporting of colored children to Booker T. Washington High School in Miami would be obviated."

52. SBM 9/21/32, p. 3748.
53. SBM 9/28/32, p. 3753.