

THE ORAL HISTORIES OF THREE RETIRED AFRICAN AMERICAN
SUPERINTENDENTS FROM GEORGIA

by

GARRICK ARION ASKEW

(UNDER the Direction of Sally J. Zepeda)

ABSTRACT

This study included the oral histories of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. The participants had professional careers that collectively spanned 54 years, beginning as teachers and moving into administrative positions including the superintendency. This study used archival documents, newspaper reports, and research and literature on segregation, desegregation, and career mobility to provide context for the participants' oral histories.

Three research questions guided the interviews for this study:

1. How did each of the participants first enter education?
2. How were the participants able to ascend to the superintendency in light of challenges that they faced as African American school administrators?
3. What was the experience of being an African American educator and school administrator in Georgia school districts?

The data revealed common factors in the career experiences of the participants. Common factors included childhood mentoring in segregated K-12 schools, segregated schools as extended families, self image and life skills training, and academic preparation at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Other common factors influencing the participants were

professional mentoring at HBCUs, experiences with career mobility processes, school desegregation as the impetus for advancement, financial challenges of the superintendency, and knowing when to retire. These factors significantly impacted the participants and their development as educators and helped to mold their personal and professional identities as African American superintendents.

Further, the participants' discussions about their unique experiences as African American educators who became superintendents in Georgia was especially important because the participants were among the small number of surviving, native Georgian, African American superintendents who worked in the state since the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* court case. The oral history research method used in this study allowed the researcher to document and to analyze this important and previously unavailable information.

INDEX WORDS: African American superintendents, superintendents, career mobility, desegregation, segregation, Historically Black Colleges and Universities

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DEDICATION

In loving memory of my grandmother, Mrs. Rosa Cofield, a woman who believed that a child's schooling should start long before kindergarten.

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God sent many people into my life without any this moment would not have occurred. Dr. Sally J. Zepeda, my major professor, my professional mentor, my friend, thank you. UGA is a huge place but you never let me get lost, and you made Athens feel like a home away from home. Drs. William Wraga and John Dayton, who stepped in and provided assistance when I needed it, thank you. Dr. C. Thomas Holmes, the first person that I had correspondence with at UGA and the man who led me to my participants, thank you. The entire faculty and staff in the Department of Educational Administration and Policy at UGA, thank you. Each of you has influenced me in some way.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study explored the career experiences of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. More specifically, this study focused on the participants' perspectives concerning the selection, recruitment, and promotions that led to each being appointed as a school district superintendent.

In the review of research and related literature, it was discovered that Moody's (1971) study was the first to explore the African American superintendency. Since Moody's study, the African American superintendency has not been fully explored, and the research concerning this group has been largely descriptive in nature (Cadman, 1989; Coates, 1980; Dunlop, 1997; Ellerbee, 2002). Studies on the African American superintendency have defined factors that shaped the experiences of African American school district superintendents over the past 32 years (Cadman, 1989; Coates, 1980; Colquit, 1975; Holden, 1977; Moody, 1971; Moody, 1973; Moffett, 1981; Robinson, 1973; Scott, 1980; Sizemore, 1986). After reading this research on African American superintendents, there was recognition for the need to conduct a perspective seeking study focused on this cadre of professionals.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored the career experiences of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. More specifically, this study focused on the participants' perspectives concerning the selection, recruitment, and promotions that led to each being appointed to the superintendency. This study's purpose and design were influenced by:

1. My interests as a researcher;

2. The professional training that I received in the field of educational administration;
3. My origins as an African American professional working in the field of education
(see Appendix A, Autobiographical Statement).

The oral history method was used in this study. Through oral history research, this study offered the perspectives of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. The participants worked in higher education settings and as school administrators over the course of the past 41 years (see Appendix B for African American Superintendents in Georgia since 1954).

Research Questions

This study was designed to explore the career experiences of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. This study focused on the participants' perspectives concerning the selection, recruitment, and promotions that led to each being appointed as a superintendent. In the process of exploring the ascent of each of the participants to the superintendency in Georgia, this study provided a historically informed account of the professional experiences of each participant.

In examining the selection, recruitment, and promotions that led to each of the participant's ascent to the superintendency and the career experiences of the participants, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How did each of the participants first enter education?
2. How were the participants able to ascend to the superintendency in light of challenges that they faced as African American school administrators?
3. What was the experience of being an African American educator and school administrator in Georgia school districts?

Significance of the Study

The African American superintendency is an area of research that has not been heavily explored since Moody's (1971) study. As a result, there is sparse new information concerning African American school district superintendents and the professional positions that they occupy. More importantly, not one oral history concerning the personal perspectives of retired African American superintendents could be located in the literature. Moreover, this study is the first exploring the African American superintendency in Georgia.

Research may benefit from this study in at least three ways. First, reflection on the experiences of predecessors may allow superintendents and superintendent candidates to be more informed concerning administrative factors that affect their careers. Reflection may also help superintendents and superintendent candidates become aware of thematic issues that have pervaded the social contexts in which they work. This study may also elevate the use of the oral history research method to further examine the nature of the position of superintendent as experienced by minority populations.

To the researcher's knowledge, there is an absence of research studies using the oral history research method to examine the nature of the career experiences of African American superintendents. Further, Moody's (1971) call for additional studies focused on the African American superintendency has not been answered in that this area of inquiry has not been explored very much in research for more than 30 years.

Theoretical Framework

This study's design, data collection, analysis, and interpretation procedures adhered to recognized methods of oral history research (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998). Also, symbolic interactionism influenced the researcher's use of the oral history research method

in this study (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 2001; Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). Symbolic interactionist thought was first conceived as a disciplined body of propositions that sought to describe the impact of human social living and interaction on individual human identity, behavior, and thought (Hamilton, 1992). The works of Herbert Blumer, a student of George Herbert Mead, first gave rise to the term symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969; Charon, 2001; Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). Herbert Blumer's work illustrated the importance of the consideration of sociological perspectives in interpreting meaning in human experience (Reynolds, 1987).

Blumer asserted that social actors' personal interpretations are the most relevant in determining meaning in experience (Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). Symbolic interactionist thought also partially views individual expression as an extension of social group ideology (Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). To the previous end, the attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions of influential social groups are represented in the behaviors of individual members (Reynolds, 1987).

Symbolic interactionist reasoning has also been used to determine the nature of the construction of human memory (Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). From a symbolic interactionist perspective, individual remembrances are partially interpreted as a cultural representation of group experiences (Charon, 2001; Reynolds, 1987).

For the present study, symbolic interactionism as a theoretical perspective was important. In providing a sociological context for accurate access and presentation of the perspectives of the participants, symbolic interactionism complimented the perspective seeking aims of oral history research (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Blumer (1969) stated:

Symbolic interactionism is a down-to-earth approach to the scientific study of human group life and human conduct. It lodges its problems in the natural world of such group life and conduct. It lodges its problems in this natural world, conducts its studies in it, and derives its interpretations from such naturalistic studies. If it wishes to study religious cult behavior it will go to actual religious cults and observe them carefully as they carry on their lives. If it wishes to study social movements it will trace carefully the career, the history, and the life experiences of actual movements . . . For symbolic interactionism the nature of the empirical social world is to be discovered, to be dug out by a direct, careful, and probing examination of that world. (pp. 47-48)

The participants' accounts were major primary source materials used in this study. Other primary source materials used in this study included newspaper articles, college catalogs, Georgia State Board of Education meeting minutes, Georgia Department of Negro Education archived files, and school board meeting minutes from the districts that the superintendents worked. These sources helped the researcher address reliability and validity by corroborating information reported during participant interviews.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms are defined as follows:

1. Career Path—the number and type of successive seats that an African American school administrator has held during his or her ascent to the superintendency.
2. Career Pattern—a combination of the successive chairs that an African American administrator has held and the process by which he or she obtained each seat.
3. Chair—an administrative position that exists within a hierarchy of administrative positions, including: administrative assistant posts, assistant principalships, principalships, central office administrative positions, and school district superintendencies.
4. Contest Mobility—the process of career advancement of an African American school administrator through his or her personal efforts, which have included:

further professional training and education, active pursuit of professional initiative, and career-based, geographic relocation.

5. Sponsor—the individuals who have directly assisted in the placement of African American candidates into administrative positions; this group of individuals includes university professors, professional recruiters, professional mentors, and school district administrative personnel.
6. Sponsored Mobility—the professional career advancement of an African American school administrator through the direct actions and recommendations of sponsors.
7. Superintendent—the chief executive officer of a school district; this position is the highest administrative position in a school district

Assumptions

Concerning this study, the researcher held the following assumptions to be true:

1. The remembrances offered by the participants represented their honest recollections concerning the nature of their professional career patterns and the forces and events that helped to shape them.
2. The remembrances offered by the participants were freely given.
3. The participants were able to communicate honestly with the researcher and to provide accurate detail due to their retired employment status.
4. The knowledge base of collective experience found in the professional life histories of the three participants is important to the research community as well as to current and aspiring African American school administrators.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 includes the background and rationale for the present study. In addition, Chapter 1 examines contextualized definitions of terms used in this study and identifies the theoretical perspective that influenced the researcher's approach to the oral history design. Chapter 2 reviews the related research and literature. The literature includes an exploration of the context and effects of school desegregation in Georgia and the southern United States during the 1950s, 1960, and 1970s, and an examination of career mobility paradigms.

In examining the context and effects of school desegregation in Georgia and the southern United States during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the review of related literature explores three areas:

1. The professional entry of African Americans into the upper echelons of American professional occupations after the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) court decision.
2. School desegregation in Georgia as an outgrowth of legally supported school desegregation initiatives.
3. Changing demographics in urban areas after the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision as an indicator of the need for African American school district administrators.

Chapter 3 details the oral history research method and how oral history research was used in this study. The oral histories of each of the participants are presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Each participant's oral history was framed within the context of the times and places in which she or he lived in Georgia. In addition, each participant's oral history was enhanced with relevant historical references and narrative prompts. Chapter 7 provides an analysis of the themes that

emerged from the data in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Chapter 8 offers final conclusions related to the study, its significance, and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of literature examined two concepts. First, the review examined the context and effects of school desegregation in Georgia and the southern United States during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Second, this chapter explored research and literature on the African American superintendency through an examination of career mobility paradigms. This chapter concluded with reflection on the significance of the context and effects of school desegregation in Georgia and the southern United States, and career mobility paradigms on the career mobility of African American superintendents.

Examining context and effects of school desegregation in Georgia and the southern United States during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the review of literature explored three areas. First, the review of literature explored the entrance of African Americans into the upper echelons of professional occupations in the United States after the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) court decision. School desegregation in Georgia was examined as an outgrowth of legally supported school desegregation initiatives. The section on the context and effects of school desegregation in Georgia and the southern United States also examined changing demographics in urban areas after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Changing demographics in urban areas were indicators of the need for African American administrators in those areas.

In its exploration of career mobility processes, this chapter examined contest and sponsored career mobility systems. This exploration was important. Literature on the African

American superintendency suggested that contest and sponsored mobility systems have significant impact on the career patterns of African American superintendent candidates.

The Context and Effects of School Desegregation in Georgia and the Southern United States, 1950-1979

This section examined four areas. First, it explored the impact of the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) court decision and the Civil Rights Movement on the entry of African Americans into the upper echelons of professional occupations in desegregated settings in the United States. Also explored was the entry of African Americans into mainstream educational and professional settings after desegregation. This section continued by examining the effect of federal and state legal initiatives on school desegregation in Georgia. The section concluded by exploring the impact of changing demographic patterns during the 1950s and 1960s on the need for African American school district administrators in the United States.

The Impact of *Brown v. Board of Education* on the Professional Entry of African Americans

In the decades following the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision (1954), the social and political climate of the United States impacted the growth in the number of African American superintendents. The increase in the number of African American superintendents in the United States after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was the result of two factors. First, African Americans received increased political enfranchisement in the United States following the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Second, there was a growing desire within African American communities to see African American officials in high-ranking positions within America's social and political infrastructure (Coates, 1980; Fernandez, 1975; Shujaa, 1996). Robinson (1973) provided a rationale for these insights:

There are many reasons why a school system must have minority administrators. Minority students need individuals of their own ethnic groups with whom they can identify and in whom they can confide. White youth, too, must have opportunities to work with and observe members of other races in positions of leadership if they are to develop nonprejudicial attitudes. But minority administrators are not needed for the young alone. Administrative positions carry prestige, power, and high salaries. These practical benefits must be shared among all ethnic groups if their members are to participate fully in the life of the nation. (p. 8)

The wish to see African Americans in high ranking administrative offices has been deemed important in relation to positions within the administrative levels of local school systems and state boards of education (Colquit, 1975; Lomotey, 1989; Moffett, 1981; Robinson, 1973; Scott, 1980; Sizemore, 1986).

The *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision was significant to the ascent of African Americans to high level administrative positions in mainstream settings because it started desegregation and helped initiate the Civil Rights Movement in the United States (Blake, 1994; Jones, 1979; Shujaa, 1996). Desegregation and the Civil Rights Movement provided African Americans entry to upper echelon administrative positions in desegregated school systems. As a result of the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision and the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans gained greater access to the upper echelons of American professional occupations, including school district superintendencies, in desegregated settings (Fernandez, 1975; Robinson, 1973; Scott, 1983).

The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954) affected social relations in the United States as well. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was the first court ruling that addressed social relations between African and European Americans in a progressive manner (Brown, 1973; LaMorte, 1999). Evidence of the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision's impact on relationships between African and European Americans was seen in the case itself, as it recognized relationships as one of the key points in the complex issue that surrounded social

relations between European and African Americans (Blanton, 1959; Friedman, 1967). The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision provided the legal impetus for the desegregation of America's elementary, secondary, and collegiate school systems (Blanton, 1959; Brown, 1973; Friedman, 1967). The sociological significance of the reconstruction of America's educational systems, due to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision has been seen in continuing efforts to provide equity in access to economic, social, and governmental opportunities to citizens of all ethnic origins in the United States (Banks, 1994; Diaz, 1992; Duffy, 2003; Naylor, 1997).

Perhaps, more important than the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision was the impact it had within the African American community. The *Brown v Board of Education* decision spawned the legislation and social equity initiatives that started desegregation in the United States. The desegregation, integration, and social equity efforts that the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision spawned initiated much of the federal civil rights legislation that allowed African Americans to gain full citizenship and political enfranchisement in the United States (D'Angelo, 2001; Davis, 2001; Holt, 2000; Jones, 1969).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were two bodies of federal civil rights legislation that were passed after the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision. The civil rights legislation that was passed in the years following the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was significant because it helped ensure the inclusion of African Americans in mainstream society in the United States.

The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision also helped initiate the Civil Rights Movement (Blake, 1994; D'Angelo, 2001). This was significant as the Civil Rights Movement was closely intertwined with efforts by African Americans to gain inclusion in mainstream society in the United States (D'Angelo, 2001).

Examining the history of the Civil Rights Movement, Davis (2001) asserted that the American Civil Rights Movement traced its origins to:

1. The social equity initiatives of president Franklin Roosevelt's 1940s New Deal program.
2. An equality impetus born from African American soldiers experiences abroad in World War II.
3. The social significance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954.

The Civil Rights Movement was broad in its scope, addressing the economic, political, educational, and social barriers that faced African Americans during the time between Southern Reconstruction and the passage of affirmative civil rights legislation in the United States.

Comprehensive explorations of the Civil Rights Movement have often focused on the efforts of individuals, and social activist groups that functioned as key actors during the movement (D'Angelo, 2001; Davis 2001; Friedman, 1967; Holt, 2000; Jones, 1969). The narrative nature of literature examining the efforts of individual civil rights activist groups including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) supports the use of oral history research in this study (Davis, 2001; D'Angelo, 2001; Holt, 2000; Jones, 1969; Shujaa, 1996).

African American Entry into Desegregated Education and Professional Settings

Research has asserted the need for top-level minority school district administrators (Moody, 1971; Robinson, 1973; Scott, 1980). Research has also recognized minority populations' opportunities to access top-level school district administrative positions in desegregated settings as an effect of school desegregation initiatives that began with the *Brown*

v. Board of Education (1954) decision (Banks, 1994; Bennett, 1993; Fernandez, 1975; Jones, 1979; Robinson, 1973).

The *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision provided legal entry into desegregated educational and work settings for African Americans. However, there have been few empirical studies that measure gains made by African Americans in their educational and career pursuits after desegregation. Braddock and McPartland (1982) summarized the problem surrounding the lack of studies focused on the educational and occupational attainments of African Americans who entered desegregated school settings as such:

Although school desegregation has generated hundreds of research studies since the mid-1960s, most have been devoted to two topics: the effects of desegregation as typically practiced on the short-term academic achievement of students, and the change in White enrollments ('White flight') in school districts due to desegregation activities. In contrast to these dominant issues, few studies have examined broader impact questions such as long-term career and adult participation consequences or community institutional outcomes. We have little contemporary reliable evidence on whether students from desegregated elementary and secondary schools have more long-run success in higher education, employment, and income; whether school desegregation contributes to desegregation progress in colleges, places of work, and neighborhoods; and whether school desegregation experiences have effects on attitudes and behaviors across generations when students become adults and parents. (Braddock & McPartland, 1982, p. 262)

Braddock and McPartland suggested that the gap in forms of desegregation studies serve to guide research in new directions:

Studies about school desegregation have rarely been embedded in rich theories of social mobility, community power, or discrimination. Because we use narrow theoretical perspectives to generate research on school desegregation effects, social researchers have failed to direct the policy debates on this issue toward a renewed public interest in the contemporary meaning of traditional American ideals, such as equal opportunity, social justice and individual rights. The absence of richer theoretical perspectives has also separated the school desegregation issue from current policy thinking on social problems such as employment inequalities and discrimination. (Braddock & McPartland, 1982, p. 262)

Crain and Strauss (1985) conducted a study that addressed some of the points raised by Braddock and McPartland. Crain and Strauss' study examined the career aspirations and occupational attainment of African Americans who received schooling in desegregated settings. Crain and Strauss' study was conducted under the auspice of Johns Hopkins University and the National Institute of Education (Washington, DC). Crain and Strauss noted that African American graduates of desegregated schools gained employment in white-collar occupations, maintained bi-racial professional networks throughout their adult lives, and worked in desegregated settings.

The participants in Crain and Strauss' longitudinal study (1966-1982) included a sample of 266 African American K-5 students from Hartford, Connecticut. Crain and Strauss also conducted sub-studies based on their 1966 research. The sub-studies occurred between the years of 1968 and 1971. However, the 1982 data were taken from a sampling of the participants in Crain and Strauss' 1966 study.

The 266 students in Crain and Strauss' (1966) sample were selected randomly from four elementary schools in Hartford, Connecticut. The four elementary schools in Crain and Strauss' study were ones that received a significant amount of Title I funds. The students in Crain and Strauss' study were divided into experimental and control groups. Students in Crain and Strauss' experimental group were bussed to suburban school districts in the Hartford, Connecticut area. In addition, 12 teachers who would have been displaced because of the loss of students from the Hartford public school systems were placed in the suburban schools with the students from inner city Hartford.

Not all of the students included in Crain and Strauss' (1966) experimental group finished high schools that participated in the study. This occurred even though all of the students in Crain

and Strauss' study, who attended suburban schools, were given the opportunity to attend those schools throughout their senior year of high school.

Surveying the African American students who attended desegregated schools in suburban areas surrounding Hartford as a part of their 1966 study, Crain and Strauss (1985) asked the participants questions about their current occupational status, their future aspirations for promotion, and overall rating of their job experiences. Crain and Strauss used a multiple regression test to analyze their survey data. In an effort to adjust for variances that existed due to each of the participant's uniqueness, Crain and Strauss included students in the 1982 data collection survey from two "outlying" groups. The first group of "outliers" included those who were offered the opportunity but chose not to attend desegregated schools. The second group of "outliers" included students who were a part of the 1966 study but remained in the Hartford, Connecticut public schools and later opted out of the Hartford school system. The students in Crain and Strauss' (1982) data collection were employed in the Hartford, Connecticut area.

Crain and Strauss (1985) interpreted their data and drew the following conclusions:

1. The students who attended desegregated schools through Crain and Strauss' study held different occupations from the students who did not participate in the program.
2. Unemployment rates were not significantly affected for students who attended desegregated schools vs. those who did not attend desegregated schools as a part of Crain and Strauss' study.
3. The students who attended desegregated schools as a part of Crain and Strauss' study were employed in occupations that had low numbers of African Americans nationally.

4. The students who attended desegregated schools held more private sector professional-manager jobs and White-collar positions than the students that did not attend desegregated schools.
5. Students who attended desegregated schools did not have occupations that provided higher incomes or that ranked higher on some socioeconomic indices than students who did not attend desegregated schools.
6. A higher percentage of students (almost 20% higher) that attended desegregated schools had or were receiving college training, and they reported that they were in occupations where the chances for promotion were good.

Throughout their study, Crain and Strauss (1985) recognized that numerous variables including student motivation, family influence, and post graduation educational attainment had the potential to affect outcomes.

In other research that focused on the occupational attainments of African Americans after desegregation, the Alabama Council on Human Relations, American Friends Service Committee, Delta Ministry of the National Council on Churches, NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, Southern Regional Council, and the Washington Research Project (1972) monitored desegregation progress in 43 urban school districts in the south. The districts in the Alabama Council on Human Relations et al. (1972) study included school systems that implemented voluntary and court ordered desegregation plans. The presence of top-level African American school district administrators, and their job capacities within school districts was one of the foci of the Alabama Council on Human Relations et al. (1972) study.

The Alabama Council on Human Relations et al. (1972) study showed the presence of African American central office administrators, including superintendents, in 10 southern cities:

1. Austin, Texas;
2. Baton Rouge, Louisiana;
3. Charlotte, North Carolina;
4. Florence, South Carolina;
5. Huntsville, Alabama;
6. Little Rock, Arkansas;
7. Memphis, Tennessee;
8. Nashville, Tennessee;
9. New Orleans, Louisiana;
10. Norfolk, Virginia.

After surveying the job capacities of top- level African American school district administrators in the 10 southern school districts listed, the Alabama Council on Human Relations et al. study (1972) determined a need for more African American central office administrators in areas that lacked African Americans in such positions. The Alabama Council on Human Relations et al. study also expressed the need for African American central office administrators to have increased voice and agency in cases where African Americans held central office positions but faced limited decision-making opportunities.

Coinciding with the Alabama Council on Human relations et al. study (1972), Georgia's first African American superintendent, M.E. Lewis was appointed on January 1, 1973. Alonzo Crim, former superintendent of Atlanta Public Schools, was appointed on July 1, 1973 (see Appendix B for African American Superintendents in Georgia since 1954).

In another study, Scott (1980) identified 46 African American superintendents who worked in the United States and the Virgin Islands in 1974. The 46 superintendents identified in

Scott's research included John Porter and Wilson Riles who served at the state level in California and Michigan, respectively. Scott (1980) also identified four African American superintendents in his research that he termed "the forerunners of current Black superintendents" (p. 42). The "forerunners" included Lillard Ashley, Bowley, Oklahoma, 1956; Lorenzo R. Smith, Hopkins Park, Illinois, 1956; E. W. Warrior, Taft, Oklahoma, 1958; and Arthur Shropshire, Kinloch, Missouri, 1963. The increased number of African American superintendents nationally since the "forerunners" as identified by Scott and in Georgia since the appointments of M. E. Lewis and Alonzo Crim, further supports the realization that African Americans first received access to the upper echelons of professional occupations, including school district superintendencies in the United States after the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision.

Federal and State Legal Initiatives: The Impact on Georgia

In Georgia, as in many of the southern states, segregation statutes defined the social interactions and relationships that existed between European and African Americans during segregation (Davis, 2001; D'Angelo, 2001; Roche, 1998). Race relations between European and African Americans in Georgia were especially strained during the late 1940s and early 1950s due to assertive social-equity rulings issued by U.S. federal courts. The assertive social-equity federal court rulings caused a flux in Georgia's political climate, as established racial segregation practices throughout the south approached an end.

Assertive federal court rulings were a part of the judicial activism that emerged after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (Salomone, 1986). Judicial activism occurred after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision because the power of the federal judiciary to interpret the United States Constitution and to determine what was constitutional was key in legal struggles that surrounded desegregation (Salamone, 1986).

During the *Brown v. Board of Education* era in Georgia, a strong block of democratic southern senators helped to maintain the status quo in social politics in the state (Roche, 1998). The senators worked to impede civil rights and social-equity legislation that emerged in the national legislature. However, in the midst of the segregationist social-politics that pervaded much of the southern United States during the late 1940s and 1950s, the initiative for social equity continued to develop in the national African American community (Davis, 2001; Roche, 1998).

The origin of the social-equity initiative in African American communities has been traced to the combined after effects of African American soldiers exposure abroad during World War II, the increased social consciousness of African Americans across the United States, and the willingness of federal courts to rule in the favor of African Americans in desegregation and social-equity cases (Davis, 2001; Jones, 1979).

Directly responding to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision of 1954 and the changing federal judicial philosophy concerning the legal validity of southern segregation practices, Georgia's political leaders stiffened their resistance to federally initiated desegregation efforts (Roche, 1998; Report on the Adequate Program of Education for Georgia, 1954). Georgia's political leaders responded to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision with legislative initiatives that opposed school desegregation (Private Schools, 1954; Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954; Report on the Adequate Program of Education for Georgia, 1954; Report on the Governor's Conference, 1954; Roche, 1998). Many of Georgia's key political leaders during the mid-1950s asserted that the Supreme Court had overstepped its boundaries in ruling that the segregation of students in schools illegal with the thought that

education was a states rights' issue abdicated to the states by the U.S. constitution (Report of the Georgia Commission of Education, 1954).

Governor Herman Talmadge led the anti-school desegregation thrust in Georgia (1948-1955). Having observed the changing philosophical nature of the federal court system prior to the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954), Talmadge developed a preemptive measure to diffuse federal efforts to desegregate schools in Georgia (Roche, 1998). Talmadge sponsored an anti desegregation bill six months before the *Brown v. Board* decision. Talmadge's bill was passed as an amendment to the Georgia state constitution (Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954). The amendment established provisions that:

1. Outlawed school desegregation in Georgia;
2. Called for the closing of any schools in Georgia that were targeted for desegregation;
3. Provided monetary reimbursement to the parents of students affected by anti desegregation school closings. (Report of the Georgia Commission of Education, 1954; Report on the Adequate Program of Education for Georgia, 1954)

In explicating the intents of his anti-desegregation legal policies, Talmadge stated:

The school segregation amendment is cumulative and permissive only. It removes what might later prove to be a crippling restriction on the power of the Legislature to preserve segregated education in Georgia. It is insurance against mixed schools. With this amendment in our Georgia Constitution, the General Assembly can frame laws which will permit us to act promptly and decisively to prevent the mixing of the races in the schools. This amendment will make it possible for your elected representatives in the Legislature to provide for separate education of the races outside the terms of the court ruling. In cities and counties in which the existing schools are closed by the federal courts, this amendment will enable the General Assembly to provide the money for free education of all the children in well regulated and properly supervised non-sectarian schools. (Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954, p. 1)

In an attempt to further secure Georgia's position against federally initiated school desegregation efforts, Governor Talmadge attempted to alleviate inequities in Georgia's segregated school

systems by increasing funding and improving facilities in African American schools throughout the state of Georgia (Roche, 1998).

Consistent with Georgia's state-constitutional resistance to federally mandated desegregation efforts, the Georgia State Board of Education sought to pass a resolution that would make adherence to racial segregationists' practices a condition of professional certification and employment for Georgia's school teachers (Georgia State Board of Education, 1955). In an address to the Georgia State Board of Education on August 15, 1955, Georgia Attorney General Eugene Cook suggested that the State Board of Education forgo its proposed segregation resolution. Cook advised the State Board of Education to base segregation enforcement policies on a Georgia law already in place. Cook quoted annotation 32-1022 to the Georgia Code stating:

Every teacher in the public schools of this state whether elementary, high school, college or university, and all other employees, of the state or subdivision thereof drawing a weekly, monthly or yearly salary, shall before entering upon the discharge of their duties, take and subscribe a solemn oath to uphold, support, and defend the Constitution and laws of this State and of the United States, and to refrain from directly or indirectly subscribing to or teaching any theory of government or economics or of social relations which is inconsistent with the fundamental principles of patriotism and high ideals of Americanism. (Georgia State Board of Education, 1955, p. 1)

Georgia's laws further stipulated that state employees and teachers take an annual oath of constitutional allegiance. The oath of allegiance included provisions that required any person violating its premise to be found guilty of a misdemeanor and to "immediately be discharged from their duties" (Georgia State Board of Education, 1955, p. 2).

Cook also reported to the Georgia State Board of Education:

The application of the Code Sections I have cited in support of the objective you ask is to be found in the legal fact that the right to teach in and to attend our public schools is a conditional right created by the State and not by the Federal Constitution. This basic legal fact was not changed by the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court of May 17, 1954 and of May 31, 1955. (Georgia State Board of Education, 1955, p. 2)

Cook concluded his address to the board by stating, “The enforcement of these laws is a responsibility of the local school boards, grand juries, solicitors General and other appropriate authorities” (Georgia State Board of Education 1955, p. 2). The Georgia State Board of Education adhered to Cook’s legal counsel and resolved to comply rigidly with the laws of the state. The Georgia State Board of Education granted enforcement responsibilities to local school boards. The legal and political posturing that arose after the *Brown v Board of Education* (1954) decision resulted in the solidification of Georgia’s early position concerning school desegregation.

While Georgia’s statute and state government agencies based resistance to federal school desegregation efforts was strongly resolved, it was not long lived. Georgia’s initial approach to its school desegregation issue became problematic. Cases like *Cooper v. Aaron* (Arkansas) made the continued promotion of legalized segregation after *Brown v. Board I and II* illegal (Roche, 1998). Further, through the *Cooper v. Aaron* case, the Supreme Court reminded the nation that it alone retained the right to “say” what the law of the land was.

Considering the stance of the Supreme Court on school desegregation, actions like those taken by Arkansas Governor Orville Faubus, in blocking the schoolhouse door at Central High in Little Rock, Arkansas, were in violation of the intentions of the *Brown v. Board* (1954) decision. Further, Faubus’ actions violated protections guaranteed to all Americans in the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.

The Supreme Court rejected Orville Fabus’ actions in the *Cooper v. Aaron* case and made public its impatience with southern efforts to delay school desegregation. Directly, the court stated:

Article VI of the Constitution makes the Constitution the ‘supreme Law of the Land.’ In 1803, Chief Justice Marshall, speaking for a unanimous Court, referring to the

Constitution as ‘the fundamental and paramount law of the nation,’ declared in the notable case of *Marbury v. Madison*, 1 Cranch 137, 177, that ‘It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.’ This decision declared the basic principle that the federal judiciary is supreme in the exposition of the law of the Constitution, and that principle has ever since been respected by this Court and the Country as a permanent and indispensable feature of our constitutional system. It follows that the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment enunciated by this Court in the *Brown* case is the supreme law of the land, and Art. VI of the Constitution makes it of binding effect on the states ‘any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any States to the Contrary notwithstanding.’ Every state legislator and executive and judicial officer is solemnly committed by oath taken pursuant to Art. VI, 3, ‘to support this Constitution.’ (para 43)

The Supreme Court solidified its position on school desegregation in the *Cooper v Aaron* case stating:

It is of course, quite true that the responsibility for public education is primarily the concern of the States, but it is equally true that such responsibilities, like all other state activity, must be exercised consistently with federal constitutional requirements as they apply to state action. The Constitution created a government dedicated to equal justice under law. The Fourteenth Amendment embodied and emphasized that ideal. State support of segregated schools through any arrangement, management, funds, or property cannot be squared with the Amendment’s command that no State shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. The right of a student not to be segregated on racial grounds in schools so maintained is indeed so fundamental and pervasive that it is embraced in the concept of due process of law . . . The basic decision in *Brown* was unanimously reached by this Court. Since the first *Brown* opinion three new Justices have come to the Court. They are at one with the Justices still on the Court who participated in that basic decision as to its correctness, and that decision and the obedience of the States to them, according to the command of the Constitution, are indispensable for the protection of the freedoms guaranteed by our fundamental charter for all of us. Our constitutional ideal of equal justice under law is thus made a living truth (para 44).

In the climate set by the Supreme Court’s stance on the speed of school desegregation, Georgia experienced nationally publicized political pressure to desegregate its schools. A desegregation struggle in Taliaferro County became the focus of national attention in 1965, following the dismissal of several African American teachers and the only African American principal in the county (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965b). Taliaferro County officials made

attempts to close the local school system in 1965. The federal court system interceded so that the Taliaferro County School System could remain solvent.

During 1965, Georgia also experienced highly publicized civil rights and desegregation-based disturbances in Americus (Americus Target, 1965; Americus Negroes, 1965; Negroes Asked, 1965). The civil unrest in Americus began in protest to the arrest of four African American females who attempted to vote in a White voting line in the city. As in the case in Taliaferro County, the Americus disturbance drew national attention.

In light of the Supreme Court's position on school desegregation and the national spotlight cast on segregationist practices in Georgia during the mid-1960s, the state's stance on segregation changed. Most of the changes in Georgia's segregationist policies were initiated by Governor Ernest Vandiver (1959-1963) and carried over into the gubernatorial term of Carl Sanders (1963-1967). Under the leadership of Governors Vandiver and Sanders, Georgia developed and maintained a semi-compliant, legalized approach to school desegregation.

The first phase of Georgia's new approach to school desegregation appeared in the work of the Sibley Commission (Roche, 1998). The Sibley Commission was developed at the direction of Governor Ernest Vandiver (1959-1963). Blanketing the state, conducting surveys, holding public forums, and offering workable solutions to Georgia's desegregation problem, the Sibley Commission informed the creation of more socially palatable solutions than complete segregation or desegregation in Georgia (Roche, 1998). The Sibley Commission promoted, socially acceptable, statute-based resistance to federal mandates to desegregate schools.

While the Vandiver administration and the Sibley Commission continued their work, Georgia school districts operated under freedom of choice plans. Freedom of choice plans, approved by the Georgia State Board of Education, allowed students to transfer between school

districts to avoid desegregation (Georgia State Board of Education, 1959, 1960, 1962, 1967, 1968).

Surprisingly, freedom of choice plans were supported in part by the *Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham* (1958) federal court ruling. Inadvertently serving as a template for freedom of choice plans in the south and in Georgia after 1961, the *Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham* case allowed the transfer of students between school districts based on available classroom space, transportation issues, the psychological state or intellectual level of the student that requested a transfer, and the potential for economic or physical reprisal against the school. In the *Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham* case, the federal court system waffled in its stance toward school desegregation in the south and provided a loophole for segregationist practices to continue.

Georgia's change in stance regarding school segregation has also been credited to the potential repercussions of having to close the University of Georgia in 1961. Under the provisions in the state constitutional amendment enacted under Herman Talmadge, funding to the University of Georgia would have been terminated due to the 1961 enrollments of African American students Charlyne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes (Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954; *The Road to Integration*, n.d.; Trillin, 1991).

The daughter of a military Chaplin and a native of Due West, South Carolina, Charlayne Hunter grew up mainly in Covington and Atlanta, Georgia (Hunter-Gault, 1992). In 1959, Charlayne Hunter and classmate and valedictorian Hamilton E. Holmes graduated from Turner High School in Atlanta Georgia (Hunter-Gault, 1992; Trillin, 1991).

Hamilton E. Holmes, an Atlanta native, came from a family of African Americans who worked in professional occupations, including his father who was a physician (Trillin, 1991). Hamilton E. Holmes also proved to be a third generation college graduate as he finished school

at Georgia and later received his medical degree at Emory University (Trillin, 1991; Two Medical Schools Accept Negroes, 1963). Hamilton Holmes was also a third generation integrationist as his father, grandfather, and uncle successfully filed and won a suit to desegregate Atlanta's public golf courses. The United States Supreme Court decided the *Holmes v. City of Atlanta* suit in 1955.

Hunter and Holmes applied to the University of Georgia in the summer of 1959, but they were denied enrollment (Hunter-Gault, 1992; Trillin, 1991). Consequently, Hunter-Gault and Holmes began college at different universities in the fall of 1959. Hunter attended Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. Holmes opted for Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.

Although enrolled in colleges in different geographic areas, Holmes' and Hunter-Gault's legal struggle to enter the University of Georgia was maintained by a team of lawyers from Atlanta that included both Donald Hollowell and Vernon Jordan (Trillin, 1991). In 1960, federal court hearings on the Holmes and Hunter cases were held in Macon, Georgia (Hunter-Gault, 1992; The Road to Integration, n.d.; Trillin, 1991). During the fall of 1960, Holmes and Hunter-Gault traveled to Athens, Georgia to attend University of Georgia admissions interviews.

On January 6, 1961, Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter were admitted to the University of Georgia (Hunter-Gault, 1992; The Road to Integration, n.d.; Trillin, 1991). The admission of Hunter and Holmes to the University of Georgia was met with resistance. Holmes and Hunter experienced an attempt to delay their enrollments on January 6, 1961 when the students at the University of Georgia rioted in response to their admission (Hunter-Gault, 1992; The Road to Integration, n.d.). Despite the difficulties surrounding their enrollment, Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter's integration of the University of Georgia was a landmark event.

Because Georgia law required the termination of funding to public schools that desegregated, the desegregation of the University of Georgia was a major impetus in Georgia's move toward state-wide school desegregation. As a result, Georgia repealed school segregation mandates as early as January 16, 1961 with what Daniels (2001, p. 156) cited as Governor Vandiver's "Child Protection and Freedom of Association Defense Package" and by October 1, 1963 many of Georgia's other public segregation policies were also repealed (Hunter-Gault, 1992; *The Road to Integration*, n.d.).

With the legal path to end school and public facilities segregation in Georgia set, the state took a new position on school desegregation. State based judicial headway toward school desegregation in Georgia continued in the *Calhoun v. Latimer* case (Roche, 1998). The judge in the *Calhoun v. Latimer* case focused on the desegregation of the Atlanta public schools. Judge Frank Hooper held his final decision in the case until the Sibley Commission finished its work, and the State of Georgia as an "entity" was prepared to make progressive moves in the direction of school desegregation (Roche, 1998). By attempting to allow the Atlanta Public School System to slowly desegregate, Judge Frank Hooper hoped that the will of the people of Georgia would be translated into attitudes that would allow the peaceful desegregation of the state's schools (Ruling of the District Court of North Georgia 1959, n.d.).

Georgia's new stance on school desegregation reflected the larger context of changing attitudes throughout the country related to school desegregation. The trend of resistance, gradual school desegregation, and resegregation along residential and economic lines has continued throughout the United States. School districts struggled first to desegregate and now attempt to maintain unitary status in accordance with parameters identified in the *Green v. County Board*

decision of 1968 (Associated Press, 1970; Ball, 1969; Dayton, 1993; Orfield, 2001; Touro Law Center, 2003).

Because school districts struggles with desegregation extended beyond the willingness to desegregate and into the area of de jure segregation, federal judicial activism continued through the 1970s (Armor, 1995; Oakstone, 2002; Salomone, 1986). Two federal cases that had wide-ranging effects on desegregation during the 1970s were the *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools* (1971) and the (1974) *Bradley v. Miliken* court cases (Armor, 1995; Oakstone, 2002).

In the *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools* case, the Supreme Court affirmed a North Carolina federal district court ruling by approving a two pronged school desegregation plan for Charlotte, North Carolina's elementary and middle schools (Oakstone, 2002; *Swan v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, n.d.a; *Swan v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, n.d.b.). The Charlotte-Mecklenburg school desegregation plan allowed busing of African American students from Charlotte's inner city to its suburban school districts and made concessions for changes in school district zoning and pairing of school districts to allow the area to achieve unitary status (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, n.d.a.; *Swan v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg*, n.d.b.). The Charlotte plan did not require racial quotas to achieve racial balance in Charlotte, North Carolina area schools. The court used feasibility and a determination of discriminatory intent by school officials in the suburban school districts as the guiding principals in approving Charlotte's desegregation plan (Oakstone, 2002).

In the *Bradley v. Miliken* case the Supreme Court rejected a federal district court's remedy for the desegregation of Detroit, Michigan's public school system (Armor, 1995; Oakstone, 2002). In 1974, Detroit's population was 64% African American; however, the city operated a public school system where the African American student population was nearly 75%.

Under the federal district court plan, students from inner city Detroit would be bussed to suburban school districts in surrounding areas to achieve racial balance in Detroit schools (Oakstone, 2002).

Unlike the suburban areas in the *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools* (1971) case, Detroit's suburban areas were not in constitutional violation of federal mandates to desegregate its schools (Oakstone, 2002). As such, the Supreme Court limited the remedy in the *Bradley v. Miliken* case to the Detroit city school district (Armor, 1995; Oakstone, 2002). In a later case, *Bradley v. Miliken II*, Detroit developed a plan to achieve racial balance in its schools by allowing students from 54 Detroit area school districts to attend magnet schools in the district. The Supreme Court also approved a comprehensive plan under *Bradley v. Miliken II* that included teacher training, new testing programs, and guidance and career counseling for students.

The *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools* and *Bradley v. Miliken* (I and II) cases are the precedents by which subsequent federal rulings in de jure school desegregation cases have been guided. By the end of the 1970s, a shift in public sentiment in the United States began. Consistent with the shift in public sentiment, busing to achieve racial balance, school funding disparities, and compensatory education programs face tougher public scrutiny, as the current debate on public education has focused on why its quality has declined (Salomone, 1986, p.10).

Demographic Patterns: An Indicator of the Need for African American Administrators

Following the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision, there was a slow realization of results relative to the placement of African Americans in high-level administrative positions in the United States. Results were slow because desegregation efforts in the south resulted in the phasing out of many administrative positions occupied by African Americans (Coursen,

Mazarella, & Piele, 1981, Ellerbee, 2002; Shujaa, 1996). However, the reduced number of African American school administrative positions due to school district consolidation did not lessen the significance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision as:

1. A judicial precedent;
2. The impetus for additional legislative and judicial equity rulings; and
3. Perceived affirmation within the national African American community of the beginnings of efforts to fully participate in mainstream society. (Bennett, 1993; Davis, 2001; Jones, 1979)

The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954) was not alone in its impact on the entry of African Americans into the upper echelon of professional occupations in the United States. Changes in the population concentration of African Americans in urban areas in the United States also worked to increase African Americans' political advocacy for inclusion in top-level administrative posts in school districts (Davis, 2001; Fernandez, 1975; Jones, 1979; Robinson, 1973).

Colquit's (1975) study focused on the effect of changes in the demographics of urban areas on the need for African American school administrators. Colquit reported that increases in the population of African Americans were seen in northern U.S. cities, and in the metropolitan areas of Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York and that African American populations exceeded the 50th percentile in those cities by the mid 1970s. However, in the school districts of America's northern urban areas, Colquit observed, generally, that African Americans were not appointed to school district superintendencies. Colquit asserted that the absence of top-level African American administrators in school districts that were largely composed of minority

constituents served to create school administrative systems that were not representative of the populations that they served.

In another study, Scott (1980) identified 46 African American superintendents who worked mostly in urban school districts throughout the United States during 1974. Scott's observation and Colquit's (1975) analysis appear consistent with reports concerning the rise of African American populations in America's urban centers and further presented the need for qualified and competent minority administrators who were ethnic members of the constituent bodies that urban school districts served (Geyer, 2002; Kymlicka & Norman, 2000; Naylor, 1997; U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

Scott's (1980) and Colquit's (1975) studies were further supported in research by Coates (1980), Diaz (1992), Kymlicka and Norman (2000), and Naylor (1997). These studies suggested positive benefits in terms of school community relations, school-community constituent representation, role modeling, student esteem, and motivation in school districts that employed strategies that focused on the inclusion of minority administrators in top-level school district administrative positions.

Literature and Research on the African American Superintendency

In the examination of the literature concerning the African American superintendency, career mobility surfaced as a significant theme that influenced the careers of African American superintendents. The examination of the literature on career mobility grew from the understanding that the participants in the study, by virtue of their final professional positions as superintendents, experienced some type of career mobility. The exploration of the career mobility of African American superintendents focused on four topics, the social norms that control career mobility, contest mobility, sponsored mobility, and ascension studies.

Social Norms and Career Mobility

Ralph Turner (1960) composed a seminal work in the field of social mobility. Turner's work examined two socially-normed mobility paradigms that he termed contest and sponsored mobility systems. Key studies that have explored the impact of contest and sponsored career mobility systems on the career development of African American superintendents included those by Dunlop (1998), Ellerbee (2002), Moffett (1981), Moody (1983), and Tallerico (2000).

According to Turner (1960), contest mobility systems have not been governed by selection criteria that limit aspirants' access to higher levels of economic or social status. Under contest mobility systems, personal effort has dictated each individual's ascent to higher levels of economic and social status. Thus, contest mobility systems have awarded the prize of elite status to the most deserving candidates.

Conversely, sponsored mobility systems have operated under an aspirant selection system that is governed by position elites (Turner, 1960). Following Turner's conception, elites selected their recruits based on supposed criteria or merit. As such, sponsored systems of mobility controlled the entry of recruits into elite society. Hence, elite status was not gained or taken away by any amount of personal effort by aspirants.

Turner's (1960) ideas relative to contest and sponsored forms of mobility were based on his observations of pervading educational and socioeconomic structures in England and the United States. Recognizing what appeared to be a more strict social hierarchy in England than in the United States, Turner developed his study. More important to this study, though, was the sociological concept that Turner's investigation was based.

According to Turner (1960), pervading social and economic conditions in a society worked together to determine its members conceptions of "the way things worked," "what ought

to be,” and “what things were natural” in that society. Turner further asserted that a society’s conception of “what things were natural” placed tremendous strains on the society’s economic and sociopolitical infrastructures for consistency. Hence, social norms acted on and reinforced the objective conditions that created them.

Turner’s (1960) conception of the internally perpetuated existence of social norms and their effect on pervading social conditions was significant in itself. Further, Turner’s perspective provided a lens through which the career mobility and experiences of each of the participants in this study may be viewed.

Factually, the participants in this study worked as professional educators, and school administrators in several locales during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. As such, the professional careers of the participants in this study developed during a period when conflicting ideas influenced society in Georgia and the United States. How were the participants in this study able to emerge from the previous milieu and ascend to school district superintendencies? What was the career-long experience of ascension to the superintendency like as an African American? The previous questions were intertwined with the professional career histories of the participants in this study.

Further, existing literature on the career mobility of African American superintendents formed the framework through which the professional ascension of each of the participants in this study was viewed. In examining the career patterns of the participants in this study, it was useful to consider the administrative positions held by each relative to the literature on the career patterns of African American superintendents. The examinations of contest and sponsored career mobility, found in the studies that follow, served as a descriptive framework through which the

career patterns of the superintendents in this study might be understood. The rationale added the dimension of career pattern insight to this perspective seeking study.

Contest Mobility

In defining contest mobility, Moffett (1981) in his survey of 145 superintendents across 11 southern states, referenced Turner's (1960) analysis stating that contest mobility presupposes a system in which elite status is the prize and that in an open contest, the rewards are earned by the aspirants' own efforts. As defined by Turner, systems of career mobility operate on the principle of fair play. Thus, contest mobility systems advocate meritocratic principles, and the victory of the most deserving candidates is achieved through the use of intelligence, common sense, craft, and successful risk-taking.

Rosenbaum's (1984) 13-year longitudinal study of the career paths of 671 new employees in a large corporation also provided insight concerning contest career mobility systems. Rosenbaum observed that in addition to a design that advocated promotion of the most deserving candidates, contest mobility systems served to ameliorate much of the general mistrust of promotion selection-criteria by limiting the number of promotions made and by delaying candidate selection until all contestants had an equal opportunity to compete under the system.

According to Rosenbaum's (1984) study, contest mobility systems attempt to maximize contestants' opportunities to realize their full potential. Further, in Rosenbaum's study, the contest mobility effect created a sense of insecurity for those who hold elite positions. Under contest mobility systems, there is no final plateau because in the contest model, each contestant may either advance or be replaced by newcomers throughout his or her career life (Rosenbaum).

Human capital theory includes a set of principles that parallel the ideology behind contest systems of career mobility (Healy, Helliwell, & Field, 2001; McGregor, 1960; Rosenbaum,

1984). Operating on the assumption of a perfect economic market place, human capital theory puts forth that an individual's market value or worth is consciously increased through the investments made in him or her either by themselves or the organizations for which they work. The additional education and training that individuals receive results in greater career advancement opportunities in their later professional lives.

Consistent with the influence of human capital theory on contest mobility systems, professional preparation has appeared in at least one study to be the most important factor in the attainment of the superintendency (Tallerico, 2000). Tallerico's meta-comparative case study included in-depth observations at 12 sites and included 75 participants—25 school board members, 25 superintendent applicants, and 25 board consultants. The findings of Tallerico's study revealed that experiential background was the dominant factor in the decision making processes of superintendent selection.

Tallerico's (2000) research further revealed that a logical progression through positions of increasing responsibility, from site level to district-wide appointments and other types of superintendencies, was seen as the most desired career path for those candidates who were widely considered as best suited for progression into the superintendency. Tallerico termed the career advancement process as "moving through the chairs."

In further describing the process of moving through the chairs, Tallerico (2000) placed a particular emphasis on context. Tallerico advised aspirants seeking vertical career advancements to the superintendency through contest efforts to gain experience and to go through the chairs in school districts that were similar to the type of school district (e.g., urban, suburban, or rural) that he or she would like to become superintendent. As an extension of the discussion of experiential

context, Tallerico (2000) further focused on the types of experience and the effects of age, gender, and race on a candidate's chances of becoming a school district superintendent.

Exploring the types of experience needed by those seeking appointment as a school district superintendent, Tallerico's (2000) research revealed a perceived need for classroom teaching experience; however, this research also indicated that three to five years of classroom experience appeared to be the maximum time that top candidates spent in the classroom. Tallerico further indicated that prolonged service at various administrative levels below the superintendency might also prove detrimental to desired career ends of aspiring superintendents.

Tallerico (2000) found that overly extended tenure in any position (more than two years in the case of an assistant principal) seemed to signal or at least casually to undermine future career aspirations. This research also revealed a preference, among selection personnel, for superintendent candidates who had served as high school principals. The rationale driving the affinity for high school principals was based in the realization of the complex nature of the high school principalship. Those candidates who had served as high school principals were seen by selection personnel as better prepared to deal with curriculum, student life, and teacher based administrative concerns.

Gender and age were additional factors that Tallerico's (2000) research examined.

Tallerico's study revealed:

1. Women were generally appointed to superintendencies much later in life than men, many having been observed to be in their early 50s before receiving appointments.
2. Women were more likely to have served longer in the classroom than their male counterparts.

3. Women were appointed to coordinator and directorship positions and not school principalships that further exacerbated the idea that the total context of their career experiences generally placed limitations on the mobility of female superintendent candidates when compared with their male counterparts.

Tallerico's (2000) research also examined the effect of race on the career paths of candidates for school district superintendencies, revealing that the majority of minority principals served at the elementary rather than at the secondary level. Exclusive experience in the elementary school principalship was seen as a limiting factor in the careers of minority candidates. Former high school principals were seen as the most desirable candidates by the placement personnel sampled in Tallerico's research.

Tallerico's (2000) study added knowledge to existing research literature concerning the effect of contest mobility systems on the ascension of African Americans to school district superintendencies. However, Tallerico's research did not produce data that presented the participants' perspectives concerning their personal experiences as both school administrators and school district superintendents. The oral history research method used in the present study attempted to fill the gap in the research by examining participants' perspectives concerning their lived experiences with career mobility systems.

Also, a 1992 national descriptive survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) found that the sampled minority school district superintendents—a total of 67 respondents out of an original pool of 2,536 surveys that produced 1,724 usable responses—reported career patterns that were consistent with the moving through the chairs paradigm (Glass, 1992). The minority superintendents in the 1992 AASA study also reported few career impediments due to a placement elite system of career sponsorship; however,

the minority school district superintendents in the AASA study did report that they perceived racial discrimination as an impediment in school district hiring practices.

Sponsored Mobility

Standing in contrast to contest systems of career mobility is sponsored mobility. Sponsored mobility systems reject the pattern of the contest (Turner, 1960). Under sponsored systems of advancement, mobility has been viewed as a process of sponsored induction into the elite. The sponsored career mobility paradigm suggested that elite recruits were chosen by the established elites or their agents. Once elite status has been given, on the basis of supposed merit, it cannot be taken away by any amount of effort or strategy (Black & English, 1986; Moffett, 1981; Rosenbaum, 1984).

Under sponsored career mobility systems, elites were recruited early in their careers, and they reaped the benefits from the specialized training and socialization that occurred within the system (Rosenbaum, 1984). Sponsored systems of career mobility are similar to internal labor market economic theories in that there are specific entry ports into given professions, and personnel are eligible for internal promotions for vacancies and investments through on-the-job training that prepares recruits for advancement to successive levels of responsibility (Rosenbaum). Under sponsored systems of career mobility, recruitment was the only method of entry into a given professional role. Sponsored mobility systems place recruits in line for predestined forms of career advancement, resulting in specific career paths.

Related to sponsored ascent into the superintendency, Rose (1969) defined sponsored career mobility as follows:

The active intervention of established persons associated with or members of the educational administration profession in the career lines of selected individuals who aspire to be or are public school superintendents. Such intervention is designed to

enhance the career progress of the selected individuals as they pursue a career in the public school superintendency. (p. 6)

Career enhancement through sponsored mobility toward the school district superintendency has further been viewed as a method of entry into a private club where one either has sponsors or does not and in which membership is either granted or not (Black & English, 1986; Moffett, 1981; Turner, 1960).

In examining the nature of systems of sponsored career mobility, Black and English (1986) in their text, *What They Don't tell You in Schools of Education about School Administration*, offered practical knowledge about contest career mobility. Black and English believed that the idea of a system of contest career mobility in which a person moves through a series of progressively prestigious administrative positions (i.e., moving through the chairs was illusory). Black and English suggested that sponsored career mobility is the path by which the majority of administrators and superintendents achieve their final career ends.

Elaborating on the method in which sponsored career mobility occurred, Black and English (1986) explained that there was an informal network of placement elites who were able to place career aspirants in various administrative positions, but the requirement was adequate tenure in those posts before career advancement was granted. Black and English described the “chair” system of career mobility as especially difficult for women and minorities to gain access to career placement sponsors.

Also, examining sponsored career mobility, Rose's (1969) qualitative study used unstructured interviews of a national sample of 17 then current and former professors of educational administration, and interviews with 4 superintendents whose careers, reportedly, had benefited from the sponsorship process. Rose's research was significant in that he examined the use of paid professional consultants in the selection, recruitment, and placement of candidates to

fill superintendent vacancies, and the role of professors of educational administration in the placement of superintendent candidates.

In recognizing the role of professors of educational administration in the sponsored mobility processes, Rose (1969) first identified the functions and activities of career sponsors. The activities of career sponsors included verbal encouragement, professional advice, selection of sponsorees for specific training programs and professional positions, nomination of sponsorees for desirable administrative positions, and job-related assistance to sponsorees. Further, Rose's study reported that successful career sponsors must not only be highly visible, but also they must have access to a vast network of potentially suitable positions for their sponsorees. Elaborating further on the role of professors of educational administration in the career sponsorship of superintendent candidates, Rose reported that there were two types of sponsors—national and local. Rose reported that national sponsors were often involved in the placement of superintendents in “plum” city or suburban superintendencies. Conversely, local sponsors were involved almost exclusively with lesser administrative posts within a limited geographical area.

Rose's (1969) study revealed that sponsoring was a reciprocal process in which the sponsor, sponsoree, and the training institution mutually benefitted from the sponsorship exchange. Rose found increased power and influence within the profession, monetary returns through contracted professional services, personal satisfaction, and increased professional contacts as sponsor benefits. In terms of sponsoree exchange benefits, Rose identified enhanced career opportunities, advancement, and the mediation of the “chair” effect on the sponsorees' career paths. Rose's study revealed universities benefit as well, namely through increased

prestige, graduate goodwill, and influence on the profession through the placement of its former students at the local and national levels.

Ascension Studies

Research has revealed three key studies that explored African American's experiences, relative to specific career mobility systems (Dunlop, 1997; Ellerbee, 2002; Moody, 1983). More specifically, these studies produced significant data concerning the methods and processes by which African Americans were selected to serve as school district superintendents or eliminated from superintendent candidate pools. Further, the results of research conducted by Dunlop (1997), Ellerbee (2002), and Moody (1983) directly points to the need for a study that could further the knowledge concerning African American superintendents by eliciting rich qualitative data portraying the personal perspectives of American superintendents concerning their career experiences.

Extending the discussion concerning the contest vs. sponsored mobility debate, Moody (1983) interviewed and surveyed through questionnaires, 94 superintendents and 28 school board search consultants across the U.S. and the Virgin Islands. In this study, Moody examined the method in which African American superintendents were selected, recruited, and promoted through school systems. Through examining the role of sponsored mobility in the development of African American superintendent candidates, Moody (1983) recognized the idea that sponsored mobility, by virtue of its design, places the time of recruitment as early in life as practical to ensure control over selection and training.

Moody's (1983) study further determined that sponsored systems of career mobility fostered a social structure based on elite credentials. This finding appears to be consistent across contest and sponsored career mobility, and further supported the idea of the advantage of youth

recognized by Tallerico (2000) in the appointment as a school superintendent. Based on the data that Moody presented, Whites were seen as the dominant force in the sponsorship of all superintendents whereas 53.4% mentioned the assistance of a sponsor in their climb to the superintendency. Following its findings on race, Moody's study also closely examined the people who most affected the possibility of African American candidates achieving the status of superintendent. The influential persons were categorized as encouragers, sponsors, network affiliates, and board consultants.

In examining the role of encouragers in promoting the candidacy of African Americans for placement as school district superintendents, Moody (1983) discovered nine major bases for stimulus. The stimuli included (a) ability to fit into a particular school district, (b) competence, (c) varied background and experience, (d) contacts within various organizations, (e) integrity, (f) ability to effect change, (g) mobility, (h) high career aspirations, and (i) educational leadership ability. The stimuli identified by Moody were also found in the characteristics of successful sponsorees identified by Rose (1969) who defined the successful sponsoree as follows:

He has obvious ability, innate intelligence, and stamina. He must be a generalist, know how to work with people, and be skilled in sociology, economics, and political science. He has these and other characteristics that over the years have generally been marked by those of us in the training programs as attributes and characteristics of likely success as a school superintendent. (p. 50)

It appears that sponsorees possess a set of skills that are describable and characteristics that escape articulation that, when combined, allow the individual to be identified as a potentially successful school district superintendent (Rose, 1969).

Moody (1983) also discovered that a little over one third of the population of African Americans were encouraged by a well known supporter whereas two thirds of European Americans received the same endorsement. In Moody's study, 61% of the Blacks surveyed

reported they were nominated by a Black person. Moody's study also revealed that Whites were nominators for Black and White superintendents while Whites were encouraged and nominated much more frequently than Blacks by nominations made by consultants.

Further examining the role of consultants in the superintendent selection process, Tallerico's (2000) research showed that board consultants self-reported their major job functions as either candidate solicitor or facilitator. According to research, candidate solicitors functioned largely as superintendent recruiters. Recruiters were often seen to have amassed a large number of professional contacts within the field, either regionally or nationally. Consultants were often seen to have directly contacted recruits/protégés concerning various superintendent vacancies. In addition, Tallerico's research also found that many consultants developed specialized niches of expertise, focusing specifically on the recruitment of African American candidates or candidates with experience in urban districts or affluent suburban areas.

Candidate facilitators, as reported in Tallerico's (2000) research, largely reported vacancy advertisement and applicant screening as their major job functions. For many of the consultants studied in Tallerico's research, this was a method of professional benchmarking and task simplification. Consultants were able to assist school boards in the candidate selection process through the (a) dissemination of materials to desirable candidates, (b) careful screening of applicant responses, and (c) collaborative development and training of candidate interview panels. Rose's (1969) study, concerning sponsored career mobility, was a beginning point on the discussion surrounding the importance of placement officials in school district searches for superintendents by highlighting the function of professors of educational administration in this process.

Moody's (1983) study on the African American superintendency, reasserted the importance of university professors in the placement of superintendent candidates with network constituents identified as the final major support base for African American or White candidates wishing to enter the superintendency. Moody's study determined that the formal network of selection elites consisted of both placement people and university professors. Moody also recognized the existence of a much looser network of peer professionals. The members of the formal and peer-based network reported being aware of individuals who were seeking jobs and what jobs were available at any given time. Further, Moody (1983) discovered that Blacks reported becoming aware of networks through attendance at conferences while Whites gained awareness through direct recommendations and their educational experiences. Moody concluded that African Americans were much more likely to have an African American involved in their professional development than European Americans and that European Americans were more likely to be involved in the professional development of European American superintendents than African American superintendents.

Extending Moody's (1983) research, Dunlop (1997) conducted a study of 205 African American school district superintendents to determine the nature of the career patterns and paths of its participants. Dunlop's (1997) study sample included African American superintendents from the United States and the Virgin Islands. In attempting to access a comprehensive sample, Dunlop reviewed the contents of various state superintendent databases as well as the National Black Alliance of School Educators superintendent database. Dunlop's efforts resulted in a list of the names of 205 African American superintendents, from which 106 usable surveys, 85 from males and 21 from females, were returned.

Dunlop's (1997) research also produced findings similar to those of Tallerico's (2000) study, in which the idea of the effect of the chair/contest mobility was believed to have a major influence on the career paths of aspiring superintendent candidates. Using both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, Dunlop reported that 70.8% of his participants had worked as classroom teachers, 53% had served as secondary principals, and 52% had served as assistant superintendents. Dunlop revealed that the majority of his sample population reported their appointments as school district superintendents to have occurred between the ages of 40 and 49.

The majority of participants in Dunlop's (1997) study also reported that they had worked for more than 22 years before becoming a school district superintendent. Further, 69% of the superintendents in Dunlop's study reported mentoring activities consistent with the development of future African American superintendent candidates. The youngest superintendents were found to serve in rural school districts. Consistent with the findings of Colquit (1975), the majority of African superintendents in Dunlop's study were appointed in districts with school boards that were largely composed of African Americans.

In a 2002 study that used quantitative and qualitative research methods, Ellerbee explored factors that limited the ascension of African American superintendent-level administrators to California school district superintendencies. Ellerbee defined superintendent-level administrators as those school district officials who supervised a given district-wide department or unit and had the term superintendent as part of their job title. Ellerbee's (2002) study targeted all of the African American superintendent-level administrators in the state of California. Based on information provided by the Association of California School District Administrators and the California Public School Directory, 23 African American superintendent-level administrators were targeted for this study.

Ellerbee's (2002) questionnaire was composed of three sections: general information, reported respondent interest level, and factors that contributed to each respondent not ascending to the superintendency. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to determine frequency distribution and cross tabulation of responses. These analysis procedures produced themes, both common and divergent. As a result, Ellerbee further explored the nuances of his findings by conducting 10 telephone interviews that specifically focused on the perspectives of African American respondents. The telephone interview participants were drawn from the response pool of 130 professionals of the 314 that were originally selected to participate in this study.

Each of Ellerbee's 10 telephone interviewees spoke of internal motivation as a key factor in their ascent to superintendent-level administrative positions. Reportedly, internal motivation was also accompanied by exemplary leadership qualities, and uncanny professional timing that allowed the respondents to receive career advances at opportune times. The participants also reported that the qualities that they possessed that most prepared them for the superintendency were the ability to take professional risks, tremendous stamina, active community connections, and the ability to work well with others.

In commenting on perceived professional deficits, 9 of Ellerbee's 10 respondents reported they did not have the budget development skills necessary to be superintendents. They also reported they felt that African Americans were intentionally shielded from district-wide budget development processes. The respondents also reported perceived deficiencies in the areas of political savvy, self-confidence, and the art of diplomatic disagreement.

It was noted that of Ellerbee's (2002) 10 telephone interviewees, only 5 reported they aspired to the superintendency. The respondents reported that the superintendency was attractive

due to the potential that it offered its office holders to affect beneficial change for students. Respondents also cited the professional prestige of the superintendency and the community power-broker status that was inherent to the position as attractive features of the office as well. Conversely, the five superintendent-level administrators who did not aspire to the superintendency cited a lack of instructional focus, their personal lack of confidence, the need for district-superintendent political fit, and the thankless nature of the position as potential drawbacks related to the position of superintendent.

Sharing their views on why a shortage of African American superintendents has existed in California, Ellerbee's (2002) respondents cited a lack of prestige, low pay relative to responsibilities, and the lack of credentialed professionals entering the field contributed to the small number of African American superintendents currently practicing in California. Table 2.1 details the 20 key factors that limited African Americans access to the school district superintendency, as reported by Ellerbee's 10 telephone interviewees.

Table 2.1

Factors Limiting African American's Access to Superintendent Appointments

Factors	Effects
Mentors	African Americans lack access to individuals who can serve as professional role models.
Community Support	The community base that once prepared African Americans for professional positions has declined since the 1960s and 1970s.
Gender	African American females were denied access to the superintendency based on under estimations of their intellect.
Racism	African American leadership has been mediated and marginalized. African American superintendents were usually appointed in struggling urban districts.

Table 2.1 Continued

Factors	Effects
Bilingual Skills	The growing Hispanic population has produced the need for bilingual educators and administrators.
Competency	African Americans have lacked the business management skills necessary to fulfill the role of school district superintendent.
Trust	School communities have not readily received African American school district leadership.
Media	The media has generally portrayed African American superintendents in a negative and controversial light.
Pressure	Special interest and community groups have pressured African American superintendents to meet their needs directly and in an express manner.
Salary	The pay that superintendents received has not been commensurate with their job responsibilities.
White Superintendents	The financial support of some urban school districts has increased. The prestige and political clout of the urban school district has attracted White Superintendents.
General Awareness	African Americans have struggled to build alliances and to accurately measure the pulses of their school communities.
Headhunters	Administrative recruiters have not been serious about recruiting minority candidates.
Experience	African Americans have lacked the time in the chairs and the concurrent responsibilities to be considered serious candidates. Also, strong nontraditional candidates, including those with military backgrounds, have widened the pool of superintendent candidates.
Business & Politics	African Americans have lacked the business and political savvy needed to become superintendents.
Writing Skills	African Americans lacked effective written communication skills.
African American Superintendent Strength	Many African Americans have not been able to deal with school boards tendencies to beat-up on them.

Table 2.1 Continued

Factors	Effects
Family	African Americans have struggled in their attempts to juggle their personal and professional lives. Also, African American males have battled role ambiguity when they have had spouses who were superintendents.
Self Confidence	African Americans lacked the support networks and confidence necessary to become superintendents.
Sponsorship	African Americans lacked sponsors in the field.

Chapter Summary

The review of related literature explored two concepts. First, the review of literature explored the context and effects of school desegregation in the southern United States and Georgia during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Second, the review of literature examined the effect of contest and sponsored career mobility systems on the career mobility of African American superintendent candidates.

Exploring the context and effects of school desegregation in the southern United States and Georgia during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the review of related literature covered four areas. The four areas included the impact of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision on the professional entry of African Americans, the entry of African Americans into educational and professional occupations after school desegregation, the impact of federal and state desegregation initiatives on Georgia, and changing demographics after school desegregation as an indicator of the need for African American school district administrators.

Exploring the impact of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision on the entry of African Americans into non-segregated settings in the United States, the review of literature

recognized the landmark case as the one that outlawed segregation in the United States. The review of literature also acknowledged the significance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in addressing social relations between African and European Americans, its existence as an affirmation of progressive movements by African and European Americans who sought an end to segregation, and the entry it provided for African Americans into non-segregated settings.

The section on the entry of African Americans into educational and professional settings after desegregation extended the discussion that began in the section on the impact of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision on the entry of African Americans into non-segregated settings. In the section on the entry of African Americans into educational and professional settings after desegregation, the discussion focused on the educational and occupational attainment of African Americans in desegregated settings in the two decades immediately following the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. The section featured studies by the Alabama Council on Human Relations et al. (1972), Braddock and McPartland (1982), Crain and Strauss (1985), Scott (1980) and research on the African American superintendency in Georgia (see Appendix B).

The review of literature's examination of the context and effects of school desegregation in the southern United States and Georgia during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s concluded by exploring two factors. The first factor was the impact of federal and state desegregation initiatives on desegregation in Georgia. The second factor covered changes in the demographic population concentration of African Americans after desegregation as an indicator of the need for African American school district administrators.

The section on the impact of federal and state desegregation initiatives on school desegregation in Georgia included discussion and analysis of landmark school desegregation cases that occurred in the United States during the participants' professional careers. The section

also viewed the political context and milieu of school desegregation in Georgia during federal efforts to desegregate schools and how Georgia's key political, and judicial and educational entities responded to desegregation and implementing a series of initiatives over time that eventually resulted in change.

Finally, the section on the impact of changes in the demographic concentration of African Americans in the United States after school desegregation focused on the rise in the number of African Americans in major urban areas in the United States after desegregation. The discussion on changes in the concentration of African Americans in urban areas after desegregation focused on the need for minority administrators to work in school districts where minority populations became the major part of the constituent body after school desegregation.

The review of literature also examined the impact of career mobility systems on the careers of African American superintendent candidates. The career mobility systems examined in the review of literature included contest and sponsored mobility systems. Contest and sponsored career mobility systems were examined in this study as an outgrowth of career the system norms. Turner's (1960) work was key in providing insight on career system norms and their existence as an outgrowth of pervading social systems. The review of literature's exploration of career mobility systems also included a review of ascension studies focused on the career mobility of African American superintendents.

In the section on social norms, Turner's (1960) work was examined and its implications on the creation and maintenance of contest and sponsored mobility systems was discussed. The section on contest mobility included an explication of contest mobility systems and a review of literature and research on contest mobility systems, the forces that control them, and the mobility of minority superintendent candidates under contest mobility systems. In the section on

sponsored mobility the review of literature explored the nuances of sponsored mobility and examined research by Black and English (1986), Moffett (1981), Rose (1969), Rosenbaum, (1984).

The review of related literature concluded with an exploration of studies that explored the ascension of African Americans to school district superintendencies in the United States. The ascension studies section included discussion and analysis of key studies by Dunlop (1997), Ellerbee (2002), Moody (1983), and Tallerico (2000). Of special note was Ellerbee's (2002) study, which focused on African American superintendents and superintendent level administrators in California. Ellerbee's study, because of its inclusion of African Americans who did not ascend to school district superintendencies, offered insights on factors that limited African Americans access to superintendencies.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHEDOLOGY

This study explored the career experiences of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. More specifically, this study focused on the ascension, career experiences, and career patterns of the participants.

Focusing on the participants' ascent to the superintendency, this study examined the experiences of each as African American educators and administrators in Georgia. The participants' experiences were significant as each was the first African American superintendent in the school district in which they worked. The oral histories in this study preserved the participants' unique career experiences.

Using the oral history research method, this study attempted to determine the following:

1. How did each of the participants first enter education?
2. How were the participants able to ascend to the superintendency in light of challenges they faced as African American school administrators?
3. What was the experience of being an African American educator and school district administrator in Georgia school districts?

Guided by research questions, the oral history research method used in this study provided insight into the career histories of the participants.

The Researcher's Role in Oral History

Oral historians are viewed as the instruments through which interviewee's oral histories are accessed (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Scholars have suggested that the quality of the material produced from oral historical research is dependent on the procedural efforts and skill of the oral

historian in conducting research (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Sitton, Mehaffy, & Davis, 1983; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002). The efforts and skills of oral historians rest in their abilities to probe interviewees effectively, maintain collegial rapport with interviewees, and guard against researcher induced bias (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998).

Because they focus on accuracy in remembrances, probing queries have produced information that is consistent with the conceptual aims of the oral history method (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Accurate remembrances have been best accessed through interviews that are candid in nature. To produce accurate remembrances, oral history interviews must be informed through methodological and oral-author-specific research (Perks & Thomson, 1998; Sitton et al., 1983; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002).

Research has also shown that the quality of interviewee remembrances produced in an oral history interview may be enhanced through the establishment of collegial rapport with interviewees (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998). Rapport is key in establishing an interview tone under which interviewees feel comfortable elaborating on past experiences (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Oral history interview context should remain within the boundaries of professional collegiality. Overly-relaxed interview atmospheres can allow the serious work of oral history to be neglected (Dunaway & Baum, 1996).

Preexisting beliefs held by interviewers are the cause of researcher bias in oral history research. Scholars have suggested that oral historians be conscious of their personal biases and attempt to separate them from the interview process (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998). Attention to bias in interviews is important, as researcher-induced bias may result in interviewee defensiveness (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Further, Dunaway and Baum

emphasized the impact of past and current cultural contexts on interviewees' revelations of past experiences. Dunaway and Baum stressed that interviewees may cast recollections in a particular context or overly inflate or deflate the importance of various events.

In conducting this study, the researcher relied on contacts made in the field during the spring of 2003 to gain access into the community of retired African American superintendents in Georgia. The collegial rapport established with the participants made the interview process more fluid. As a result, each participant provided richly detailed information concerning his or her career experiences.

Initiating the Study

This study began with a pilot study conducted during the spring of 2003. The pilot study provided the researcher with insights and data that were used to guide the present study. Insights and data acquired during the pilot study included perspectives on research on African American superintendents, entree into the field, and preliminary themes in the careers of the participants.

While conducting the pilot study, it was found that there was a dearth of research focused on the African American superintendency. Continued exploration of research and related literature on the African American superintendency revealed that the majority of existing literature on the African American superintendency was descriptive in nature only. No perspective seeking studies that examined the African American superintendency were found in the literature. Further, not one oral history focused exclusively on African American superintendents or the nature of their career experiences was found. The absence of perspective seeking studies and oral histories focused on the African American superintendency in research literature evidenced a gap in research that the present study began to fill.

Leading the research for the present study, the pilot study provided entree for the researcher into the close-knit group of professionals who are retired, native Georgian, African American superintendents. The pilot study's focus on retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia was significant. First, the retired African American superintendent population in Georgia is very small (see Appendix B for African American superintendents in Georgia since 1954). The participants also reported that many of their former counterparts are now deceased.

Guided by the aims of the pilot study, the present study allowed the researcher to preserve the histories of a group of African American professionals who are of the first generation of African American professional educators to enter school administration following desegregation in the United States and Georgia. Also, because the participants were natives of Georgia, the researcher was able to contextualize the research to the state.

In gaining entree into the peer community of the participants in the pilot study, the researcher was guided by the recommendations of Dr. C. Thomas Holmes, a professor in the Program of Educational Leadership at the University of Georgia. The recommendations made by Dr. Holmes led the researcher to a prominent figure in the community of retired African American superintendents native to Georgia, Dr. Evans Harris. Through references provided by Dr. Harris, the researcher made contact with Dr. John Culbreath and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin.

After gaining entree into the field, the pilot study interviews began. The pilot study interviews provided data on the participants and what their career experiences. Preliminary analysis of the data from the pilot study revealed substantive themes that pervaded the career experiences of each of the participants. The substantive themes included:

1. Public events that verified the participants professional competence;

2. Professional preparation;
3. Various forms of career mobility;
4. School and community effects of political controversy.

In preparing for the oral history research for this study, research efforts were informed by the pilot study. As such, the researcher was easily able to reestablish contact with the participants. The pilot study also provided baseline data from which the emphasis of research shifted toward a more focused examination of the participants' career experiences.

Oral History Theory

The development of oral history as a unique method of qualitative research has been credited to the works of Allan Nevins' Oral History Project (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Nevins' work began at Columbia University in 1948 and resulted in the appearance of Columbia University's Oral History Collection (1960). Uncannily, the emergence of Nevins' work at Columbia University paralleled the development of the portable tape recorder. Portable tape recorders allowed verbatim oral data to be collected from the field. Portable tape recorders helped to promote the popularity of anthropological and historical research, as the recorders provided a tool through which precise data could be extracted from the field (Dunaway & Baum).

Focusing on interviews, scholars have asserted that oral histories begin with audio-taped recordings of the spoken words of those who have first-hand knowledge of information that researchers or oral historians have sought to preserve (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Sitton et al., 1983; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002). The audio-taped recordings of oral history interviews have been viewed as primary source materials (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Oral history as a form of qualitative inquiry has allowed researchers to access and to document

information that had previously been unavailable. The usefulness of oral history in documenting histories that might have otherwise been lost has been significant. Because of oral history research, future generations may reflect on the experiences and histories of their predecessors. The interviews conducted for the present study included 5, 90-minute sessions with the participants.

In designing this study, the researcher recognized the significance of oral history research in producing historical texts across four contexts. First, research has shown that appointments of African American school district superintendents have been relatively uncommon phenomena (Colquit, 1975; Dunlop, 1997; Ellerbee, 2002; Fernandez, 1975; Robinson, 1973). Second, the African American superintendency, as an area of scholarly research, has not been heavily explored since Moody's 1971 study. Third, it is hoped that this study will add worthy knowledge to the research community. Fourth, this study may also elevate the use of oral history research in explorations of the career histories of minority groups in the field of education.

Quality Concerns in Oral History Research

The scholarly oral history research model found in Sitton, Mehaffy, and Davis' (1983) *Oral History: A Guide for Teachers and Others* was used in this study. The stages of scholarly oral history research identified in the Sitton et al. text (1983) included:

1. Pre-interview Research—Pre-interview research must be well informed. First the topic must be selected and participants identified. The researcher should consult many primary and secondary sources to validate ascertations. Following this process, a pre-interview guide should be developed. This guide is a roadmap that should direct the initial interview. The interview guide is not a script.
2. Initial Interview—This interview is based on background information gained during the pre-interview research. This interview sets the tone for the series of interviews. The initial interview should begin with basic identifiers i.e. who, what, when, and where. The interview should then move into substantive themes. All non-verbal oral author explanations should be translated into explicit verbal accounts. The interview must be conducted in a comfortable noise free environment. The proper spellings of

people, place, object and event names must be clarified before the close of the interview. Throughout the interview session, the researcher should function as the consummate listener.

3. Tape Analysis—This procedure allows the researcher to conduct more precise interviews sessions as the interview process continues. Interview tapes should be analyzed for content and breaks in interviewer technique. The researcher should conduct the tape analysis.
4. Re-interviews—These sessions help to thicken data, as respondents can be asked to rediscuss certain items or produce additional details, clarification, or remembrances. Further, respondents can be asked to particularize general answers or explain special terminology.

Theoretical Framework

Symbolic interactionism was the framework that influenced the researcher's use of the oral history method in this study. Symbolic interactionist thought was first conceived as a disciplined body of propositions that sought to describe the impact of human social living and interaction on individual human identity, behavior, and thought (Charon, 2001; Crotty, 1998; Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). George Herbert Mead has been recognized as the developer of this symbolic interactionist thought (Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). However, the works of Herbert Blumer, the inheritor of Mead's symbolic interactionist philosophy at the University of Chicago, gave rise to the term symbolic interactionism (Charon, 2001; Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987).

Blumer (1969) asserted that symbolic interactionist thought is based on the following premises:

1. Human beings act toward things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them.
2. The meaning of things is derived from interaction with one's peers.
3. Meanings are modified and handled through an interpretative process used by the person dealing with things that have been encountered. (p. 2)

Symbolic interactionism as conceived by Blumer (1969) elevates social actors' personal interpretations as the most relevant in determining truth or meaning in experience. Social actors' personal perspectives have not developed in exclusion of the influence of social groups, and as such, the attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions of influential social groups are represented in the behaviors and presentations of individual members and are thus important to acknowledge (Reynolds, 1987).

Symbolic interactionist reasoning has also been used to determine the nature of the construction of human memory (Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987). From a symbolic interactionist perspective, individual remembrances can be partially interpreted as a cultural representation of group experiences (Charon, 2001; Reynolds, 1987). Symbolic interactionist interpretations of memory does not preclude the unique nature of individual human experience but recognizes that meaning and interpretation of human experience are socially constructed (Charon, 2001).

Symbolic interactionist perspectives recognize truth in the historical sense as the emergent consensus of participants from a particular interactive situation (Charon, 2001; Hamilton, 1992). Objects and human gestures as symbolic representation are also viewed as data sources that are found in human communication. Researcher clarification of meaning of symbols and gestures is viewed as the key to proper interpretation—as these representations have many forms and multiple contextual meanings (Charon, 2001; Hamilton, 1992).

Symbolic interactionist perspectives have also forwarded the exploration of research problems through extensive scrutiny of other forms of raw qualitative data. This form of scrutiny includes the extensive review of interview tapes and transcripts by the researcher in an effort to discern accurate meaning (Reynolds, 1987). From a symbolic interactionist perspective, intimate

understanding of the social actor's world—seen through the social actors eyes and validated through consensus reports—is seen as the purpose of this type of research (Hamilton, 1992; Reynolds, 1987).

The oral narratives of the three retired African American superintendents were obtained through the social interaction of the researcher and the participants. All interview sessions were audio-taped. Throughout the interview process, the researcher maintained a fieldnote journal, making entries related to what was heard and observed during the interviews. The journal entries prompted deeper analysis of the data while reviewing interview transcripts. The fieldnotes were also used to inform Chapter 7 that included the researcher's analysis of the data presented in the study.

Sampling Method

Reputational sampling is an effective method of group survey in studies that require information concerning rare or elite populations (Kish, 1965; Snow, Hutcheson, & Prather, n.d.; Sudman, 1976). Reputational sampling is important because its method of member identification allows members of rare or elite populations to provide information relative to the identities of other members of the sample population (Kish, 1965; Sudman, 1976). This was important in identifying the participants for this study and determining the identities of the African American superintendents who have worked in Georgia school districts since 1954 (see Appendix B for complete listing).

The participants in the present study were identified during the pilot study. Dr. C Thomas Holmes, faculty member in the Program of Educational Leadership at the University of Georgia, led the researcher to Dr. Evans Harris. Through references provided by Harris and the researcher's review of a Georgia superintendent directory, Dr. John Culbreath and Beauty

Baldwin were identified. The Georgia superintendent directory and information provided by Dr. Culbreath helped the researcher develop Appendix B, African American Superintendents in Georgia since 1954.

Participant Profiles

Dr. John Culbreath

John Culbreath is a retired, male, African American superintendent living in the state of Georgia. Culbreath served as a school administrator in Georgia throughout his professional career. Culbreath influenced many of the policies that have directed K-12 education throughout Georgia for more than a quarter century, working as a school district superintendent in Dougherty County, Georgia, serving on the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, and working on several Georgia educational task forces.

As a superintendent, John Culbreath worked in Dougherty County, Georgia for six years. During his six-year tenure as superintendent, Dr. Culbreath initiated a number of school district reforms. These initiatives included the establishment of a reading program for Dougherty County's kindergarten and first grade students, a night high school, and health care programs throughout Dougherty County's school system. Currently, Dr. Culbreath works as interim Dean of the College of Education at Albany State University.

Dr. Evans Harris

Evans Harris is a retired, male, native Georgian, African American superintendent who currently lives in the state of Georgia. Harris' ascent to the superintendency in Taliaffero County, Georgia occurred along a path that involved a contract non-renewal during school desegregation, graduate study at the University of Oklahoma, the development of the educational administration

program at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia, and a reconciling yet controversial return to the K-12 arena in Taliaffero County, Georgia.

Serving first as a vocational education instructor and later as a recruited principal of a combination school, Evans Harris began to climb the administrative ladder relatively early in his career. Because of conflicts in Taliaffero County related to school desegregation, Harris' contract as a school principal was non-renewed, leading him into an alternate career path.

In graduate school, Evans Harris found professors that embraced his personality and because of his significant experience with desegregation efforts in Georgia, he was included in work on a similar project in Oklahoma. This led to extensive field-work and involvement in Oklahoma's Fox-Tatum crisis. After graduating from the University of Oklahoma, Harris assumed a post at Tuskegee University. Evans Harris' work at Tuskegee mirrored the work he performed in graduate school. Harris' work at Tuskegee University resulted in his being invited back to Albany State University in Albany, Georgia to establish an educational administration program for minorities in the state.

Evans Harris eventually returned to Taliaffero County to serve as school district superintendent. This proved to be a controversial move as Dr. Harris struggled to keep the Tallifero County's school district intact due to political controversy in the school-community related to the continued existence of the Taliaffero County School System.

Mrs. Beauty Baldwin

Beauty Baldwin is a retired, female, native Georgian, African American superintendent. Baldwin currently lives in the state of Georgia. Having worked in the field of education for more than 30 years, Baldwin observed the growth and expansion of the role of the African American administrator in the state of Georgia. During her professional career, Baldwin served as a

classroom teacher, assistant principal, principal, and school district superintendent throughout the state of Georgia. Baldwin faced many challenges throughout her professional career. From proving her professional worth to resisting eminent political pressures, Baldwin was tested on many fronts. In the face of these challenges, Mrs. Baldwin brought innovation and change to a small city school system.

Beauty Baldwin was recognized as a trailblazer throughout her career. For example, Baldwin was the only African American adult in the first school in which she worked. Baldwin, for many years, was the only female African American administrator in Gwinnett County, Georgia. As such, Beauty Baldwin was a rare commodity and European American school district superintendents heavily recruited her in the midst of school integration and desegregation efforts in Georgia. Finally, and perhaps not surprisingly, Beauty Baldwin was the first, female, African American superintendent in the state of Georgia.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in a qualitative study is linked to the researcher's ability to create within the research community a basis for consideration of the researcher's findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The ability to establish credibility of findings is related to the researchers ability to establish the reliability, validity, and objectiveness of their studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) believed four questions should be considered by researchers when determining the trustworthiness of a study:

1. How might the researcher establish truth in the contextual revelations of the research subjects?
2. How generalizable are the researcher's findings?
3. How sound is the researcher's methodology in relation to its ability to be replicated in the attempt to produce similar findings?

4. Are the researcher's findings as free, as is possible, of researcher bias? (p. 290)

Lincoln and Guba's questions led the researcher to consider the four domains through which the trustworthiness of a qualitative study may be established—validity, reliability, generalizability, and neutrality.

Validity

The validity of oral history research is dependent on the degree of conformity between the interviewee's reports concerning past events and the events themselves, as reported by other primary source materials (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995). Researchers have considered validity in replications of the oral history method of qualitative research from three perspectives: memory, method, and culture (Britton & Pellegrini, 1990; Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995). The researcher examined the significance of each to this study.

Memory

Oral history scholars have viewed human memory as fallible (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002). The fallibility of human memory can be further complicated by interviewees' tendencies to recall events that they consider most important (Ritchie, 1995). The remembrances that interviewees deem important do not stand in opposition to researchers' interests. Instead, they have existed as rich sources of data that must be carefully examined in efforts to extract the most relevant and significant information (Britton & Pelligrini, 1990; Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Ritchie, 1995). Thus, methodologically sound oral histories focus on the topic of research but are open to spontaneous interviewee revelations (Ritchie, 1995).

The dual aims of oral history research have not precluded the need of researchers to seek accuracy in the reports of interviewees (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002). Scholars have suggested that oral authors' reports concerning historical events should be compared with those of other primary sources (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002). Non-cooperating, interviewee-generated primary source materials also serve to validate the remembrances of oral authors (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995).

Research has suggested that four key points should be considered when examining the remembrances of interviewees for accuracy in revelation (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). The points are as follows:

1. An interviewee has spoken from his or her point of view. Those who were at the center of historical events may be seen to have offered more significant accounts of their personal accomplishments. Those on the periphery may have offered better comparisons of an array of principal actors.
2. Distant memories often have been more easily recalled and understood by oral authors.
3. Oral historians should have designed their studies in a manner that will be seen to have avoided nostalgia and promoted candid oral author revelations.
4. Because of the nature and aims of the oral history method of qualitative research, interviewees' remembrances, often, have represented those of the survivors of various historical eras or processes. (pp. 99-106)

Research based methods are effective in their ability to assist oral historians in examining the remembrances of oral authors (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995). During this study, interviewees' remembrances were checked for validity through comparison with primary source materials that included newspaper reports, archival records, and

local and State Board of Education meeting minutes. Table 3.1 further details the archival documents examined for this study.

Table 3.1

Archival Documents

Document	Collection
Albany State College Catalog, Summer Session 1965	Georgia Room, The University of Georgia Main Library
Dougherty County Schools, 1995-1996 Georgia Public Education Report Card	Georgia Department of Education School District Report Card Archive-Website
Fort Valley State College Bulletin, Catalog for the year 1944-1945, Announcements for the year 1945-1946.	Fort Valley State University, Hunt Memorial Library, Heritage Collection
Georgia School Superintendents Directory (2003)	Georgia Department of Education Web-Directory
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1955)	Georgia State Archives (1955)
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1959)	Georgia State Archives (1959)
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1960)	Georgia State Archives (1960)
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1962)	Georgia State Archives (1962)
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1964)	Georgia State Archives (1964)
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1967)	Georgia State Archives (1967)
Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, Biweekly Meeting Agenda (1968)	Georgia State Archives (1968)

Table 3.1 Continued

Document	Collection
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from the Region IV Office of Civil Rights, September 12, 1969	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1969), Georgia State Archives.
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from the Region IV Office of Civil Rights, September 24, 1969	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1969), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from the Region IV Office of Civil Rights, February 18, 1971	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1971), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from the Region IV Office of Civil Rights, May 18, 1971	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1971), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from Dewey E. Dodds, May 21, 1971	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1971), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from Dewey E. Dodds, July 2, 1971	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1971), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from Dewey E. Dodds, March 1, 1972	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1972), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Honorable Herman Talmadge from Jack P. Nix, March 22, 1972	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1972), Georgia State Archives

Table 3.1 Continued

Document	Collection
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Honorable Elliot Lee Richardson from Phil M. Landrum, March 27, 1972	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1972), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Jack P. Nix from Honorable Herman Talmadge, March 31, 1972	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1972), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from William H. Thomas, May 31, 1972	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1972), Georgia State Archives
Gwinnett County Office of Civil Rights File, 1969-1977, Letter to Mr. J. W. Benefield from William H. Thomas, February 18, 1977	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1977), Georgia State Archives
Private Schools, Georgia State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, p. 4, July 13, 1954	Georgia State Archives (1954)
Report on the Governor's Conference	Georgia State Archives (1954)
Report on the Adequate Program of Education for Georgia	Georgia State Archives (1954)
Savannah State Bulletin; 1958-1959: Announcements, 1958-1960	Savannah State University Library
Taliaferro County, County Federal Office of Civil Rights Report, Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goosby et al., Court Opinion	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1965)
Taliaferro County, County Federal Office of Civil Rights Report, Federal Correspondence to Dr. Claude Purcell and Mrs. Lola H. Williams, December 2, 1965; December 3, 1965; January 17, 1966; September 30, 1966; April 1 1966	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1965)

Table 3.1 Continued

Document	Collection
Taliaferro County, County Federal Office of Civil Rights Report, Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goosby et al., Order Appointing Receiver	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1965)
Taliaferro County, County Federal Office of Civil Rights Report, Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goosby et al., Final Report of the Receiver	Georgia Department of Negro Education (1965)
Taliaferro County Schools, 1994-1995 Georgia Public Education Report Card	Georgia Department of Education School District Report Card Archive-Website
The Use of A Model in Investigating the Process of Superintendent Selection (Ideal-Type, Georgia). Doctoral Dissertation, Georgia State University, 1986	Georgia Room, The University of Georgia Main Library
What Georgia's Leaders Think About the Segregation Amendment	Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, Georgia State Archives (1954)

Method

Research methodology is another domain addressed by scholars when determining the validity of oral history research (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998). Scholars have heightened the research design standards and sampling rationales used in oral history research (Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002). This has been seen in the establishment of scholarly models of oral history research as well as the promotion of standardized oral history interview techniques (Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995; Sitton et al., 1983; Sommer & Quinlan, 2002).

Further extension of scholars' efforts to achieve validity in oral history is through precise sampling methods (Perks & Thomson, 1998). Validity also is achieved, in part, through the use of interviewee remembrances because they represent each oral author's reflective analysis concerning past events (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998). Interviewee remembrances have been further validated through the value found in their contribution of historical accounts where none previously existed (Perks & Thomson, 1998). Interviewees' reports have been viewed as primary source materials, created from individual perspectives. Philosophically, interviewee reports have been viewed as no more or less biased than any other firsthand human source or written document (Dunaway & Baum, 1996).

Consistent with the literature concerning the importance of method in establishing the validity of oral history research, this study used the scholarly model of oral history research established by Sitton et al. (1983). Interview techniques used in this study were consistent with those detailed in the works of Perks and Thomson (1998), Ritchie (1995), and Sommer and Quinlan (2002). Reputational sampling was used in securing potential participants for this study (Kish, 1965).

The participants were identified through reputational sampling methods which began with the pilot study in the spring of 2003. Dr. C. Thomas Holmes guided the researcher to Dr. Evans Harris who then identified other native to Georgia retired African American superintendents, including Dr. John Culbreath and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin.

For the present study, the researcher reestablished contact with the participants via e-mail and telephone. Initial interview sessions were set up after IRB approval was granted in October of 2003. During the initial interview sessions, the researcher covered identifying personal and career data with the participants. The four subsequent interview sessions, each held

approximately three weeks apart, were guided by the data that the participants revealed in prior interview sessions. The three-week time lapse between each participant's interview sessions allowed the researcher to reflect and to begin analyzing data to determine points of inquiry for subsequent interviews. The participants also reflected on the data during the time between interview sessions.

Consistent with oral history methodology, the researcher probed the participants concerning the details of the same career events over time. This process helped to thicken the data, revealed contradictions, and allowed the researcher to seek clarity in the participants' remembrances. The researcher compared participant responses with newspaper clippings, archival documents, literature, and research texts (see Table 3.1).

The participants were highly motivated during the interview process. As a result, the researcher found that the participants often reflected on past interview sessions between sessions with the researcher and offered information and clarification in subsequent interview sessions, at times, before it was sought.

Culture

Culture is a third area that impacts the validity of oral history research (Britton & Pellegrini, 1990; Dunaway & Baum, 1996). In examining an interviewees' remembrances, researchers should be aware that the narrative represents the interviewee's point-of-view, which is a cultural perspective that may have been cast in a particular setting or orientation due to present or past cultural leanings (Dunaway & Baum, 1996).

Multiple questioning strategies applied in subsequent interviews assisted the researcher in gaining perspective concerning accuracy of the participants' revelations (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Perks & Thomson, 1998). The researcher interpreted the remembrances that the

participants offered in light of the times in which they were set. Again, similar questions about the same events over time helped thicken the data by allowing the participants to provide increasingly rich detail throughout the interview process.

Reliability

Reliability is a term that defines the consistency of a study's findings. In terms of oral history research, reliability is dependent on the ability of researchers to prompt interviewees to consistently report the same story, about the same events, over time (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Ritchie, 1995). Consistency in interviewees' remembrances is viewed as a function of the quality of the participant's memories (Dunaway & Baum, 1996). Access to accurate remembrances has been seen as a function of researchers' tactful skill in probing interviewees concerning the precise nature of their experiences (Dunaway & Baum, 1996; Ritchie, 1995).

In the present study, the researcher used the following measures to establish reliability:

1. The audio-taped interviews were analyzed for lapses in content and contradictions in responses.
2. Interviews were compared against existing primary source materials to check for validity.
3. Various questioning strategies were used during each series of interviews to solicit information from oral authors concerning the nature of their career experiences.
4. Oral authors' clarifications and expanded explications formed the base from which interview transcripts were edited for accuracy.

Generalizability

Oral history research is used to study the heritages of groups population whose histories have not been well researched or recorded (Perks & Thomson, 1998; Ritchie, 1995; Sitton et al.,

1983). As such, oral history studies have been used in the exploration of the histories of ethnic minority and other non-majority culture groups (Perks & Thomson, 1998; Price, 2002; Walker, 1996). This study was designed to focus on the nature of the professional career histories of three African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia.

Neutrality

The researcher is passionate concerning this study's line of inquiry. Research has not fully explored the nature of the professional career experiences of African American superintendents. Further, to the researcher's knowledge, existing literature does not include any oral histories concerning the nature of the career experiences of African American superintendents.

The researcher recognized that passion could cause potential bias in this study. As a result, the researcher attempted to design the study in a manner in which validity and reliability safeguards ensured objectiveness. The major validity and reliability safeguards in this study were based on the researchers questioning strategy and research efforts. By tactfully questioning the participants about events in their careers over time, the researcher prompted the participants to provide rich detail concerning their career histories. The researcher was able to compare the participant's remembrances to archival documents to check for context and accuracy. Finally, the ethical guidelines of the Oral History Association were followed in conducting this study (Oral History Association, 2000).

Limitations

This study was bound by limitations. The study featured the oral narratives of three retired African American superintendents that lived and worked in the state of Georgia. The accuracy in the revelations found in these narratives were limited by each oral author's unique

level of candidness. The study, potentially, has been further limited by the historical data found in the narratives of its three participants.

Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the research method used in this study, oral history. Exploring the researcher's role, this chapter provided detailed information on the researcher's approach to the study to gain rich accurate data from the participants while accounting for researcher bias.

This chapter also included the account of how the researcher arrived at the study's focus, the career experiences and subsequent mobility of a sample of three retired and native Georgian African American superintendents. Reflecting on the origins of this study, the researcher provided detail on the pilot study that guided the research and how the researcher gained access to the peer group of retired African American superintendents in Georgia.

Oral history research theory was another area addressed. Exploring oral history theory, the researcher provided background for the rationale behind the design of the oral history research method and provided detailed links to literature on the subject including references to the works of the man who has been widely considered as the father of oral history research in the United States, Allan Nevins.

Also included was discussion of this study's level of generalizability and its limitations. The Chapter concluded with an examination of quality concerns, the theoretical framework, the sampling method, participant profiles, trustworthiness, validity, reliability, and neutrality measures taken in this study.

CHAPTER 4

DR. JOHN CULBREATH

Childhood and Schooling in a Segregated System

Dr. John Culbreath is an African American male who grew up in a single parent home. John Culbreath's primary and secondary school educational experiences took place in Walton County Public Schools' (WCPS) segregated system during the 1950s and early 1960s. As an African American student in WCPS' segregated system, John Culbreath's experiences at George Washington Carver High School were influenced by the mentoring that he received from teachers at the school.

While mentoring students, the teachers at George Washington Carver High School helped them overcome psychological barriers that they might have faced because of segregation and conditions present at the school. Potential psychological barriers were created by stigmas that were falsely associated with students' ethnic and socioeconomic origins and perceptions that they might have formed because of the deteriorated condition of the facilities at George Washington Carver High School. In his discussion on being a student in WCPS, a segregated school system during the 1950s and early 1960s, Dr. Culbreath's remembrances covered two areas, namely Mrs. Willie Grace Randall, a teacher, and the segregation he experienced as a student in the WCPS.

Mrs. Willie Grace Randall

Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of educators at George Washington Carver High School centered on an English teacher, Mrs. Willie Grace Randall. Mrs. Randall was more than

a teacher to John Culbreath as she served as his first mentor. Mrs. Randall mixed compliments and insults in her conversations with John Culbreath, using words that were beyond his vocabulary. Mrs. Randall's technique led John Culbreath, a curious child, on a quest for knowledge, as he looked up words such as "nonchalant" and "uncouth" to find out just what Mrs. Randall meant in her conversations with him.

Mrs. Randall also treated John Culbreath and other students in her class with "great care, concern, dignity, and respect." Because Mrs. Randall treated her students with this care, their self-esteem levels rose. Dr. Culbreath reflected on the influence that Mrs. Willie Grace Randall had on him during his time as a student at George Washington Carver High School:

I first envisioned myself as an educator because of the greatest teacher I have ever seen, who taught me high school English in the 9th, 10th and 11th grades, Mrs. Willie Grace Randall. She modeled high standards, care, concern and high expectations for herself and her students and never compromised them. [Mrs. Randall] had many excuses not to expect very much out of me. I was a bashful small sized—for my age—young man who came from poverty. I was from a single parent home. I didn't dress well because I couldn't afford to but she saw past all of that.

She [Mrs. Randall] saw something that really wasn't and began to treat me like I was a well-dressed, wealthy, quite intelligent person, and it felt good. I began to come closer to what I felt she thought I was and in the process became a very, very good student, when I wanted to be, and a pretty effective communicator, speaker and writer. I also became a very caring person because I couldn't wait to find someone to jerk out of their routine and make them into what they thought that I thought they were.

Mrs. Randall used positive affirmation and the power of expectation to influence her students.

Under Mrs. Randall's tutelage, John Culbreath wanted to achieve more to please the mentor that he held in high esteem.

Reflecting on Mrs. Randall's teaching methods, Dr. Culbreath recounted her unique approach to character building, a technique in which adjectives were used to convey compliments and to prick students' consciousnesses:

[Mrs. Randall's approach] was subtle. She would use adjectives to describe me. I didn't know what they meant. The very first one I remember was uncouth. It could have been a compliment. It could have been an insult. I went and looked it up . . . an uncivilized person, loud, rude. I didn't want to be uncouth anymore. She said I was nonchalant and again I looked it up and found that she meant that I was indifferent. I didn't know quite how to handle indifferent . . . appearing as if I really didn't care if the sun didn't shine. I didn't want to be those things so she began to throw words out that she knew I didn't know but she knew that I was a nosy person who would go and look them up to see whether it was a compliment or an insult. So she would mix them up, compliments and insults.

Mrs. Randall's teaching did not stop with character building. She used great literature to expose her students to different cultures and to increase their base of knowledge. Perhaps Mrs. Randall knew that beyond the walls of George Washington Carver High School, John Culbreath and her other students would have to hold intelligent conversations with people about a range of topics and cultures. What better way to transport students from underprivileged backgrounds to worlds they had never seen or could not imagine than through literature?

Mrs. Randall used to ask me about poems that I should have read, and I hadn't, and she asked me about books that I should of read, and I hadn't. I would go read them so that I would be ready the next time she asked me about *Ivanhoe*, "Tell Tale Hearts" or *The Raven* or whatever it was. So she tricked me into learning the meaning of words that I never really intended to learn and reading books and poems that I never really had an inkling to read.

She [Mrs. Randall] knew that the power of quenching the thirst for knowledge, for whatever reason, was too powerful for me to ignore. I was highly motivated, usually about the wrong things but she turned that motivation around. She turned that loudness, that boisterousness, that uncouthness into a fair level of sophistication. She was magical in transforming vices into virtues and making me like the new person that emerged.

Mrs. Randall also allowed her students to embrace their ethnicity while recognizing their circumstances as just that, circumstances. Because they were allowed to embrace their ethnicity and to separate their circumstances from their self images, students in Mrs. Randall's class were able to view school as an intellectual pursuit, and they learned to love themselves at a time when

segregationist practices could have had lasting effects on their self perceptions. Culbreath elaborated:

Through Mrs. Randall I also received, for the first time, from a teacher an affirmation of my right to be . . . my right to be poor, my right to be nappy headed, my right to be bashful, my right to be from a single parent home in the projects, all of that was just fluff with her, because she affirmed my right to be in her class as full citizen of her class and expected me to stay and not to bring in any of that garbage that baggage that we so often allow students to pile up in front of them ‘Don’t ask anything, I’m Black, I’m poor, I’m from a single parent home, I’m a single mother myself.’ Move that baggage out of the way. We are dealing with an intellectual pursuit. Mrs. Randall would say ‘You are going to go on this journey, you can either fasten your seat belt or you can bum around, but you are going on the journey.’

Mrs. Randall’s teaching methods were captivating and with students in tow, she took her classes to foreign lands without ever having to get a permission slip signed. Mrs. Randall’s methods taught John Culbreath that “the mind could transport a man anywhere he desired.” According to Dr. Culbreath, Mrs. Randall took her students “lots of places.” Dr. Culbreath recalled that he “enjoyed the ride” in Mrs. Randall’s class and remained motivated because she always affirmed his accomplishments and constantly encouraged him to excel.

After the 11th grade, John Culbreath moved on to a senior English teacher who had been Mrs. Randall’s mentor. Culbreath’s senior English teacher had one goal, the highest level of student achievement. Culbreath explained this experience:

Mrs. Randall turned me over after the 11th grade to the lady who taught her English in high school, Mrs. Rose Ison. So, I had the fortunate, or unfortunate circumstance to be taught in the 12th grade by the “master’s” “master”. Mrs. Ison had heard all the excuses and seen all the tricks for all the years. You got away with nothing. You worked. If she wasn’t in the room you worked because she was an even harder taskmaster. She wanted us to leave that place, that magical place called George Washington Carver High School and show the world what poor people, well motivated and well taught could become. I had no notion to be a part of that but I became an integral part of it and I am extremely grateful for that.

Through his experiences as a student at George Washington Carver High School, John Culbreath was able to go beyond his origins. At George Washington Carver High School, John

Culbreath learned that it did not matter that he was Black. It did not matter that he was “poor.” It did not matter that he was “nappy headed.” The only thing that mattered at George Washington Carver High School was how hard John Culbreath was willing to work to go beyond his condition as a poor African American high school student in a segregated school system in northeast Georgia in the 1960s.

Segregation

Reflecting on the nature of the segregationist practices that permeated the south and the school district that he was a student, John Culbreath recounted the experience of being an African American student in WCPS’ segregated school system. Culbreath’s discussion on segregation initially focused on the lack of resources at George Washington Carver High School (GWCHS) during segregation. Interestingly, and consistent with reports by Roche (1998) which affirm that Georgia’s leaders initially attempted to resist school desegregation by increasing the level of services provided at Negro schools during segregation, John Culbreath noted that the Walton County School Board provided some concessions to GWCHS when African Americans in the community complained about services.

John Culbreath’s remembrances of segregation also covered Georgia’s freedom of choice plan. The freedom of choice plan was a passive attempt to comply with school desegregation mandates. Under the freedom of choice plan, some African American students were allowed to attend and then desegregate Georgia’s public school systems (Georgia State Board of Education, 1959, 1960, 1962).

Georgia’s freedom of choice plan also allowed European American students to transfer out of school districts that were desegregating, thus making early school desegregation efforts in Georgia an almost unsolvable quandary. John Culbreath also noted that under the freedom of

choice plan, the most capable African American students were considered for desegregation efforts and within that group those students who were of the fairest skin tones, often, were selected for school desegregation efforts.

Directly reflecting on his schooling experiences during segregation, Culbreath revealed that school segregation in Georgia was constitutional, mandating that White and Black students attend separate schools. Dr. Culbreath described the separate schools in Monroe, Georgia and the conditions that existed in them.

There were two sets of schools. There was one school for the Caucasian students and they received the new books. They [the Caucasian Students] received the best learning materials in school. We [the African American students] did not. When the books were well used and well worn they were brought over for us [the African American students] to use. We knew we were getting second hand books. We could tell by many of the names in the books that they had not been the property of African American students. None of the students names who were listed in the book were upperclassmen at my school. So, we knew that these were books that were probably out of usefulness for the White students so they were given to us [the African American students].

Sometimes members of the African American community in Monroe, Georgia made complaints about conditions in the African American schools and the schools received new resources. Dr. Culbreath recounted. I can remember the first time that we got to smell new books coming out of the box. It was a smell that we hadn't smelled before because our books had always been well worn. After that [complaints in the district] we got a football team [too], fully at the school system's expense.

Dr. Culbreath's remembrances further indicated that consistent with efforts started by Governor Talmadge in 1954, African American schools in Monroe initially received better funding in the place of access to desegregated school setting:

They [the school district administration] just decided that if we were going to claim that we had to come to the White school because we didn't have the physical materials and facilities that the White school had, they [the school district administration] would get us the materials. So, the school district fixed our field and put lights on it. That was the genesis of football at Carver High School in Monroe, Georgia in 1961.

After Blacks tried to attend the White school we received the necessary facilities. So it was decided that they [the school district administration] would keep the schools segregated by getting us a team. The overwhelming impression was that we were not first

class students and our teachers were not first class teachers though they were outstanding. It was even felt that our principal was not a first class principal. We simply had to take the back seat in the community.

The inadequacies of the facilities present in segregated schools caused African Americans to have to use second-hand materials.

Assessing the nuances of the process of school desegregation in Walton County Georgia, Dr. Culbreath elaborated on the freedom of choice plan, which allowed schools in Georgia to passively comply with school desegregation mandates. Culbreath noted that while *Brown v. Board II* (1955) had decreed that school desegregate with all “deliberate speed” the south was slow to comply, taking almost nine years to begin to actively desegregate schools. Dr.

Culbreath’s comments on the principles that guided school desegregation revealed the following:

The freedom of choice plan was a way to passively comply with the ten year old law that emanated from the *Brown v Board* decisions. The separate but inherently unequal systems were to be dismantled with all deliberate speed. Well that took about nine years. Speed was slow in the south during that time [laughter]. Well, we wound up with freedom of choice being up as a straw man. The thinking was ‘We [segregated White schools] will let select Black students come to White schools. We will not let a critical mass of students in but we will let those few in.’

So, certain students from the Black community were selected to integrate the White schools, during my school years. These generally were those who were very capable students. Also, it may have been coincidental but most of them [the Black students that were selected for integration] were very fair skinned. I know from what was seen, heard, and said in the community at that time that the first wave of students who integrated the schools in Monroe, Georgia encountered many problems. It was a torment. Imagine a hand full of African American students [in the 1950s and 1960s] lost in a sea of European American faces, the name calling, the threats, the fights. But that’s how we made it through the 1960s, selective integration.

Further reflecting on the experience of widespread school desegregation, not just in Georgia but throughout the South, Dr. Culbreath revealed that court ordered desegregation began to affect the pace of school desegregation. In the cases of *Green v. County Board* (1968) and *Swann v.*

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education (1971), the Supreme Court called for unitary school

districts (i.e., districts with schools not identifiable by race and allowed the busing of students and manipulation of school district lines in cases of clear discriminatory practices by school districts).

Dr Culbreath indicated that even after *Green v. County Board* and *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, Georgia's school districts struggled to desegregate. Culbreath shared:

By the early 1970s there was a massive court order that was designed to desegregate the schools in the south. There was a decree that single race schools had to be dismantled and unitary school systems were to take their place. Well, it didn't say that you had to integrate, you simply had to desegregate. So, in many places in Georgia there was flight by the White students into newly formed academies. Those academies usually took the name of the person who the county was named after, for example Jefferson Davis Academy, George Walton Academy. Those academies sprang up as an alternative to going to this unitary school system.

So, the schools in many places, especially in South Georgia were still overwhelmingly Black and the number of White students, already low in number, dwindled further because of the educational alternatives that they had. So, we didn't have true integration in Georgia. We had selective desegregation throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s.

In addition to the barriers that African American students faced during desegregation, Dr.

Culbreath noted that African American professional educators faced challenges as well.

Culbreath indicated that African Americans struggled to gain and to maintain administrative positions that they held in Negro Schools. Culbreath explained:

Also, during desegregation there seemed to be an unwritten rule about certain positions. There was an unwritten rule about high school principals. It seemed that most of the Black male high school principals who had made it with almost nothing in the way of resources, were not capable in the eyes of the people who made decisions to be high school principals.

So, most of them [former high school principals who were African American] were junior high school principals or elementary principals once integration and desegregation came along. Or, Blacks served as assistant and associate principals at the high school. Blacks weren't put in the highest positions of authority, although there were a few African Americans who were department heads, head football coaches and high school

principals. However, they were the exception to the rules. They were like Jackie Robinson. They were obviously head and shoulders above any candidate from anywhere.

Dr. Culbreath's account revealed that some African Americans lost administrative positions because of school desegregation. Culbreath's remembrances also indicated that during desegregation, African Americans also gained access to administrative positions in desegregated settings. The administrative positions in desegregated settings were professional positions that African Americans did not have access prior to school desegregation efforts initiated by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (1954). Culbreath's commentary also included references to Jackie Robinson, the first African American to play major league baseball (Rookie of the Year, 1947).

Dr. Culbreath's reference to Jackie Robinson indicated that African Americans who received administrative posts in desegregated settings were extraordinary candidates. The Jackie Robinson metaphor used by Dr. Culbreath indicated the need of African Americans during school desegregation to possess exemplary skills as school administrators. In current research, Ellerbee (2002) found that competent skill levels as defined by business management acumen, general awareness, and political savvy, and experience were 4 of 21 factors that limited African American's access to school district superintendencies (see Table 2.1).

Dr. Culbreath continued his analysis of the situation that African American educators and school administrators faced during school desegregation by focusing on the position of African American coaches and the continued separation that existed in the schools:

Thinking more about the head football coaching position [it] was another place where this pattern [of exclusion of African Americans] was evident. The head football coaches [who were Black] were not considered to be good enough to be football coaches at the desegregated schools. In general, the coaches who had coached successful teams at the Black schools were made assistant coaches at the desegregated schools. Also, Blacks who had been department heads at the segregated schools were simply teachers at the

desegregated schools. It seemed that the separation continued. Even though we were together we were apart.

African American coaches, like African American school administrators, lost some positions during school desegregation. It seems that school desegregation in Georgia was a slow and cumbersome process. Also, Georgia, like other southern states, resisted school desegregation and when faced with ultimatums, implemented a freedom of choice plan that allowed the state to passively comply with federal mandates. Under freedom of choice plans, African American students were allowed to attend European American schools on a limited basis. Although segregation was legally ended by *Brown v. Board* (1954), racial separation in Georgia school districts like WCPS continued even when limited numbers of African American students were allowed to attend European American Schools.

Undergraduate Study

In the fall of 1964, John Culbreath began his freshman year at Albany State College. Culbreath financed his education at Albany State College with funds provided by a \$300.00 per year Regents Scholarship, a \$200.00 loan, a \$75.00 per quarter valedictorian's award, and money that his mother and grandmother gave him to offset expenses. During his time as a student at Albany State College (ASC), Culbreath served in various leadership capacities, including a term as student body president in 1968. In the spring of 1968, John Culbreath graduated from Albany State College with a B.A. in French.

An ASC Catalog from 1965 provided clues relative to Albany State College's academic, social, and cultural dispositions during the mid-1960s. The catalog defined Albany State College as a coeducational institute and a recognized member of the University of Georgia System with the authority to grant four-year college degrees. Degree requirements at ASC included a minimum of 180-quarter hours of college work with a minimum GPA of "C." ASC also required

(a) three quarters of all degree work to be completed at Albany State College, and (b) all freshmen to maintain an average of “C” in their English courses.

All students at Albany State College during the mid-1960s gained admission to the college through a prescribed admissions process. The ASC admissions process required students to obtain two character references and a recommendation from their high school principals. After extensive committee review, qualifying students were admitted to ASC and issued a certificate of admission, which had to be presented during registration at ASC.

Albany State College students who were not legal residents of Dougherty County, Georgia were required to live on campus. Albany State College required its students to abide by its student code of conduct, exemplifying good citizenship inside and outside of the college community. Finally, the cost of attendance for a 10-week term, the equivalent of one full academic quarter, was \$271.00 for boarding students, and \$80.00 for non-boarding students with an additional charge of \$100 for out-of-state students at Albany State College.

Albany State College’s academic, social, and cultural climate during the mid-1960s was affected by the social and cultural conditions that pervaded Albany, Georgia, the United States, and the south during the early and mid-1960s. The social and cultural conditions that pervaded the United States during the mid-1960s affected communities across the country as they struggled to maintain stability.

Research revealed nine major factors that influenced the sociocultural climate of Albany, Georgia, the United States, and the south in 1964 when John Culbreath first enrolled as a student at Albany State College (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1

Factors that Influenced the Sociocultural Climate of Albany, Georgia
and the Southern United States during the mid-1960s

Factors	Circumstances	Outcomes
Civil Unrest in Albany, Georgia	In 1962, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. became involved in Civil Rights activities in Albany. ^a	Albany, Georgia was placed in the national spotlight. Activists and city officials in increased communication.
The assassination of president John F. Kennedy	On November 22, 1963 president John F. Kennedy (JFK) was assassinated while riding in an open top car in a motorcade in Dallas, Texas. ^b	The United States mourned the loss of president Kennedy. Lyndon B. Johnson succeeded JFK as president of the United States. President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 into law.
The assassination of Medger Evers.	On June 12, 1963 Medger Evers, the Mississippi field secretary for the NAACP was shot and killed in the driveway of his home. ^c	Jackson, Mississippi received national media attention and a series of intense Civil Rights marches and protests ensued. Also, the American Civil Rights Movement received more attention.
Positive gains for African Americans during the early and mid-1960s	In 1962 the Supreme Court ruled that no state could mandate racial segregation of interstate transportation facilities. In August of 1963, New York City began an initiative to include African Americans in "White collar" jobs. ^e On December 10, 1964 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize. ^f	State and federal government agencies worked to limit discrimination against African Americans. The American Civil Rights Movement also received positive international attention as a result of Dr. King's receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Table 4.1 Continued

Factors	Circumstances	Outcomes
The Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C.	August 28, 1963, 250,000 marchers gathered in Washington, D. C. to lobby for African Americans' Civil rights. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., delivered his I Have a Dream Speech. ^g	The march in Washington, D. C. showed the magnitude and disciplined constraint of Civil Rights efforts in the U.S. as the march received national media attention.
The Cuban Missile Crisis	Following a failed invasion and coup attempt at the "Bay of Pigs," Cuba, with aid from the Soviet Union, increased its defenses. ^h The Soviet Union assisted Cuba by moving nuclear arms to the island and building missile facilities. ⁱ	Weeks of extreme tension between the United States and the Soviet Union ended peacefully as the Soviet Union removed nuclear arms from Cuba. The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union continued.
Continued desegregation struggles in Georgia and throughout the south.	Civil rights protests and skirmishes in Macon and Savannah, Georgia drew national attention. ^j In Louisiana Civil Rights activities proceeded peacefully. ^k Also, the first African American students were admitted to Duke and Emory Universities. ^l	Peaceful demonstrations continued to emerge as an effective lobbying method. Also, African Americans gained greater access to facilities, services, and institutions in the United States.
Disappearance of civil rights workers in Mississippi.	In June of 1964, a biracial group of Civil Rights workers investigating a church burning in Philadelphia, Mississippi disappeared. ^m	The bodies of the civil rights workers were found on August 4, 1964. The deaths of the Civil Rights workers strengthened the resolve of Civil Rights activists to achieve equality for all Americans.

Table 4.1 Continued

Factors	Circumstances	Outcomes
Alabama	Civil Rights protests during the spring and summer of 1963 in Birmingham and Gadsden resulted in 2650 arrests. ⁿ	Solutions to problems in the south were sought and the need for change reinforced. Also, the push for national civil rights legislation (the Civil Rights Act of 1964) was strengthened as president Johnson resolved to help African Americans gain equality in the United States.

Notes: ^aPowledge, 1962a, 1962b, 1962c, 1962d, and Sitton, 1963. ^bJohnson Acts, 1963, Johnson Takes Awesome Duty, 1963; U.S. Responding Well, 1964. ^cN.A.A.C.P. Leader Slain, 1963. ^dU.S. Shifts to Use, 1962. ^eArnold, 1963. ^fKing Takes Nobel, 1964. ^gCollier-Thomas & Franklin, 2000. ^hThe Cuban Missile Crisis, n.d. ⁱAccused Cubans Leave, 1962 and Castro to Give Up, 1962. ^jPowledge, 1963, and Sitton, 1961, 1962. ^kHaley, 1963, and U.S. Judge, 1962. ^lTwo Medical Schools, 1963. ^mCollier-Thomas & Franklin, 2000. ⁿBirmingham Alert, 1963; Hope Surges Anew, 1963; Negroes Sing, 1963; Vote Drive Set, 1963.

The factors detailed in Table 4.1, along with the general atmosphere of civil unrest that dominated the early and mid-1960s, led to the enactment of one of the most significant civil rights laws in the history of the United States, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2000; also see Appendix D for Civil Rights Act of 1964).

Recounting his experiences as an undergraduate at Albany State College during the early 1960s, John Culbreath's remembrances focused on two factors, the cocoon and no nonsense professors. The 1960s were years of change in the United States. The political climate throughout the United States, and the south in particular, was unstable. The assassinations of national leaders along with riots and violence caused uncertainty. In the midst of the turmoil of the 1960s, Albany State College served as a safe haven for African American college students.

At Albany State College, African American students were protected from the outside world and allowed to flourish.

The Cocoon

During his transition to college life, John Culbreath struggled to remain focused as he had as a student in Mrs. Willie Grace Randall's class in Walton County. Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of Albany State College during the mid-and late-1960s indicated that the school provided a haven for its students. Freshman year at Albany State College (1964) marked the first time, in Culbreath's words, that he had been away from home other than "to go to boy scout camp and 4-H camp, one time each." Culbreath also revealed that since he was from a small town, Monroe, Georgia, Albany State College gave him a bit of a culture shock. According to Culbreath, Albany State College's 1, 200 students were more people than he had "ever seen at one time" in his life.

Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of his initial reaction to Albany State College extended beyond the culture shock and focused on the personal challenges that he faced. A freshman from a county town in rural northeast Georgia, Culbreath suffered esteem issues as he sought a niche at Albany State College (ASC) while questioning his right to be among the other students. Fortunately, professors at ASC took an interest in John Culbreath and their encouragement helped him to adjust. Dr. Culbreath recounted the experience of arriving at the ASC campus and the adjustment process that he went through, describing a period in which he lost self-esteem and was then rejuvenated by interest that the professors showed on him:

I temporarily forgot all the lessons I was taught. I began to see myself as a lesser student because, perhaps, I came from a lesser place with fewer material things. Then I found affirmation from college level teachers. I couldn't imagine a professor from college, especially one with a PhD would care about me by name but it seemed like when you did well academically in class teachers felt better about the whole class and particularly about you.

So they [the professors at Albany State College] began an affirmation process that wasn't as wholesome or as frequent as Mrs. Randall's procedure but it worked the same way for a naive boy when he got pats on the back. I wanted to do more of the things that caused that pat on the back to happen.

Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of ASC did not end with the adjustment and affirmation process that he experienced. The discussion extended to the environment that ASC provided for its students in the midst of the social turmoil of the 1960s.

John Culbreath reflected fondly on how ASC like many other Historically Black Colleges and Universities across the United States cared for and protected its students:

Also, Albany State College, like most HBCUs [Historically Black Colleges and Universities] was a cocoon [in 1964]. It was a place where a caterpillar, who had never been away from home before, could come and find a comfortable warm place.

Now, before I got there I thought, 'All of these people are going to be smarter than I am, cooler than I am, or better looking than me.' Some were smarter, but they were ugly [laughter]. Some were better looking, but they were not smart [laughter]. So it all balanced out [laughter]. I was a typical wild-eyed freshman, scared to death. I found others like me from all over the state, even the guy from Atlanta. He was scared too. So we found a cocoon filled with heavy-handed adults in our midst. I wish we had more of those heavy-handed adults today.

Crediting the cocoon-like environment present at ASC to the adults at the school, Dr. Culbreath offered remembrances of how he complained about "the Dean of Men, the Dean of Students, the Dean of Instruction" and how those same adults continued to watch over the students at the school to make sure they were "about something purposeful." The discipline that the adults at ASC maintained was crucial for two reasons. First, the discipline that the adults at ASC maintained, kept the students on track toward graduation. Second, the social climate in the town of Albany and the south in general was such that "a spark of discord could ignite a forest fire of demonstrations."

The discipline that the adults at ASC maintained affected the culture and climate at the school, shielding students from the distractions of civil rights protests and demonstrations in the community. Culbreath elaborated:

The adults and the cocoon were important because the town had an upheaval, where the cocoon was penetrated two years before [1962] when Dr. King had come to the state. He [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.] accomplished a lot and set the stage for the national civil rights movement and other forms of protest that had taken on some of the same tactics that he used in Albany in 1962.

The cocoon was penetrated because some students had been put out of school for participating in those actions a couple of years before I got to Albany. Anyway, the cocoon had been sealed again by the time I came in. As a result, the professors, the dean, the president and all of those folks were back, completely in charge. We all knew that. So, things were safe then.

Albany State College formed a nurturing close-knit community that was largely unaffected by interference caused by happenings in the outside world. Also, while the world outside Albany State College was harsh and filled with turmoil, things changed during Culbreath's time as an undergraduate at the school.

Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of the nature of Albany, Georgia during the 1960s and the changes that occurred in the city and throughout the United States during his time as a student at the college focused, first, on how the students were initially treated when out in the community.

Dr. Culbreath noted:

Out in the world we [the students at Albany State College] were seen, perhaps, as just any other group of Black people, and dealt with any assumptions that came along with that. We didn't get student discounts that other groups of students may have gotten. The idea was we could shop if we wanted to and if we didn't 'fine, just pretend they aren't over there.

Later, Dr. Culbreath observed a change in the social atmosphere in Albany and throughout the United States:

The world began changing while I was at Albany State College. President Kennedy had been assassinated the year before. Dr. King had been awarded the Noble Peace Prize. The

civil rights act of 1964 was signed. So, it looked like things were going to change permanently . . . and we [African Americans] as a people would be permanently better off. Further, we had done it working through the system.

As a freshman at ASC in 1964, John Culbreath struggled with esteem issues as he searched for his own niche within the college community. In addition, the world outside ASC was in turmoil in 1964. However, turmoil did not stop progress. African Americans made significant social progress in the United States during the 1960s and ASC, like many Historically Black Colleges and Universities, was a safe haven for its students. Because of the environment that ASC provided, John Culbreath found his niche, and he was able to thrive.

No Nonsense Professors

The professors at ASC impressed on students the need to work hard and to strive for excellence. Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of the professors at ASC focused on two outstanding educators, Dr. Houston "a surly but caring" history professor, and Mrs. Blaylock, "a gifted and hard working" professor in Albany State College's College of Education. From Dr. Houston and Mrs. Blaylock, John Culbreath learned invaluable lessons.

Dr. Houston was a "tall imposing man" who did not "put up with any nonsense." During the time that John Culbreath was a student at ASC, Dr. Houston maintained a reputation for having very few students that earned the grade of "A" in his classes. According to Culbreath, Dr. Houston took pride in his reputation for having very few students earn "As" in his class "not because he didn't want students to succeed but because he wanted students to learn the value of hard work and to appreciate their accomplishments once they were rightfully earned."

Dr. Culbreath did not get an "A" when he was a student in Dr. Houston's class. However, John Culbreath received something from Dr. Houston that was better than any letter grade, a lesson in dealing with people and adversity:

I didn't get an "A" in his [Dr. Houston's] class. That semester I had 5 "A's" and one "B." He explained to me that once you get a "B" you fall out of the "A" tree, you can't get back in it. I learned a whole lot about history from him. I also learned about dealing with people and dealing with adversity. It was a great experience for me, under pressure. After a while you think "I can handle this, I have studied, I have read these chapters." However, Dr. Houston made sure that if you passed his class that you would study constantly.

Further reflecting on his experiences with the academic rigors of student life at ASC, Dr.

Culbreath focused on Mrs. Blaylock, an instructor in the College of Education. Mrs. Blaylock was a "constant taskmaster" who did not allow students to take her classes lightly. Culbreath recounted an instance when Mrs. Blaylock took him aside and spoke to him "woman to man" about his work in her course and the example that he should be setting as an aspiring campus leader.

Mrs. Blaylock asked John Culbreath to redo the sub-par political position paper.

Culbreath complied and by doing so took a step in his growth as a campus leader and a scholar. By taking Mrs. Blaylock's advice, John Culbreath lived up to his role as a campus leader, becoming student body president during the same year (1967).

Dr. Culbreath's relationship with Mrs. Blaylock extended into his professional life many years after he graduated from ASC while serving as superintendent in Dougherty County:

Mrs. Blaylock and I began a relationship in the introduction to education class that lasted through my retirement as superintendent. She was one of my school board members during the six years that I was superintendent. What a great book end to my career to have had her as a rebellious 19 year old, radical 60s student, and then as a rebellious 1990s superintendent at 53 years old.

She [Mrs. Blaylock] was one of my last board members. That was special to me especially because she passed away not long ago. Fortunately, I have all of our memories . . . times when I would call as a principal and ask her for the names of prospective teachers. She was always helpful in helping me staff my school by suggesting good people. She was very special. So, Albany State College was a place where under the watchful eye of heavy-handed, caring adults, I continued to grow and mature.

Mrs. Blaylock exemplified the type of professors that ASC employed during the early and mid-1960s. The professors at the school were caring people who touched students' lives on the human level. The professors at ASC during the early and mid-1960s were also insatiable "task masters" who expected one thing from students, "quality work."

Also, the training that the professors at ASC provided built on the lessons that African American students learned from African American teachers in segregated settings. In the life of John Culbreath, the effects of the mentoring that he received in segregated school settings held true, as ASC helped to turn a poor country boy from Monroe, Georgia, into a competent and responsible adult.

Teaching

In the fall of 1968, John Culbreath began his professional career in education. Working as a classroom teacher for four years, John Culbreath taught in a segregated school setting at Henderson High School and in 1970 became a teacher in an integrated setting at Randolph County High School. In each school that he taught, Culbreath learned lessons about teaching and effectively managing and supervising teacher activities.

John Culbreath arrived at Henderson High School in the fall of 1968 as a recent college graduate, full of energy, enthusiasm, and confidence. Culbreath's confidence level was so high that the principal and veteran faculty members at Henderson High School staged scenes to humble the cocky 20 year old.

By the fall of 1970, Randolph County had begun massive desegregation efforts in its schools and John Culbreath, along with other African American faculty and staff members from Henderson High School, was transferred to Randolph High School. The transition to Randolph High School was an uneasy one as the principal at Henderson High School, James Smith, and the

superintendent of the Randolph County Schools System, Mr. Fred Darden, openly displayed wariness about the desegregation process.

Far Too Cocky

Dr. Culbreath's journey to Henderson High School began with his undergraduate experiences at Albany State College. Dr. Culbreath, along with an older cousin who was at ASC, pursued a degree in French and planned to return to school and obtain a graduate degree in foreign language after getting his bachelors degree. Dr. Culbreath's career plan, at that point, was to become a foreign language professor.

Dr. Culbreath obtained a Bachelors Degree in French from ASC in 1968. However, his initial plan to go to graduate school did not work out. With a degree in French, no acceptance letters to graduate school, and no job, John Culbreath accepted a teaching position at Henderson High School in Cuthbert, Georgia in 1968. Dr. Culbreath's class load at Henderson High School was heavy, as he taught French and English and took on extra duties helping the play director and basketball coach at the school. John Culbreath's schedule led to long days and short nights.

As a first-year teacher with no student teaching experience, John Culbreath lacked formal training in pedagogical methods. However, when finally having to come face-to-face with the students at Henderson High School, Culbreath relied on what he knew, and he taught the students as he had been taught when he was a student at George Washington Carver High School. John Culbreath worked hard as a teacher. He built relationships with students and tried to help them achieve their fullest potential. Dr. Culbreath reflected on the relationships that he built with students as a teacher and the professional goal that he set for himself as an educator:

During my first year of teaching, I also built relationships with students. Many [of the relationships] are still alive today because I so wanted them to make me proud. Some did and some did not. Some didn't even try. However, my goal everyday was to make the students learn the things that I had to teach them because I had a bag full of good

information for them. Some of the students came with the attitude that they didn't care what information I had; they were determined not to be impressed by me. So, I spent a lot of time building relationships with students, without knowing that was what teachers are supposed to do. It became something that I could rely on.

Because Dr. Culbreath built relationships with students, he was successful as a teacher at Henderson High School. During his first year at Henderson High School, John Culbreath also continued to increase his knowledge of teaching and learning while on the job. Culbreath's path was set and his resolve was solid. He only struggled in one area, managing professional relationships with older adults at the school. Some of the older staff members at Henderson High School initially viewed John Culbreath as naïve. As a result, older faculty often led Culbreath into publicly humbling experiences most of which involved the school's principal.

Dr. Culbreath recounted his humbling experiences as a first-year teacher, and the lessons that he learned from them:

[In 1968] I was 20 years old and full of energy. I didn't know how to say no. My principal kept giving me more and more things to do but I didn't mind because I had gotten involved. Anyway, at that time I was real arrogant. I was way too cocky. The veteran teachers knew how to handle me. Now things might have been different if there had been ten of us [young, arrogant, cocky teachers] there in my first year [laughter]. However, there was only me. One arrogant, cocky 20 year old old teacher who thought that he could change the school. They [the veteran teachers] would do things to make me humble.

For example, I would talk a lot and complain about things like standing in line behind the students in the lunchroom and they would suggest that maybe I should bring that up in a faculty meeting . . . and I would. Then I would call for all of those who felt the same way so the principal could see the ground swell of opposition. Of course, they [the veteran faculty members] wouldn't say anything [laughter]. Issue, after issue, after issue for the entire fall, the veteran faculty members would sit in the lounge and tell me somebody ought to say something. I would say, 'By God, I'm gonna say it.' They [the veteran faculty members] always left me hanging.

Dr. Culbreath, though cocky, was sincere. Unfortunately, the veteran staff's exploits in their attempts to humble Culbreath extended beyond the teacher ranks into the realm of the

administrators. The school's assistant principal set out to make John Culbreath his accomplice in sabotaging the principal's authority:

To top it off, the assistant principal didn't get along with the principal at that time. In fact, he did what he could to circumvent and sabotage the principal and would come hang out in my room. He [the assistant principal] would just walk in and start talking, even when I was teaching. Well, he was my boss so I had to humor him. Well the word got out that he was going to become principal and he was going to make me his assistant principal, imagine a first year teacher.

John Culbreath's non-relationship with the assistant principal became public knowledge, and the school principal questioned his loyalty:

Well, I didn't always have money, we only made \$5100 dollars a year and I didn't spend that wisely. Well, I always ran out of lunch money before payday and I would borrow from the principal. One day I tried to borrow fifty cents for lunch and the principal said 'You need to get it from your buddy.' I said, 'What buddy.' The principal said, 'You know the AP' [assistant principal]. Well it became clear to me that he felt that I was asking questions in meetings as part of the AP's one-man sabotage. I said, 'No sir you have got me wrong.' Anyway, we [the principal and I] had a talk.

John Culbreath only needed a more purposeful channel in which to project his energy.

Fortunately, the principal at Henderson High School saw the situation the same way and because of Culbreath's undying enthusiasm and genuine love of his profession, he was given a platform from which his leadership ability could emerge.

John Culbreath took advantage of his new platform and implemented a more efficient school-wide grade reporting system:

[During the first year of teaching], I had a plan for reporting grades. Up until my arrival, every student had a sheet in the stack of master grade sheets. In order to give grades you had to put them by each student's name on the sheet and pass it around the entire school. Well the master sheet came back around for you to put them on the students' report cards. Well guess who got the sheet the night before report cards were due. The 20 year-old loud mouth that knows so much. 'Let's see if he can get his cards done?'

Well, I would stay up most of the night looking through that cumbersome list and I couldn't enjoy refreshments because I didn't want to get the master list dirty. So I went privately to the principal and told him that I had a better way to do grade reports. Well he was still mad from all my questions in the faculty meetings. He said 'What do you mean,

nobody else complains about them.’ I said, ‘Yes they do but nobody complains to you.’ Well I explained my plan to him. It cut out a lot of the red tape in the grading process by allowing homeroom teachers to maintain master lists for all the grades of students in their classes. I explained how my plan could work long term. The principal said that he would consider the plan.

The next day at school, John Culbreath was relieved of his regular classroom duties and allowed to use class time to orient teachers to the new grade-reporting plan. The teachers made his job difficult, and he explained:

The first teacher that I came to was extracting a very long square root from a very large problem. Well she continued to work on the problem as I stood in the doorway. When she finished, she acknowledged my presence. I told her that we had a new plan for grade reporting. She expressed to me that she thought the present system was fine and that if everyone did what they were supposed to do on time ‘there would be no problems!’ Well anyway, I told her that the principal said that this was to take place. Anyway, it was hard. There were thirty-five teachers and they all gave me the same response. I think that they were sending word ahead that I was coming. Of course, the plan was to wear me out! Evidently, everyone had been prepped. When I got back to the principal, he had been wanting to see some humility from me. I was very humble and beat down at that time. He enjoyed that. However, I had done what he told me to do.

Dr. Culbreath eventually got everyone to buy into his grade reporting system, and the new system, paid dividends in time and improved relationships. The teachers got their grades done in half the time that it took them under the old grade reporting system and John Culbreath was recognized and thanked accordingly.

Because of the success of his grade reporting system, John Culbreath was able to effect a change in the climate at Henderson High School which translated into faculty and staff at the school changing their opinions about him. Culbreath elaborated:

After that [the implementation of the new grade reporting system] people began to see me in a different light. ‘The boy is too brash, too outspoken, and not as smart as he thinks but he can do some things.’ Well, I mellowed off a little bit and the next year I was more able to work with and through teachers. They saw me not as a threat and not as a smart mouth but just someone who needed a little seasoning. They seasoned me too. So, when I became assistant principal some of those same teachers were on the faculty. I learned that often you had to go to leaders within the faculty before implementing new plans because

some teachers had the power to kill any idea that they didn't like or support it. So, during that time I learned about interacting with faculty as an administrator.

Dr. Culbreath's eye for efficiency helped relieve some of the stresses of a burdensome task that had "dogged teachers" at Henderson High School for years. Also because of his keen work and the benefit that his grade-reporting system produced for teachers, Culbreath saw improvement in his relationships with faculty and staff at Henderson High School, as their perceptions of him changed.

John Culbreath had a range of experiences in his two years at Henderson High School. He was able to transition from an cocky, novice first-year teacher into a more seasoned and professional educator. During the process of maturation, John Culbreath remained dedicated to education and continued to develop his leadership skills.

The Legal Remedies Have Been Exhausted

In 1970, John Culbreath began teaching in a desegregated setting at Randolph County High School. School desegregation in Randolph County during 1970 was an unsettling process and divisive issues, controversial administrative moves, psychological barriers, and misperceptions marked the transition. John Culbreath's experience with desegregation in Randolph County began with the district's reassignment of teachers and his being sent to Randolph County High School as a French and English teacher.

Before beginning his tenure at Randolph County High School, John Culbreath witnessed two orientations by school district administrators, the principal and the superintendent of the Randolph County School System, that could have discouraged him and possibly set him on a different career path. In the literature during school desegregation in Georgia, a study on school desegregation directed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development at the University of Georgia by Johnson & Hall (1968) acknowledged problems with most Georgia

superintendents' perceptions of African American teachers and staff assignments during integration. The Georgia ASCD study sought to identify problems occasioned by the desegregation of schools in Georgia and ways to solve them. As such, the 1968 Georgia ASCD study affirmed the need for cooperation among faculty and staff of both races.

On the problem of Georgia superintendents' perceptions of African American teachers, the 1968 Georgia ASCD study revealed:

A dimension of the problem in the assignment of teachers to a school of the opposite race is a lack of confidence in the ability of Negro teachers. While superintendents are quick to acknowledge that they have superior teachers among their Negro faculty, they are considered rare. (Johnson & Hall, 1968, p. 18)

In offering a solution to the problem of school integration, the 1968 Georgia ASCD study revealed that:

To be effective, school desegregation requires understanding and cooperation among faculty members and students of both races. The role of the principal requires that he not only foster these conditions within his school but also communicate the fact of their existence to the community. (Johnson & Hall, 1968, p. 19).

John Culbreath's first orientation to school desegregation was given by the African American principal at Henderson High School, James Smith. Culbreath recalled that Mr. Smith used desegregation as a threat against his teachers and related:

The principal who was African American used desegregation as a threat to tell all of us to retire, because I guess that in his eyes our skills were not good enough to pass muster in the newly desegregated school system. I thought 'He shouldn't be saying this.' He was a good man. I guess that out of desperation he wanted to motivate us, I guess. It made me angry though. He hadn't seen the teachers at the other school teach. Yet, he automatically assumed that they were better than I was because they were White.

Reliving the emotions associated with his principal's comments prior to school desegregation in Randolph County, Dr. Culbreath reflected further on some of the misconceptions that African Americans held and how those misconceptions adversely affected the performance of African Americans in desegregated settings. Dr. Culbreath also reflected on

how those teachers who went in with the intent of doing a good job without trying to reinvent the art of teaching or promoting other agendas were successful:

I also think that a big, big ‘tale’ that Black people told to themselves during that time [desegregation] was . . . if we can just get over there, just the aura of being on the White campus, our students will do better, our principals, our teachers, we just need to get to the promised land and that’s all we need. We don’t need to study, we don’t need to work hard and have high expectations. If we can just get there we will be smarter.

Know what, we got over there and we were no smarter than we were over at the colored school. So, it appeared to me that teachers who had high expectations, who worked hard and prepared for their students were successful. Those who did not were not successful. Students who were engaged, regardless of the color of the teacher, were more orderly than students who decided everyday what they were going to do. A lot of teachers were intimidated by students of both races. They were afraid that the students were going to get them. Also, there were many Black educators who thought that once we got to the promised land well . . . these students must know more than we know.

It seems that African Americans who got to “the promised land” and failed to work hard found themselves left behind. Dr. Culbreath’s remembrances of school desegregation in Randolph County also focused on the how the county superintendent of schools, Mr. Fred Darden, informed the African American teachers at Henderson High School that the district planned to desegregate. Culbreath recalled that the superintendent told the African American teachers that “all legal remedies had been exhausted and that there would be some drastic changes next year [1970].” Essentially, African Americans were only being allowed to come to Randolph County High School because the school district had no further method to delay the action. Dr. Culbreath remembered thinking “Why are we starting off like this? This would have been better if he had waited until we got over there. Why did he have to come here to tell us this?”

While the superintendent of Randolph County and the principal at Henderson High School did not use the most effective approach in implementing school desegregation, John Culbreath and some other educators at Randolph County High School did not forget about the

issues that could have hindered the process. Culbreath reported that he and others focused on serving all students at the school:

Myself and teachers like myself, we just taught once we got to the integrated school. We felt that these students, White and Black, need us to be effective educators now more than ever. So we taught and we kept order. People would say, 'How did you get Paul to behave?' Well, I would just tell them [the students] what it would be like in my room.

John Culbreath held the same expectations for students at Randolph County High School that he held for students at Henderson High School. Culbreath's classroom management methods were based on one premise, "we are here to learn." Any student that did not agree with Culbreath's approach soon found him or herself in trouble:

You see, I could predict the future. I could tell my students what it would be like in my classroom before we got there. So, those who tried to keep my prediction from coming true, they got in trouble. I would say I can see us writing essays. I can see us writing term papers. I can see us doing grammar exercises. I can see us reading books. I see us doing a lot of learning. I could predict the future for my students and make them make my predictions come true.

Dr. Culbreath readily acknowledged the work of his colleagues, especially the efforts of a select group of European American teachers, as being key in making the process of desegregation at Randolph County High School a smooth process. Culbreath stated:

Fortunately, there were White teachers who didn't buy into the segregationist philosophy. They wanted help with that load of kids who didn't always want to learn. They wanted help with those children that they didn't always understand. They wanted to genuinely motivate and teach those children. So, African American and White teachers who saw education as the purpose of schools, and not hatred, worked together. We counseled together on how best to work with all students. Some of the children needed more attention. Some needed patience. Some needed a phone call home. Some needed to have an official letter arrive at home. Whatever it took, that's what we did.

We [African and European American teachers] were able to work together and help each other have school. So, that cadre of teachers overcame a lot of the obstacles that were placed deliberately in our way to make us fail or even turn against each other. So, many teachers of both races had that mindset that we aren't going to throw anything out. Nothing is going to change. Things can work for students, if we pull together and make it so. Now this isn't to say that we had a 100% success rate. Some didn't succeed because they wanted to reinvent teaching because we had a new mix of students.

Desegregation at Randolph County High School was successful because educators at the school decided to make it so. However, the transition to desegregated schools was not without some minor problems. Randolph County High School discontinued many of its extracurricular activities during school desegregation and students became anxious. Without extracurricular activities, many students at the school struggled with emotions they had no place to release.

Dr. Culbreath also indicated that during desegregation, Randolph County High School spent too much time in “transition.” The feeling that desegregation was “too new” stymied progress at the school. The result was a conglomeration of modular schedules and decreased student activities which adversely affected morale in the school. Reflecting on the circumstances created by the absence of extracurricular activities after initial school desegregation efforts, Culbreath stated:

That part [not having extracurricular activities] of the transition was a disaster. However, responsible White citizens in the community convinced the school board to restore those activities and pay off debts for the athletic programs. Those folks got us back into football and band and chorus and plays and all of that. So, the more we moved back to normalcy and normal school the better our students behaved and the better they performed academically.

In what may have not been a normal expectation in a desegregated school setting in 1970, John Culbreath was selected as Randolph County High School’s Star Teacher. However, hidden dissention among some faculty who were not a part of the group of teachers who facilitated the desegregation process influenced the actions of the principal in attempting to lessen the dignity of the award. The principal did not notify John Culbreath that he received the award and presented it to him the day after the awards banquet without having filled in the name on the award certificate.

Dr. Culbreath recounted the emotions that he experienced when he unceremoniously received the Randolph County High School star teacher award:

That really crushed me [the way in which the star teacher award was presented]. It was such an honor and it was made so little of. Well, I took a marker and wrote my name on the certificate because I had earned the honor by virtue of being selected by the student. In analyzing my selection by the student I guess that it wasn't very popular among the other staff members. There were many other teachers that had taught him longer. He could have selected any one of those long haired guys from the 70s but he didn't, he chose me. I'm honored, even to this day that he did.

Dr. Culbreath's tenure at Randolph County High School was a successful one. He along with a cadre of caring teachers, Black and White, at the school helped to facilitate the desegregation process. Also, Culbreath's work at Randolph County High School and the connections that he made with other professionals while working there led him into his first administrative post as an assistant principal in the county.

The Assistant Principalship

As an African American in a desegregated setting, John Culbreath's assistant principalship appointment occurred at a time when the social milieu of the school district in which he worked along with his competence and skill as an educator made the appointment possible. John Culbreath's experiences as an assistant principal covered a period of eight years and included appointments at two schools, Randolph County Elementary School (1972-1976), and Monroe Area High School (1978-1982). In both assistant principal positions, Culbreath grew significantly as an educator and administrator as he faced crucial events and made potentially life altering decisions.

At Randolph County Elementary School, through a battlefield promotion, John Culbreath because of an "accident" learned how to be an administrator. At Monroe Area High School, John Culbreath learned the value of having proper relationships in place in the school as his remembrances focused on civil rights protests and the school and a crisis involving a student with a loaded gun.

A Battlefield Promotion

In 1972, John Culbreath began his four-year tenure as assistant principal of Randolph County Elementary School in Cuthbert, Georgia. As a desegregated school, Randolph County Elementary School served European and African American students and employed African and European American faculty and staff. Influencing national school desegregation efforts during the early 1970s was the *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* case (Gaillard, 1988; *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.a; *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b.).

The *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* case originated with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg (North Carolina) board of education's 1965 school desegregation plan (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.a; *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b.). Although the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system adopted a school desegregation plan that was legally acceptable in 1965, the school district made very little effort to implement the plan over a four-year span (Gaillard, 1988). In 1969, 14,000 of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's 24,000 African American students attended schools that were at least 99% African American in student population (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b). Focused on the establishment of a unitary system consistent with the parameters of the *Green v. County Board* case (see Chapter 2), litigation in the *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* case began in 1968 (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b.).

On February 5, 1970, the fourth circuit federal district court adopted a plan to desegregate Charlotte-Mecklenburg's school system (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b). The remedy adopted by the fourth circuit court included separate plans for the

desegregation of Charlotte-Mecklenburg's elementary and secondary schools. The remedy, adopted by the court, recognized the needs of school districts to (a) purposefully affect faculty, staff, transportation, and extracurricular activities, (b) provide majority to minority student school transfer provisions, and (c) reconfigure school attendance zones, all in efforts to establish unitary school districts (Gaillard, 1988). The extent to which the previous measures were used as starting points in the desegregation process were governed by a given school district's needs.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg school desegregation plans, adopted on February 5, 1970, did not go unchallenged. On March 5, 1970 the federal appeals court for the fourth circuit partially stayed the federal district court action adopted on February 5, 1970 (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b). The stay was initiated based on concerns surrounding Charlotte-Mecklenburg's plan for desegregation of its elementary schools. However, by August 7, 1970, the fourth circuit district court had again reviewed its original plan and two new submissions by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg board were reviewed (*Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b). On August 7, 1970, the fourth circuit federal district court ordered that the original plan for elementary school desegregation adopted on February 5, 1970 remain in place.

By 1971, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school desegregation case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court on appeal. The Supreme Court recognized that the Charlotte-Mecklenburg case dealt with constitutional principles and that in 1969 the Charlotte-Mecklenburg school system had failed to achieve unitary status within its schools. Based on the previous events, the spirit of *Brown v. Board*, and the guidelines set forth in *Green v. County Board*, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the August 7, 1970 actions of the fourth circuit federal district court in the *Swann v.*

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education case (Gaillard, 1988; *Swan v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, n.d.b).

For John Culbreath, the early 1970s were a time of change as he transitioned from a school that desegregated in 1970 to his first assistant principalship in 1972. Culbreath's assistant principalship appointment at Randolph County Elementary School occurred when the assistant principal at the school, Mr. Jay Wansley, was promoted to the principalship at Randolph County High School. Dr. Culbreath termed the process through which he received his promotion into school administration "a battlefield promotion." The "battlefield" promotion that allowed John Culbreath to enter school administration was the result of the combined effects of three processes.

First, John Culbreath was qualified to serve as an assistant principal because of his experience and skill as an educator. Culbreath's experience as an educator and his four years of work in the field gave him a competitive edge in terms of contest mobility. Contest mobility, as conceived under Tallerico's (2000) "chair" paradigm, determined that a candidate must serve a certain length of time (five years maximum for a classroom teacher) before ascending to the next higher position in the administrative hierarchy.

Second, and perhaps more importantly, was John Culbreath's friendship with the outgoing assistant principal at Randolph County Elementary School. Dr. Culbreath reflected on his relationship with Jay Wansley, the outgoing assistant principal, at Randolph County Elementary School, and he shared:

The outgoing assistant principal [an African American] at the elementary school [in Randolph County] was my fishing buddy. [The outgoing assistant principal in Randolph County] was there when I got there. He came with the school. Before integration he was there as a science teacher. He had also served as an assistant principal in the segregated school. I got to know him. He took me in. We played cards etc. He talked to me. He was a good older mentor, a wise individual who was a renaissance man. He held several

degrees: science, agriculture, administration, counseling. Our relationship continued and blossomed.

Research by Ellerbe (2002), Moffett, (1981), Moody (1983), and Rose (1969) have all indicated that exposure to mentors and access to sponsors in the field have significant impact on the development of African American school administrators as they advance through the administrative ranks and ascend to the superintendency. Jay Wansley served as both a mentor and sponsor for John Culbreath in Randolph County.

The third process that affected John Culbreath's appointment was the district's administrator assignment rationale. In general, the Randolph County School System attempted to maintain racial balance among its school administrators during the 1970s. Dr. Culbreath described the Randolph County School System administrator assignment rationale like this:

The district tried to maintain racial balance between the administrators in schools. Generally, if the principal was Black the assistant would be White. If the principal was White the assistant principal would be Black.

Dr. Culbreath further revealed that because the district decided that the new principal at Randolph County High School (1972) would have a European American assistant, he and a primary supervisor, who was European American, were assigned to Randolph County Elementary School.

Reflecting on his job duties and the challenges that he faced, Dr. Culbreath revealed that "discipline, building, and grounds, lunchroom, school buses, night duty, custodians, and parental complaints" were his major responsibilities. Dr. Culbreath also cited crisis management as a major job task. In fact, it was through crisis management that John Culbreath grew as an administrator and began to develop the intuition and team building skills that veteran school administrators possess.

Culbreath explained:

I was thrust in the middle of crisis management. After I gained some experience I learned that it didn't have to be that way. You don't always have to react to the latest crisis.

There are ways that you [an administrator] can be proactive and anticipate things that might happen that you do not want to happen. You can then do things to prevent those things from happening. I developed a very, very good intuition that allowed me to discern good and bad situations, people and things.

I was able to sense who was working and who was not. I was able to determine what was working and what was not. I began to trust my instincts and trust my intuition. I began to trust the intuition of others. I began to seek the advice of others because I was overwhelmed. I guess that I didn't have to be broken from any of the traditional dictatorial administrative styles because the circumstances in which I was placed forced me to automatically have to rely on other people.

Also, as an African American assistant principal in the 1970s, John Culbreath faced a stereotype that cast African Americans as only being competent managers of non-instructional matters.

Culbreath stated, "The thing that would have marked me for my career would have been discipline, building and grounds, lunchrooms, and irate parents had it not been for an accident."

The accident that Dr. Culbreath referred to was Randolph County School System not assigning a principal to Randolph County Elementary School in 1972. The Randolph County School Systems' oversight allowed John Culbreath to break the stereotype of the 1970s African American administrator and gave him the skills that allowed him to vertically advance to subsequent positions in school administration.

Reflecting further on the challenges the he and other African Americans faced as school administrators during the 1970s, Dr. Culbreath focused on the skills that African American administrators had not been able to display because of a lack of opportunities and feelings that pervaded many communities in relation to the ability of African Americans to manage a desegregated school's faculty and staff. Culbreath revealed:

Unfortunately [in 1972], the assumption was that African Americans could only deal with non- instructional things. When it came to curriculum and instruction, teacher evaluation, and budgeting, it seemed that African Americans were thought not to have measured up, usually without having been given a chance to measure up. The irony, was at that time African Americans had very little experience with physical plant and technological operations. In fact, we [African Americans] knew much more about curriculum and instruction than building and grounds. However, it seems that our initial experiences in mainstream settings were limited to supervising non-instructional things.

Looking back, a large part of what I believe was faced by African Americans was due to feelings . . . by many that African Americans, perhaps, were unable to properly supervise an integrated staff. African Americans, working on the instructional side of supervision, simply was not acceptable at that time. So, in many ways the agency that was promoted in the African American community by school desegregation was marginalized by many of the practices that were maintained in schools.

A 1968 study published by the Georgia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and School Desegregation Educational Center revealed data similar to the views expressed by Dr. Culbreath. The study stated that “many superintendents lack confidence in their Negro principals” (Johnson & Hall, 1968, p.18). The 1968 Georgia ASCD study noted that the problem of integrating school staffs had never before been faced.

Reflecting on the accident that changed the course of his career, Dr. Culbreath revealed that for three months he and the primary supervisor at Randolph County Elementary School, Mrs. Elizabeth Wiggins, who was European American, were the administrators at the school. While Randolph County Elementary School did not have an official principal during the first three months of the 1972 school year, the campus was in “expert hands” as both Culbreath and Wiggins were skilled educators.

After the Randolph County School System hired a principal for the elementary school, John Culbreath and Elizabeth Wiggins continued to manage the school. Because he remained in a position of meaningful responsibility, John Culbreath’s experience and range of administrative

skills continued to grow. Reflecting on his tenure at RCES after the school's principal was appointed and the responsibilities that continued to maintain, Dr. Culbreath shared:

When the principal, finally, was hired he was in the last two or three years of his career so he was not about to start new initiatives. Also, he [the new principal] had come in from another state. So he let us [the primary supervisor and myself] continue. So by default, I had to do curriculum and instruction, and some project writing. I also evaluated teachers and did budgeting.

So through trial and error and help from others, including the man who had been the primary supervisor before the arrival of the principal, I got very good at those things, especially grant writing. I was able to bring in funds to hire paraprofessionals and to improve the technology present in our building at that time. So, no longer could anyone say that I knew nothing about curriculum and instruction. Other African Americans fell into the experience the same way. So, I was able to break the mold of the Black principal who only knew building and grounds.

The assistant principalship at Randolph County Elementary School also required John Culbreath to increase his administrative and academic credentials. As a result, John Culbreath enrolled in a Master's Degree program at Georgia State University, Ft. Benning.

Randolph County Elementary School was a proving ground for John Culbreath. Because the school had no principal when he was appointed as its assistant principal, Culbreath and Elizabeth Wiggins had to share the school's administrative duties. The shared responsibility for the school was important for two reasons. First, neither administrator had the luxury of having a "boss" on site, which allowed them both to learn school administration through experience in a relatively low-pressure environment. Also, because there was no principal at the school, Culbreath and Elizabeth Wiggins were able to carry out administrative duties and learn various administrative tasks in an environment that allowed them to act as a principal would in his or her daily tasks.

You Want to Strike Back

In 1978, after working for two years as a full-time doctoral student and graduate assistant at the University of Georgia, John Culbreath became assistant principal of Monroe Area High School (MAHS), located in Monroe, Georgia. John Culbreath sought the assistant principalship in Monroe because of the knowledge that he gained concerning the African American community's desire to have African American school administrators. However, John Culbreath found that once he was appointed as assistant principal at MAHS, the African American community began to challenge him.

The challenges against John Culbreath by the African American community in Monroe, Georgia required him to exhibit a mature professionalism that allowed him to continue to perform his job duties while acknowledging the political position of some members of the African American community in Monroe. Mr. Joe Bradley, superintendent of WCPS, hired John Culbreath as the assistant principal at MAHS after Culbreath presented himself to Bradley as a qualified candidate.

Dr. Culbreath reflected on his first meeting with Mr. Bradley, and he related:

His [the superintendent's] first comment to me was 'Come on in John, we need some good minorities.' After a 15 or 20 minute talk about my philosophy of education and ideas that I had for discipline, he stopped me and asked how tall I was. That kind of took me by surprise. If you have your idea of the ideal teacher or assistant principal you ought to know it when you see it [laughter]? You shouldn't have to ask how tall a person is, how much they weigh or anything of that order. So, I was kind of unsettled about the question of how tall I was.

John Culbreath's height did not matter. Joe Bradley unofficially hired John Culbreath for the assistant principalship at Monroe Area High School during their first meeting. After securing the superintendent's support, John Culbreath was officially recommended and introduced to the Walton County School Board.

Dr. Culbreath's introduction to the board was significant not only because it was the first meeting between John Culbreath and the Walton County School Board but also because the superintendent, who perhaps was being influenced to make another choice for the assistant principalship at the Monroe Area High School, consciously asked the board to "look at" John Culbreath. Dr. Culbreath shared his remembrances of his introduction to the Walton County School Board:

During my introduction to the school board, a few days later, the superintendent said a very sincere thing. You also have to remember where he was [in time] since 1978 and having progressed since 1970 and the massive desegregation of schools just like I had in a different setting [to understand what was said].

He [the superintendent] said to the board members I just wanted John to come and I wanted yall to look at him. I know what he meant. He meant that I want you [the school board] to hear him talk. I want you to see that he [John] doesn't have any outlandish hairstyle or any braids. He doesn't have any outlandish clothing. He [John] is a good man. Well, he [the superintendent] was able to very proudly present me to the school board.

During Dr. Culbreath's assistant principalship at Monroe Area High School (MAHS), racially motivated innuendo surrounded a coaching appointment at the school in that an African American candidate who supposedly had been promised the high school's head coaching position was passed over in favor of a European American candidate. The MAHS school community was "split" over the issue, and African American students boycotted the school and its athletic programs. Culbreath related:

Once the White coach was hired he brought on two White assistants. The Black assistant decided that he would pursue the job legally and remove himself from the coaching staff because he saw the conflict of being on the staff and suing the school system for the head coaching job. He [the African American assistant coach who resigned] and I had many conversations. It was a difficult time in our program. So, I talked to him and tried to give him the benefit of my best judgment.

The controversy that began with the football program at MAHS affected the entire school community. Civil rights activists began to protest at MAHS football games. The community

drew media attention and tensions heightened. Dr. Culbreath shared his remembrances of the beginning of MAHS' 1978 football season:

At football games [at the high school in 1978] there were four Black players and six or seven Black people in the stands and one Black cheerleader. So, the backlash was that many more Whites bought season tickets than ever before. I tried my best to explain to the community where I lived, the Black community, and the church where I worshiped that as long as I was employed by the school system, it was my job to make sure that school was held and in an orderly manner and to remove anyone who interfered with that, students or citizens.

That didn't set well with a lot of people with whom I grew up. I was supposed to be marching around the field with a sign. Well, no, I don't think so. I signed a contract to be the assistant principal of the school. If I had felt an urge to do otherwise, my first move would have been to resign from the paid position. Then I could have picked up a picket sign and marched around the school.

Opening night [of the football season in 1978] was a difficult night because large groups of students had been recruited to participate in a march that circled the stadium in protest of the coach. The Atlanta T.V. stations and news media were wired about the opportunity to show the controversy in this [Monroe, Georgia] community.

The civil rights protestors did not stop with their protests at the first game of the football season. The second game of the season saw more protestors arrive under the leadership of one of Georgia's current African American legislators. The protest at the second game was intense as the protestors used megaphones to amplify their message, a part of which was aimed directly at John Culbreath who shared:

By the second game they [the protestors] turned out in force and a well known Black civil rights leader who is in the state legislature now was addressing the stadium through a megaphone, sound effects during the game. Well, my job was to take up tickets. That is what assistant principals do. So then, he [the civil rights leader] began to call my name over the bullhorn. That startled me at first because I thought that it was a PA [school public address] announcement. Well, my wife and daughter were at a game at another high school so it [the announcement] startled me. So, I turned around.

The civil rights leader began inviting me to come out and join my people; the people who had fought, bled and died for me to get that job. I was to show my gratitude by picking up a sign. Now he [the civil rights leader] had to have been egged on by people who knew me; people who I thought knew and respected me. He [the civil rights leader] pointed out that people were laughing. He said that they [people] would smile at me at the game but

laugh at me when they left. He said that I might have a high paying job and drive a fine automobile but I was just another “N” [racial slur]. He said that I was born a “N” and that when I died I would be just another “N.” Well, by that time, the crowd outside was cheering louder than the crowd inside the stadium.

The principal [of the Monroe Area High School] who happened to be White, said ‘Go down there and watch some of the game.’ I said ‘. . . no, no, no . . . You don’t understand. I have to hear this. I can’t let you tell me what they said.’ I had to hear it on my own so if I needed to at a later time, one on one or one on two, I could sit down and talk to my brothers and sisters about what they said and not worry about them debating what you said they said. So, the principal allowed me to do that.

Reflecting on his feelings about being heckled by African Americans who picketed the football games at the MAHS in 1978, Dr. Culbreath stated:

I would be lying if I said it [being heckled by the civil rights leader outside of the stadium] didn’t make me angry because he didn’t know me. He didn’t know where I had been, what I had done or what I stood for. He was simply calling me out as directed by some local folks. It [the situation at the football game] struck me as very, very shortsighted.

They [the African American community] had been clamoring to get a qualified African American administrator who could start off at a certain spot and hope to become principal and maybe superintendent someday. They [the school community in Monroe, Georgia] got that. Now they were going to make me risk losing my job by coming out and protesting while I was on duty. That was not very far sighted at all.

The civil rights protestors at the MAHS football games wanted a sign of solidarity from John Culbreath. However, John Culbreath was an employee of the Walton County School Board, and his job duties required him to uphold the school district’s policies and remain professional.

The actions of the civil rights protestors’ created tension in John Culbreath’s life.

Culbreath was conflicted not about his position on the protest issue but about his feelings over his becoming a target of the demonstrations held by the protestors. Culbreath further elaborated this thought:

You [a person in a situation like the one at the Monroe Area Comprehensive High School] want to strike back. You [a person in a situation like the one at the Monroe Area Comprehensive High School] want to say some ugly things. You want to yell and scream, but then you know someone has to take the high road. If the thing [the situation at the

school] is going to work someone is going to have to take the high road, bare some abuse, temporary abuse. I say temporary because nobody is going to stay in a situation where they are being abused for the whole year but bare some abuse for the moment and then later on build relationships with some of those same people [who may be in opposition to a particular issue].

Dr. Culbreath reiterated that relationship building was key in returning MAHS to normalcy. Part of the process of returning the school to normalcy included making sure the children knew that they would be treated fairly in school, especially after many of the boycotters returned to school. The students were not retaliated against because they chose to protest; however, it was made clear that “if they broke school rules [while in school] they would be punished.” Once the ground rules were established and the school maintained consistency in its dealings with students, “things continued to improve.”

As the administration continued to build school-wide relationships with students, Culbreath continued his efforts to build personal relationships with students. Culbreath’s efforts began with increasing his visibility at MAHS. Culbreath shared:

Also, I tried to know all the students in the school [in an effort to build relationships]. Now, obviously with 1200 or 1300 students that was impossible but I tried. The reason was if there was ever a fight [as an administrator] if you know both of the young men involved, you can say Garrick, John and usually that would be all you needed to say if students knew and respected you.

Dr. Culbreath walked the halls of MAHS and got to know students on a first name basis. Culbreath’s efforts were important as relationship and “bridge building” continued throughout the year (1978) at MAHS. As a result, the school’s climate changed. In 1978, MAHS hired an African American head basketball coach who took the team into the third round of the state playoffs. Also, during a situation when a student brought a gun into the school, the relationships that the administration had established with students helped avert a tragedy involving a student with a loaded gun, and Culbreath shared:

There was a situation that same year [1978] where a student was in the hall angry with a loaded gun. Now, what do you do to keep the young man from going into a rage and emptying the gun? The principal met him in the hall. I was right behind him, backing him up. Well the principal met him [the student with the gun] in the hall. I couldn't hear what was said. I saw the student point the gun at the principal. The principal put his hands up. However, another student came up [out of nowhere] and put his hand on the boy's shoulder and convinced him [the student with the gun] to walk away.

The student was not supposed to be on campus. The principal and I both had signed a suspension form on the student for a fight that he had been in. It appeared that he had come back to school to get revenge on the two students that he had been fighting with.

The "gun crisis" revealed that proper relationships were in place at MAHS, which was important in helping restore order in the school. Culbreath explained:

So we got order restored in the school. We had the proper relationships in place, fortunately. You hate to test them [relationships] in crisis but the purest crisis [and test] there can be is a student with a loaded gun in the school . . . Relationships got us through that year [1978]. People came to understand and respect the fact that we would try to do the right thing by everyone. The end results may not have pleased everyone all the time but we tried to be as consistent and fair as possible.

"Relationships are a part of what makes a school" and John Culbreath witnessed that fact through firsthand experiences in 1978. From the boycotts in the fall to the situation with the student with the gun later that year, relationship building was key in restoring order at MAHS. The skills that John Culbreath gained in relationship building were key in his later administrative positions in Georgia in Cuthbert, Brunswick, and Athens, Atlanta, and Albany.

Doctoral Studies

During the mid-and late-1970s, native Georgians set historic precedents. Also during this time, the nation, and perhaps the world, became more aware of the significant social progress that African Americans in the United States experienced. Three events have given credence to the two previous statements. First, Jimmy Carter, a native Georgian, and 2002 Nobel Peace Prize winner, was elected president of the United States on November 2, 1976 (Lewis, 1976; Jimmy Carter Wins, 2002; Victory Claimed, 1976; Victory Delights, 1976). Second, on January 25,

1977, former civil rights activist and then current U.S. Representative, Andrew Young, was appointed as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations (Clement, 1978; Hayslett, 1977; Young, 1994). Third, and perhaps most significant in highlighting the social progress made by African Americans in the United States, *Roots*, a television miniseries based on author Alex Haley's then best selling novel, was first shown over the course of eight days, beginning on January 23, 1977 (ABC's *Roots*, 1977; *Best Bets This Week*, 1977; *Television Highlights*, 1977).

While working as a doctoral student at UGA in the mid-1970s, the key social and political events that directly affected communities in Georgia and across the United States often were the topics of serious discussion in Culbreath's classes. Offering his opinion on these events, John Culbreath added his perspective to the milieu of ideas that informed classroom discussions at UGA.

Open Channels of Communication

Dr. Culbreath asserted that his success as a graduate student at UGA was due to his "outgoing personality and willingness to maintain open channels of communication." The ability to adjust to and communicate in any setting was a skill that John Culbreath used with ease, especially in situations where humor helped bridge gaps. Culbreath recounted one instance where his sense of humor and interpretation were important in helping him communicate with a classmate:

I went to UGA and worked full time for two years. I was one of just a few African American graduate students. However, I was well received at the school. Communication was critical. Sometimes it was just a matter of getting to know people.

For example, one man made friends with me by telling me that I shouldn't drink all the coffee that I was drinking because it would make me Black. Well, I admitted to him that I had been drinking it for years and it had no obvious effect [laughter]. Well he [the man] just exploded [laughter]. Well he told everybody down the hall, Do you know John Culbreath? Let me tell you what he told me . . . Well that gave us a basis for continuing conversation. Whenever he would see me he just burst out laughing and I would too.

Well that was an icebreaker and it cut through a communication barrier that might have been there otherwise.

John Culbreath's response to his classmate's joke helped him make a friend and also showed his mature sense of discernment in recognizing situations, their implications, and gravity. Culbreath continued:

Sometimes for registration, I would go in the coliseum and yell out Where is the Black Studies registration line at? Well, my major professor was mostly embarrassed by that because he was a rather conservative, straight-laced guy. Well anyway, I did that just to loosen up the atmosphere, everyone in there [the coliseum] was not looking for the Black Studies department.

Dr. John Culbreath's openness and his ability to see humor where it existed were two skills that allowed him to flourish as a doctoral student at UGA.

Reflective Discussion of Sociopolitical Issues

The discussions in classes at UGA covered pressing issues of the time, including the premiere of the television series *Roots* and the appointment of Andrew Young as a United Nations ambassador. John Culbreath offered views about the topics that perhaps were not widely or intimately discussed between members of African American and European American communities. Culbreath related:

It was a fun time being a graduate student, doing errands and chores. The debates with the professors. One professor and I started debating about whether *Roots* should have been produced or not. He thought that it shouldn't have because it would only enflame people and make people of both races [White and Black] angry. Well, I told him that I had seen *Birth of a Nation* and it had as its theme that there was an African American to blame for everything that was wrong in America. Well I thought that *Roots* would be a good opportunity to see a different view, equal time. After every showing [of *Roots*], we would have a debriefing.

After the last episode the professor said I've watched all the episodes. Have you? I said Yes sir, all sixteen hours. He said you know what, I agree with you that was a story that needed to be told. Well, we had a good two week running debate on the value of voice being given to marginalized populations, even when that meant revisiting times that were not very pleasant.

The discussions in John Culbreath's classes allowed students and faculty to consider new and varying views on important social events. Also, as a minority student in a majority setting, Culbreath did not assert his view on issues as the view of all African Americans, but one of many views to be contemplated. Culbreath shared:

Also [while in graduate school] people in my immediate school community tended to think that I represented the Black point-of-view on sports, politics, etc . . . If people wanted to know what Black people thought they asked me. Well the thing that I tried to express was that I thought differently from a whole lot of other African Americans. There was no Black point of view.

However, in the middle of the 1970s, I was one of few African American doctoral students at the University, and I gave intelligent responses to the questions that I was asked about Carter's election and Andrew Young's appointment as ambassador to the UN [United Nations]. However, in the end, my opinion was only my opinion. I just tried to offer what I thought were fair assessments of events and situations. All in all, it [being a doctoral student] was a great experience.

John Culbreath enjoyed his time as a student at UGA. The UGA experience also provided John Culbreath with professional contacts throughout the state and the country, many of which he currently maintains.

The Principalship and Central-Office Experiences

Dr. John Culbreath was principal of three schools during his career, Randolph-Clay High School (1979-1983), Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School (1983-1985), and North Atlanta High School (1993-1995). Culbreath also worked as a central office administrator in Glynn County, Georgia from 1985 until 1993, serving as both an assistant and associate superintendent. In each of his principalships and central-office administrative posts, Dr. Culbreath faced challenges.

As the first principal of Randolph-Clay High School, John Culbreath's mission was simple: facilitate the smooth merger of two separate county high schools into a single building. The merger of Randolph County and Clay County High Schools into Randolph-Clay High

School (RCHS) was the manifestation of a high school consolidation plan between the two school districts, enacted to lessen financial burdens in both counties.

After leaving RCHS, Dr. Culbreath assumed the principalship at Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School in Athens, Georgia. The Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School principalship required Culbreath to affect changes in the attitudes of people in the Athens, Georgia area relative to the image of the school. There were divisions among Burney-Harris-Lyons staff members and a general feeling in the Athens area that Burney-Harris-Lyons was the “worst middle school” in Athens. Dr. Culbreath used an “it can be done” attitude to change the culture at Burney-Harris-Lyons.

Transitioning out of the Burney-Harris-Lyons principalship in 1985, Dr. Culbreath’s next administrative position was in Glynn County. Culbreath worked in Glynn County for eight years. Kermit Keenum, superintendent of schools in Glynn County during 1985, recruited Dr. Culbreath to work as an assistant superintendent. Kermit Keenum mentored Dr. Culbreath and placed him in a position of recognized authority.

In 1993, Dr. Lester Butts, superintendent of the public school system in Atlanta, Georgia, recruited Dr. Culbreath to serve as the principal of North Atlanta High School in 1995. North Atlanta High School (NAHS), located in the Buckhead commercial and residential district in Atlanta is one of the flagship schools of the Atlanta Public Schools System.

Dr. Culbreath was the first African American principal at NAHS, and this appointment came as a surprise to many in the Atlanta school community. During his tenure at NAHS, Culbreath worked to build support for the school within the community and promoted a strong sense of school pride. Culbreath also guided NAHS through a move to a new building. Dr.

Culbreath served as principal of NAHS for two years, surviving a peculiar contract nonrenewal at the end of his first year.

Bringing Rival Communities Together

Dr. John Culbreath served as principal of Randolph-Clay High School for four years (1979-1983). Culbreath was recruited to serve as principal of Randolph-Clay High School (RCHS) by the Randolph County school board president, Mr. Julian Morgan.

Reflecting on his transition into the RCHS principalship, Dr. Culbreath revealed that RCHS was formed because of a merger between two county high schools, Randolph and Clay County High Schools, in southwest Georgia. As a part of the terms of the agreement in the merger, the consolidated school site was located in Randolph County. Also, the Randolph County school board served as the board of authority over RCHS with the Clay County school board acting in an advisory function.

Dr. Culbreath was selected for the RCHS principalship for two reasons. First, Dr. Culbreath was known for his skills as an administrator in building strong relationships with school communities. Second, Culbreath and school officials in the Randolph and Clay County school communities were familiar with each other because of Dr. Culbreath's work in the area during his time as a teacher and assistant principal in the Randolph County School System (1968-1976). Considering Culbreath's connections in southwest Georgia and his recruitment back to the area in 1979, his move into the RCHS principalship was a sponsored career mobility event.

Dr. Culbreath recounted his understanding of the events of the school board meeting that led to his appointment as the principal of Randolph-Clay High School like this:

Well, at a board meeting where nominations were given for a principal at the new school, the school board chairman said Call John and when he answers the phone ask him if he will come for \$24,000 dollars. Well \$24,000 dollars in 1979, I didn't have to think twice at that offer. I said . . . yeah, I will come. They asked me if I needed to talk to my wife. I said, no I don't. If she refuses to move I will come down there alone [laughter]. Seriously, though. I knew the people in both counties. I knew the expectations. I knew what they needed . . . so yes, I will come.

After accepting the RCHS principalship, John Culbreath and his family moved to Clay County, Georgia. Culbreath's move to Clay County was symbolic because Clay County was the smaller of the two counties, Randolph and Clay, and was often ridiculed by people in Randolph County because of a rivalry that existed between the two school systems. After Culbreath moved to Clay County, people in both counties focused less on the rivalry between the two school systems and paid more attention to their new principal.

Fortunately, Dr. Culbreath thrived in Clay County immediately making himself a part of the area school community. Dr. Culbreath recounted:

Well people would say Where do you live? I would say . . . out past Bermuda Church and Della Morgan's store, I was in the fourth house on the left. People would come by and see me cutting grass and playing with the dog or picking up pecans. I became someone who was not that old principal but a member of the community. People would say He happens to be the principal but he understands. He's got a garden back there. I saw him back there pulling weeds. He's a human being and not that old so and so that people said he was. So, I made it successful. I did as much as I could in four years.

Dr. John Culbreath's first job as principal of RCHS involved bringing the Randolph and Clay County school communities together. Establishing school traditions at RCHS was an integral part of the community melding process in Randolph and Clay Counties.

John Culbreath guided RCHS in its selection of a new mascot and purposely opened the school with an empty trophy case, allowing the school to establish its own legacy. Dr. Culbreath revealed:

I went to Randolph County High School to ‘put it out of existence that year’ and to put Clay County High School out of existence that year as well. Then in my second year I brought the two schools together in a new facility, paid for by the state. The school system bought the land [for the combined school], at a very good price. My job was to bring the people together in the new building and have school.

A large part of the job at the new school was building traditions. Both schools [Randolph and Clay County High Schools] had been extremely successful in basketball. Well the communities wanted me to allow them to bring the old trophies. They [the Randolph and Clay County school communities] also wanted to bring the trophies that both bands and fine arts programs had won.

Well, obviously, the trophy cases at the new school were empty. The communities wanted to fill the trophy cases with the old trophies. I said no. I decided that we would fill the new trophy cases legitimately, with honors earned at the new school by the students from both communities. Well, now its obscene the number of plaques and trophies that they have at the school now. It is just a tribute to the children; the parents, the coaches, the teachers, the play director and all the people who helped those children fill up those cases.

[Dr. Culbreath’s idea was] You don’t borrow somebody else’s tradition from the past, you establish your own. The school community thanked me for that. One parent summed it, backhandedly, ‘There is only person who could have handled this situation you had and that was John Culbreath. Nobody else could have done it that way.’

John Culbreath’s tradition and community building efforts at RCHS flourished and the school gained the support of parents, students, and teachers from both counties. Culbreath continued his community building efforts at RCHS through his approach to student relationships and instructional matters, making all students the focus of his administration. Culbreath asserted that under his leadership:

Race didn’t matter any more. It [the question] was are you from Clay County or Randolph County? So, I was able to put race on the back burner, and made the main issue in the community inclusion. I was able to make sure that both groups of students [from Randolph and Clay Counties] felt like they belonged at their high school.”

Elaborating on the methods that he used to ensure the inclusion and participation of students from Randolph and Clay Counties in as many school activities as was possible, Dr. Culbreath revealed that the faculty and staff provided transportation for students to school functions. The

transportation that the school's faculty provided allowed students, whose parents worked at jobs that had 3 o'clock and 5 o'clock shift start times, to participate in extracurricular activities at RCHS. The efforts created a sense of worth, value, and purpose in the Randolph-Clay school community. Dr. Culbreath revealed:

It was a source of pride to know that we were providing access to students who would not have had access to extracurricular activities any other way. Well, we got the children where they had to be and once they got there they performed.

After firmly establishing the role of RCHS in the area school community, Dr. Culbreath placed an emphasis on providing "first-class services" for students, and he made sure that all programs associated with the school and all representative groups from the school displayed such actions.

Dr. Culbreath used administrative micromanagement techniques to ensure that everything associated with RCHS was "first class" and he asserted:

I made sure [also] that everything in that school was classy. We did things right, for the children. The children deserved not to be ridiculed. From the graduation ceremony to the uniforms for the basketball teams, everything was classy and done right. At that time, I was not much into shared leadership. I know that sounds funny. [At the time] the task that I had in front of me was impossible. However, I was determined that I was going to succeed.

I had to micromanage the whole operation. Now despite my management style, the culture that I promoted in the school was an open and supportive one. We had to have that. The school and the community needed to feel good about themselves. I micromanaged the details but on the people side of the operation, I promoted an open culture. We supported each other in that school. When honors were earned, credit was given and the bragging began [laughter].

We found the resources to buy what was needed. I hired good people. These were the contributions that meant the most to students, setting high expectations, provision of and access to resources. We did whatever it took even if it meant leaving a basketball tournament in extreme south Georgia with the two leading actors in the play and traveling to Athens so that they [the children] could perform in a state competition the next day. Little things like that added value to that experience. We [the faculty and staff] did what was necessary to serve the students and the community.

The RCHS principalship required Dr. Culbreath to open a new school. In opening a new school, a principal has to do more than “just make sure that all the textbooks have arrived.” The principal of a new school “must attend to matters like school and community culture.” In the process of opening RCHS, Dr. Culbreath further established his reputation in Georgia as a first-rate school administrator.

The reputation that John Culbreath established as a first-rate school administrator and community relations expert created other professional opportunities for him. The first opportunity that presented itself after the RCHS principalship was the principalship at Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School in Athens, Georgia. The Burney-Harris-Lyons-Principalship required John Culbreath to use the same school-community and culture building skills that he honed as principal of RCHS.

Changing Attitudes

Dr. John Culbreath is a native of Monroe, Georgia. Monroe, located in rural northeast Georgia is about 25 miles southwest of Athens, Georgia, home of the University of Georgia. Offering John Culbreath a chance to return to Athens and to be within 25 miles of his home in Monroe, the Burney-Harris-Lyons principalship was a promising opportunity.

John Culbreath, in a contest mobility effort, applied for the position of principal at Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School. Beginning the principalship at Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School, Culbreath found a situation similar to the one he faced as the new principal of Randolph-Clay High School in 1979. Dr. Culbreath again was responsible for bringing school communities together.

In the case of the Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School principalship, Dr. Culbreath did not work across county lines to join two schools but instead worked to merge the culture within a middle school that was formed from two middle schools in the same district with completely different cultures and student clientele. Adding to the challenge of the principalship at Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School was the perception in the Athens area that the school was the “worst middle school” in the Clarke County School District. Culbreath revealed:

So, in 1983, I moved back to Athens to be middle school principal at the school that was ranked, not officially, but unofficially as the worst in the County [Clarke County]. There were three middle schools in Athens at that time: Hillsman, Clarke Middle and Burney-Harris-Lyons.

Burney Harris had been the old Black school. This was the campus on which the new school existed. Lyons was the country junior high school. It [Lyons] was combined with Burney Harris. So, you had country kids from trailer parks and country houses going to school with kids from subdivisions and all the projects in Athens. Hillsman’s constituents were professors’ children out by the university. Clarke Middle [served] old established neighborhoods [in Athens]. Old Athens sent their children to school there. It [Clarke Middle] was a middle class school. Then there was Burney-Harris-Lyons, four principals in three years. I went to Burney Harris Lyons determined that I would make a difference for the kids.

Beyond the daunting task of melding cultures, improving student performance, and changing the school’s culture, Dr. Culbreath faced another challenge as principal of Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School (BHLMS), a perception that suggested he would not be able to succeed because he was an African American male. Dr. Culbreath explained:

I think the expectations of me were rather low coming in. I think that they [some people in the Athens school community] thought that I wouldn’t tend to intellectual things. Perhaps, it was thought that I wouldn’t have the value to form the gifted and advanced classes. They, and I’m generalizing. A lot of people, generally, underestimate the intellectual ability of African American males.

If you [an African American male] are of some size, you must be a football player. If you are tall you must be a basketball player. If you are short, you must be a soccer player, a baseball player, or a track star [laughter]. It just seems that it is always something away from intellectual pursuits and academia and you have to convince them [people] that not

only do you know a thing or two but you have some ideas that can advance academia. Then you begin to gain respect.

Also, you [African American administrators] are expected to come in play cronieism with other African Americans and when you don't do that well you get one of those Arsenio Hall " hmmmmmmmmmmsssss." Well after a while you [African American principals] eventually begin to be judged by what you do and how you act.

Dr. Culbreath chose to address school culture as the first area of improvement as principal at BHLMS. In doing so, Dr. Culbreath remembered that he “made some people mad” because he knew “what a good school sounded like, smelled like, and looked like.” Further, many of the teachers at BHMLS were “set in their cliques.” Culbreath recalled, “There was a definite divide between people who worked at Lyons Middle School and those who worked at Burney Harris Middle School.”

Further reflecting on the situation surrounding teacher cliques at BHLMS, Dr. Culbreath stated:

There were people who would say that the school [Burney Harris] went bad when it merged with Lyons. Others would say it was so wonderful when we were at Lyons and from their conversation you knew that they kind of wished that they were back there. So you had to get with everyone and say “folks, we are going forward. Wherever we came from we are here. We have to teach these students the best we can.”

So, there were clicks. The Language Arts and Social Studies people resented the Math and Science people for snubbing them in faculty meetings. There were other clicks, Black, White, foreign teachers. The population of students was a mix as well. Well in trying to run the school effectively, I [we the school] didn't have time for all kinds of cliquish behavior.

Dr. Culbreath joined all the cliques at BHLMS and he systematically broke them up, forming one new click, the Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School faculty and staff. As a first move in breaking up faculty and staff cliques and in an effort to eliminate a number of discipline problems at BHLMS that occurred between 6th and 8th grade students, John Culbreath changed the room assignments of 26 teachers at BHLMS during the summer of 1983. Although his

decision met scant approval when the teachers returned to BHLMS to begin the 1983-1984 school year, Dr. Culbreath was unwavering.

Dr. Culbreath's decision to keep room assignments as he arranged them was logistically sound because it created a 6th grade wing at BHLMS, eliminating instances where 6th and 8th grade students came into close contact with one another at the school. Culbreath's plan reduced the number of discipline infractions by 8th graders who "smacked 6th graders in the mouth for getting smart with them." Although, Culbreath's plan was sound, BHLMS teachers were not pleased with the room changes. Culbreath elaborated on this displeasure:

The first day of preplanning was the test. If looks could kill, I would have been dead now for eighteen years. They [the teachers] gave me some dirty looks. So, I began the meeting with the serenity prayer. 'God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change and the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.' Well, some [teachers] had called downtown about the room situation. Well downtown let me be. The feeling was that if I cooked my own goose they would get rid of me. So the sentiment from downtown was give him a chance. We think that he may be on to something. He's got true grit, we know that.

So, I let the teachers know that the room assignments could not be changed, so accept it. If you can't accept it pray that you would have the serenity to accept it [laughter]. Well we went through the meeting [pre planning] in a tense mood. You could have cut it [the tension] with a knife.

Dr. Culbreath, a skillful motivator and caring educator, concluded the preplanning meeting with the faculty and staff at BHLMS with a poem urging them to be "relentless in their efforts to educate students and help change the schools aura." Culbreath ended the meeting by quoting Thomas, imploring his colleagues to not go gently into the goodnight but to "Rage, rage, rage, against the dying of the light" (Dylan Thomas, *Do not go gentle into that goodnight*).

Reflecting on the impact of his final comments to the BHLMS faculty and staff during preplanning for the 1983-1984 school year, Dr. Culbreath stated:

I read the whole poem to them [the teachers]. That's the way I left them. I told them. The students are coming tomorrow. You should not be gentle in how you prepare for them. Expect the most. Rage! After that I left the meeting. Well the teachers were convinced. I heard one say later He really is gonna do this. He really does mean what he says. He doesn't care what anybody says. He believes that he is right. He isn't gonna change the room assignments. He is going to turn this school around. I'm with him.

Dr. Culbreath turned BHLMS around and worked there until 1985. Providing a rationale for why he moved on to a new position in 1985, Dr. Culbreath indicated "it was time." In two years, Culbreath changed the culture at BHLMS from "one of low expectations and discord to one of achievement." Culbreath brought new faculty and staff to BHLMS. Dr. Culbreath reported "I had done all that he could do. It was time for a new challenge."

Dr. Culbreath's rationale for leaving BHLMS was the first in which he mentioned a sense of "knowing when it is time" to move on. Culbreath's ability to sense when it was time to move on would assist him during the rest of his career in Georgia's K-12 school systems. The first stop after BHLMS was the city of Brunswick, the county seat of Glynn County, Georgia. Brunswick provided Dr. Culbreath's first experience in central office administration.

Acceptance, Validation, Exclusion

Dr. Culbreath was recruited to serve as an assistant superintendent in the Glynn County School System by the district's superintendent, Kermit Keenum. Kermit Keenum was a European American superintendent who kept a short list of the top African American administrators in Georgia and actively recruited them. Working as a sponsor in the field, Kermit Keenum recruited John Culbreath to work as assistant superintendent in Glynn County School System. Dr. Culbreath recalled that the recruitment process lasted about three months before Kermit Keenum "popped the question", and he shared:

What would it take for you to leave Athens and come to Brunswick? I said, If I am going to move, I need to start thinking about it in November and then I need to talk and meet

and visit in November, and December. Then in January I will make the decision. I will definitely need time for my family to make the transition. That was how I operated.

Well the superintendent let me know that he wanted to call me in November. Well I was 25 miles away from home at the time. I was three blocks away from the University of Georgia. I loved where I was and what I was doing. So, it was not possible for me to leave, or so I told him. Well the superintendent assured me that he would call me in November. I knew him [the superintendent of the Glynn County School system] relatively well, he had been superintendent in Cobb County and had been a friend of mine for about five years.

On November 1st he [the superintendent of the Glynn County School System] called me. Well, I was enough of a psychologist to know that I was supposed to think that from May until November he [the superintendent] was thinking I'll be glad when November gets here so I can call John. Well that was just the way I felt. Also, I was gullible enough to have been totally flattered by that [the superintendent's call]. I asked him why he called me on the 1st. He said, You told me call you in November. Well, this is November 1st. This is the first chance I had to call you. I said to myself he isn't even ashamed of what he is doing [laughter].

Kermit Keenum's persistence flattered John Culbreath. After a "face to face" meeting with Kermit Keenum in Dublin, Georgia, John Culbreath accepted the position of assistant superintendent in Glynn County.

Entering the assistant superintendency in Glynn County, Dr. Culbreath was granted authority over personnel and district operations. Kermit Keenum supported Culbreath while he was assistant superintendent in the Glynn County School System and allowed him to grow into his position. Dr. Culbreath reflected on the significance of his appointment in Glynn County, how the superintendent showed great faith in him, paid him fairly, and placed him in charge of matters of significance—personnel and budgeting. Culbreath shared:

I was not in charge of toilet tissue and paper towels but in charge of budget, personnel, and all operations. This is what he [the Glynn County School System Superintendent] did. He brought me [to Glynn County] specifically to grow into that position. Also, rather than pay me peanuts and have me grow he started paying and treating me like I was already there from the very beginning. He never wavered in his support for me. Lots of people would go in after hours and manifest different issues but he stood by me.

He [the superintendent of the Glynn County School System] helped me to understand what he anticipated from my position. I was given charge of the district budget, school business, personnel, and operations in general. He allowed me to grow into my new position with his full support. A lot of candidates, Black and White, had applied for the position that I held and were working at different levels within the school district. He and I had to deal with the dynamics of that situation. We handled the situation well and were able to accomplish much within the school district.

As an assistant superintendent with decision-making power in the Glynn County School System, Dr. Culbreath implemented programs that helped improve the school district. Through a data processing director that he hired, Culbreath was able to improve the district's management of its documents and turned many manual functions into automated processes. Culbreath's recruitment of quality educators to Glynn County did not end with the data processing director as he used Glynn County's allure to attract qualified personnel "of all races and both genders" to Glynn County. Dr. Culbreath revealed:

I hired quality people and I encouraged others to hire quality people. Also, it wasn't hard to recruit in that area. We [Glynn County] had the beach, the ocean, seafood, plus it was a fantastic district.

We didn't have to take anybody who walked in. We could be selective while being sure to include minorities and women in positions of responsibility. We prided ourselves on that. We didn't break the law in our hiring practices by setting quotas. We just made a conscious effort at inclusion. Sometimes I would tell people look, until you find out if there is a qualified African American candidate we should leave the position open.

Sometimes candidates would emerge who wouldn't hurt us. Well, my idea was let's get people in the district who would help us not just someone who will not hurt us. So, the challenge was to seek to be equitable without sacrificing quality. Now, that [recruiting qualified minority candidates] can be done if it's done on purpose. However, if you don't make the conscious effort to do that, it's very easy for a school district to have an administrative staff that has very few minorities.

Glynn County School System's reputation as a first rate school district grew in education circles while Dr. Culbreath served as assistant superintendent. Dr. Culbreath challenged educators in the district to help students reach their full potential. Dr. Culbreath also helped to ensure the quality behind the district's reputation by continuing to hire quality people. Dr. Culbreath asserted:

People respected Glynn County. If you came from Glynn County to go to work somewhere else they [the employers] were excited about getting you because they knew that you had experienced certain professional development. They knew that you had lived up to certain expectations. They knew that you were of a certain quality if you had the Glynn County stamp on you.

Dr. Culbreath also revealed that the citizens of Glynn County felt “good” about the county’s school system because it turned out a steady supply of ready workers and college students who often returned to the area as trained professionals in various occupations. Further, the public’s faith and the district’s contributions to the community turned into financial blessings for the school system. Dr. Culbreath shared:

The public felt good about the school system. Every time we tried to pass a bond issue the public would go for it. Supportive things about the school system were said in the community. Our graduates went away and did well. That maintained a steady supply of new professionals who flowed back into the community. Sometimes . . . outside the community, the State Department of Education would say things like ‘John Culbreath chooses which rules he will obey.’ They were right. If something needed to be done that benefited children and there was a rule that kept it from happening, in those days I ignored the rule. Today, I get the rule changed.

Our town [Brunswick] was almost six hours away from Atlanta so it wasn’t like we could just walk over to the State Department. Now, we didn’t break the law. However, if there was a rule that worked against children learning, being safe, or productive we just ignored it. Not in the sense of being difficult. We simply ignored it and did what was best for the children. Now I get the rules changed.

So, Glynn County was like a mini paradise. It was a beautiful setting with sea breezes. The community demanded that the children be educated well. If we needed help from the community all we had to do was ask. The idea was educate the children well enough so that if they wanted to they could go to Harvard. However, if a student chose to stay closer to home and attend any university in the state that would not be a problem either. We had good sports programs. We hired good coaches. We had good music teachers and good band directors. The school district was on sound footing.

Culbreath’s success in the Glynn County School System helped him further solidify himself as a legitimate professional among the ranks of Georgia’s education elites. He shared:

Along the way, I proved myself as a legitimate person who belonged there [Glynn County]. I wasn't there because of anything that anyone gave me. People helped me though. The thinking is that if you are doing good things and have ideas people will help you. I was totally dedicated to my job.

In 1989, a turn of events occurred in the Glynn County School System as Kermit Keenum, the superintendent that recruited John Culbreath and who was also a mentor to him, returned to the Atlanta, Georgia area. Glynn County School System hired a new superintendent, Dr. Jeffrey Weaver. While Dr. Weaver was professional, Dr. Culbreath was not the assistant superintendent that he had selected. As a result, loyalty became a concern and relationships between Culbreath and other members of the Glynn County school community changed. Dr. Culbreath recounted:

The district hired a superintendent that had not selected me. He benefited a lot from my experience, my expertise. However, I wasn't the one that he wanted in that position. One day the new superintendent said to me . . . you know, I need someone who when they spoke it would have been as if I had spoken. He had in mind someone from a former working relationship because he couldn't see my loyalty to the old superintendent being transferred over to him. But I was willing to do that. He didn't understand that. You [a school district employee] can't stay with the person who has left. You have to get with the program that the current leader has.

When your mentor leaves you [an employee] have to be mature enough to transfer your loyalties to the person that takes their place, the new superintendent. You can't make assumptions that he [the new superintendent] will be just like his predecessor. He [the new superintendent] reserves the right to be his own person. So, we had a superintendent come in who hadn't chosen me to come to Glynn County . . . we [the school district faculty and staff] had to build relationships. Loyalty is not automatic, back and forth between people. However, I worked diligently at helping him [the new superintendent] become his own superintendent and not the replacement for the one who had departed.

In the midst of changing power and relationships in Glynn County, Dr. Culbreath endured a period of uncertainty as political adversaries in the district gained greater voice and control in district affairs. During the period of uncertainty, Culbreath also struggled with role ambiguity as he was unable to discern how the superintendent wished him to support his role publicly, sharing:

Sometimes the superintendent wanted me beside him as a coequal, especially in crisis. Sometimes, he wanted me to back up a little bit and sometimes he wanted me to back up a little bit more. Sometimes, he pushed me out front. So, I couldn't ever figure out exactly what kind of assistant superintendent, and later associate superintendent, that he wanted me to be.

[The situation in Glynn County had become] so much like a strait jacket. Activist board members were looking for information, not to be informed, but because someone had told them that we [the administration] were not being consistent and fair.

Dr. Culbreath also encountered obstacles in dealing with school board members during the period of uncertainty that followed the departure of Kermit Keenum. The obstacles grew out of an ongoing debate with board members about the way in which Dr. Culbreath constructed the district's financial reports. The school board demanded more detail and Dr. Culbreath was willing to comply. However, it seemed that Dr. Culbreath's efforts simply were not enough, and he explained:

I wanted to furnish that information [whatever the board was looking for] to all of the board members not just one of them. Well, it seemed that a board member had been told that some of the schools in the county were able to get resources including staff that other schools could not. So, a board member asked for a list of all the staff of every school, which was the board's right, and the salaries of each staff member.

So, [in reporting to the board members] I went a step further. I submitted an allotment sheet with the formula that showed how all of the staff were earned, school by school. I listed the names of all the people who worked in the schools and the monthly salaries. If someone worked in two schools, I showed them in both places, 50% here and 50% there. Wherever the money came from I showed it, federal grants, local money etc . . . I spelled everybody's salaries out. I presented that information to the board members.

Dr. Culbreath's new financial report was not satisfactory and the district called for a report on annual salaries, figures which could be extracted from Dr. Culbreath's second financial report. However, the school board desired to see them as separate calculations. Culbreath struggled during that time as school board pressures and the daily demands of his regular duties mounted. Culbreath reflected:

Now that was going on while I was still managing personnel, handling the budget and dealing with staff development and data processing. At that time I wanted to hear my superintendent say look, we will get somebody to multiply these numbers for you. This man has done enough. He has given you the most comprehensive data on this school system and how it is managed.

Unfortunately, Dr. Culbreath had not satisfied the desires of the Glynn County School Board and a third financial report was issued. Sensing that it was time to move on, Dr. Culbreath began the process of transitioning out of the Glynn County School System. The first step in the process was a letter that he wrote to the Glynn County School Board. Dr. Culbreath's letter indicated that "frequent requests for information that was already provided" interfered with his ability to do his job as an associate superintendent. Dr. Culbreath further implored the Board "to please discontinue" inquiry proceedings if it was convinced that he was "an honest professional and if it (the board) was convinced otherwise to please formally bring him before the board for further proceedings."

Dr. Weaver's response to Dr. Culbreath's letter was "not a happy one." Dr. Weaver and Dr. Culbreath discussed the ramifications of the letter and came to an agreement. Dr. Culbreath revealed:

When the superintendent got his copy [of the letter] he said you know that I am looking for a job somewhere else. You are going to cut off your nose to spite your face. You will not even be considered for this job [the superintendency] writing stuff like this. Well, I told him [the superintendent] that was how I felt about the situation.

Also, I wasn't sure that I wanted the job [the superintendency] if we [any potential administration] would have to continue doing what had been done over the past few months. The superintendent reiterated that my position would not help my case. Well, he and I talked the situation over and we finally agreed that I should stand firm in my final decision.

Finally, after four years under the new administration, I moved on. Things in the school district were incompatible. I moved on because we could not go any further with the arrangement in the school district at that time. That's what you [a school administrator] do. You don't stay there and clog up the man's business. You don't make his business bad; you move on.

Dr. Culbreath gained a tremendous amount of experience during his time as assistant superintendent in Glynn County. Also, Dr. Culbreath was afforded the opportunity to work under two different superintendents and school district administrations while in Glynn County. The experience of working under an administration in which he had favor and one in which, perhaps, he did not enjoy such an opportunity gave Dr. Culbreath the skills to work under pressure in any environment. Also, the assistant superintendency in Glynn County gave John Culbreath district-wide school administration experience, an added credential in his ascent to the superintendency.

The Country Boy Comes to the City

The superintendent of the Atlanta Public Schools System, Dr. Lester Butts, recruited Dr. John Culbreath to serve as principal of North Atlanta High School (NAHS) in 1993. The move to Atlanta placed Dr. Culbreath closer to his family in Monroe, Georgia, located about 50 miles north of Atlanta and allowed the entire Culbreath family to enjoy Atlanta's "electricity" as the blossoming southern metropolis filled with shops, restaurants, and professional sports teams began preparations for the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. Making his transition out of the Glynn County School System in 1993, Culbreath was intrigued with the city of Atlanta and the opportunity to serve as principal of NAHS, a combination magnet school for the performing and fine arts located in the heart of Atlanta's exclusive shopping and residential district, Buckhead.

North Atlanta High School's student clientele came from the surrounding Buckhead residential district. The school also drew many minority students from the south side of Atlanta. As a result, NAHS had a diverse mix of students in 1993 with students who spoke a variety of languages including English, Arabic, Chinese, French, and Spanish.

Dr. Culbreath offered other reasons why he elected to accept the principalship at NAHS instead of seeking other central office opportunities, citing the superintendent's sincerity, and the prestige of the position as other contributing factors:

So, it [the idea of taking on the principalship at North Atlanta high School] was intriguing. Yes, I had been a principal before and was proficient at the high school and middle school levels. So, I didn't need to be a principal. However, someone at the State Department of Education [Georgia] suggested my name [to Atlanta Public Schools System Officials]. Well the superintendent [Dr. Lester Butts] called to see if I was interested. Again, I was intrigued but this time not by the school itself but by the superintendent's sincerity and urgent need. He [the superintendent] wanted me to come [to Atlanta] that Friday and he was calling me on a Thursday morning. I told him sir, you sound like this is kind of urgent." He told me that he was going to make recommendation on Monday night to the board.

The next day Culbreath interviewed with Dr. Lester Butts and by Monday night he learned via a "live television broad cast" that he had been appointed superintendent of NAHS. Dr. Culbreath received an official call from the president of the North Atlanta High School PTA the next morning being addressed as the school's principal.

Before the start of the 1993-1994 school year, Dr. John Culbreath and 21 other new principals in the Atlanta Public Schools System were presented to the Atlanta Schools Community. Although Dr. Culbreath had interviewed with Dr. Butts and the PTA had given him an official welcome, many people in Atlanta's school community did not know who Culbreath was, and his introduction at the school board meeting produced some unexpected reactions. Dr. Culbreath recounted:

Now, at the board meeting where the new principal appointees for 1993 were introduced there was a bit of a surprise. I had served on numerous boards and been involved in many civic activities, especially in south Georgia, the Rotary Club, the United Way, Boys and Girls club. Also, my resume was extensive. I had worked as an assistant principal, principal, and assistant superintendent. However, many people in Atlanta did not have a face to attach my credentials to. Evidently, some in the school community in Atlanta had made the assumption that I was White.

Well, Dr. Butts was known for theatrics [laughter]. At the meeting he was to introduce 22 new principals to the Atlanta Public Schools community during an August pre-service meeting. As superintendents do, he [Dr. Butts] started off introducing his new principals, 21 of them, everyone except me.

Heads turned because there weren't any new White principals left. Everyone had been wondering who is the person that is going to be principal of North Atlanta High School. Everyone looked around but no announcement had been made. So, Dr. Butts said " . . . this young man has done an outstanding job as associate superintendent in Brunswick, Georgia. He is going to do a tremendous job at North Atlanta High School. I would like to introduce you to Dr. John Culbreath."

Dr. Culbreath's introduction to the Atlanta school community caused a murmur in the crowd. Culbreath recounted hearing "Who is this country boy?" The room was "alive with conversation and the meeting could not continue." Dr. Butts called for a break and after about 15 minutes, "the room retuned to normalcy." Dr. John Culbreath had been officially introduced as the new principal of North Atlanta High School.

Atlanta was preparing for the 1996 Summer Olympics in 1993. Also, by 1993, Atlanta had seen African Americans serve as mayor, Andrew Young (1981-1989) and Maynard Jackson (1973-81, 1989-1993). African Americans had also served as school district superintendent in Atlanta by 1993, Dr. Alonzo Crim (1973-1988), Dr. Jerome Harris (1988-1990), and Dr. Lester Butts (1990-1994). In 1993, Dr. Culbreath became principal of a flagship public high school in Atlanta, Georgia. Maintaining his commitment to service for all, Dr. Culbreath made instruction for all the focus of his administration. Commenting on his role as principal of NAHS, Dr. Culbreath asserted that he "refused to be the Black principal or the principal for the Blacks."

Dr. Culbreath established ground rules and put children first and the NAHS community followed his lead. Further, Dr. Culbreath recruited quality teachers to work at NAHS, and he made sure that his assistant principals were constantly in classrooms, monitoring student

progress, and assisting teachers with instructional concerns. Summarizing his vision for NAHS during his time as principal, Dr. Culbreath stated:

Those two magnificent magnets [in North Atlanta High School] were to compliment each other rather than compete with each other. We merged the programs with synergy. We believed that all children could learn. Our goal was student achievement above all else. The school faculty and staff designed our course offerings so that all of our students had the opportunity to excel. We provided guidance but we allowed our students to soar. I kept order and I was also involved in making sure that the school was deeply involved in intellectual pursuits, student visits to foreign countries, etc.

In addition to its focus on instruction, Dr. Culbreath made sure that his administration maintained community connections while working to establish new traditions in the community. By staying connected with the school community, the NAHS administration was able to “adequately gauge students’ needs and address parents’ concerns.” At the request of faculty and parents in the NAHS community, Dr. Culbreath set up a suggestion box and regularly discussed concerns with faculty in an effort to make sure that all voices within the NAHS community were “heard and valued.”

In terms of traditions, Dr. Culbreath had the good fortune to be principal at NAHS in 1994 when the school was moved to a new facility in the Buckhead area. As a part of the school renewal that occurred with the move to a new facility, NAHS selected a new mascot for the school. Dr. Culbreath recounted the process by which the new mascot was selected and how the school spirit that the new mascot generated enthusiasm and “verve in the academic program” at NAHS as well as within parent groups. Culbreath related:

We designed a school mascot, a warrior. The mascot was fierce, a large figure in armor, with a mace, a double-edged sword, and a shield, painted on the gym wall. One person designed a cartoon character, very futuristic but that wouldn’t do. The mascot needed to be tough. The mascot needed a weapon. When an opposing basketball team lined up to shoot free throws they saw that figure. So there was a deliberate presence of school pride and school spirit that transferred over into the academic arena. We started a newsletter where we bragged about students and talked about upcoming events. The parents took that and ran with it. It was good for the kids.

Also, the PTSA [Parent Teacher Student Association] had an office in the school. There were five or six mothers who volunteered in that office everyday in the school. Most traditional principals would have been intimidated by that They might hear what I'm saying when I'm going down the hall. They did. They might see how I act. They did [laughter]. It was a good thing, though.

When there were rumors that something was amiss at the school, parents and community members could call the school or the PTSA office if they liked and they [the PTSA volunteers] could say, That's not true. These people [the administration] wouldn't let that happen. If it [whatever fallacy] does happen, which it will not. We will be right on it. As a matter of fact, why don't you come out here. I will take you around the school. Don't tell me when you're coming. Just come and I will show you our school. There was pride in NAHS. We had visible support. We had financial support. We could not have made it without that support.

The community support that NAHS enjoyed was the impetus for its success. However, the support of the NAHS community could not avert a crisis in Dr. Culbreath's life that occurred in the summer of 1994. When Dr. Culbreath, along with the 21 other new principals in the Atlanta Public Schools System, temporarily experienced a "peculiar contract nonrenewal." The unexpected contract nonrenewal caused a financial crisis in the life of Dr. John Culbreath as he lost money in capital gains taxes on the house that he sold in Brunswick when he moved to Atlanta. Culbreath related:

Well, it seemed that the Atlanta [school] system wanted to make a point [about tenure] so they non-renewed all of the 22 new principals that they had gone to great lengths to hire [at the end of the first year]. They pointed out to us that the non-renewal was just temporary. Well, if you are just temporarily fired, you will not be able to put the money from the house you sold into a new house because the bank will ask you if you have a job next year and it's a public record that you had been fired.

So, all 22 new principals to the system that year [1993-1994] got non-renewed and stayed non-renewed. [This continued] while I was moving into the new building and handing first year teachers their second contracts. I didn't have one [a contract]. Many parents were up in arms to march on the board as a result of what was going on. Then on June 19 we [the 22 new principals] got our contracts. I got calls from a lot of board members to make sure that I had received it [the contract].

I thought Folks, you have missed your window of opportunity. You have caused me to have to pay capital gains tax on the little money that I made on the sale of my house [in

Brunswick]. I could have put it [the money] into a bigger house and had a little interest to offset the difference.

Well, one board member said, 'If that's the problem [money/credit] then John, tell me who your realtor is and I'll go and vouch for you.' I was disheartened. I had to refuse. I hadn't worked that hard for that long to have to have someone vouch for my credit.

Dr. Culbreath was perturbed by the losses that he incurred because of the district-wide principal's contract nonrenewal. Also, Dr. Culbreath was not the only person affected by his contract nonrenewal. The Culbreath family, Dr. Culbreath's wife and daughter, had also moved to Atlanta. Dr. Culbreath relived the experience as he revealed the human emotions that surfaced during the summer of 1994:

So, I betrayed my family by getting them to move to Atlanta. We were safe and happy in Brunswick. We had friends. We had a good life. I told them [the Culbreath family] just come for a year. For the first year I will be unprotected and after that year my job will be secure and we will go on with our lives. So, I sold my family a bill of goods but it was too late by the summer to change course. Maybe, I could have found something but I decided to stick it out because of the tremendous burden of moving into the new school, I needed to be there.

With the start of the 1994-1995 school year, NAHS welcomed 1500 new students, marking a significant increase from the previous year's enrollment. At the beginning of the 1994-1995 school year, Dr. Culbreath also discovered that the Atlanta Public Schools System central office would be taking one of his three assistant principal positions back, leaving the NAHS administrative team undermanned at a time when student enrollment was up and when the district had placed more emphasis on student safety.

Dr. Culbreath was livid about the loss of an assistant principal and a struggle with the Atlanta Public Schools System central office began, explaining:

I was told that we were given the additional assistant principals [at the old Atlanta High School facility] because we had a lot of trailers at the old site. [The idea was] since we were moving into the new facility, they [central office] would take them [the assistant principals] back. I said [to the central office supervisors who wanted to remove one of my assistant principals] I need all three of mine [assistant principals], thank you very much.

[They said] no. They named another high school that only had two [assistant principals]. I said, this is going to sound like I'm being funny. You guys say that I am facetious and making jokes all the time but why not give that school [the one that had been named] an additional assistant principal. In fact, give them four.

They told me that I could not have things that other schools did not have. I said, nor do I want it [special concessions]. But I need all three of my assistant principals. Well, I was told that I needed to write the name of the person that I wanted to move on a form and sign my name. I thought, if I don't put a name on the form you will not be able to move anyone?

Dr. Culbreath did not "sign away" his assistant principal and his stand paid off because central office officials allowed NAHS to retain all three of its assistant principals. Dr. Culbreath noted that all three "eventually became principals in Atlanta" with one of the three working in his second job as a principal of an Atlanta public school. Dr. Culbreath added that "we must have done something right" given the success of his assistant principals.

Other than the contract nonrenewal in 1994, Atlanta worked out well for Dr. Culbreath. However, Atlanta was not where John Culbreath was destined to end his career in K-12 education. Fate turned a gracious smile in Dr. Culbreath's direction, and he was able to enjoy a privilege that few African Americans in Georgia have experienced (See Appendix B). Dr. John Culbreath became a school district superintendent. Dr. Culbreath offered a nostalgic reflection on his feelings concerning the Dougherty County superintendency:

An opportunity came to be the first African American superintendent in the place where King [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.] had come and launched the civil rights movement in 1962. It was a place where other people that I had known as a college student at Albany State, received me, tolerated me and graduated me. That town, not very far from Cuthbert, where I had spent 12 very good years was wooing me and others to be superintendent.

The NAHS principalship was a perfect springboard into the Dougherty County superintendency. At NAHS, Dr. Culbreath worked as the administrative head in an environment that served a diverse student population. Further, working as a high school principal in a large

urban district proved that Dr. Culbreath could effectively manage the task of urban school district administration. The NAHS experience also allowed Dr. Culbreath to continue to develop his community building skills. The peculiar contract non-renewal in 1994 also showed that John Culbreath could maintain the school district's business even when under personal duress.

The Dougherty County Superintendency

Dougherty County's metropolitan area has a current population of more than 120,000. With its thriving business and manufacturing economy, Dougherty County has been recognized as the commerce and trade center of southwest Georgia (Albany Georgia Demographic Profile, 2003). During the 1990s, Albany-Dougherty County was home to approximately 96,111 residents (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1990). United States Census data revealed that at the beginning of the 1990s, Dougherty County's population was 50.3% African American, 48.8% European American, and .9% Hispanic.

Dr. John Culbreath was appointed superintendent of the Dougherty County Schools System in 1995. Culbreath's appointment as superintendent of Dougherty County was the first such appointment for an African American (Dougherty County Schools, n.d.).

Expressing his vision for Dougherty County's schools in 1995, Dr. Culbreath stressed the need for teamwork and innovation in instruction, as Dougherty County sought to provide students with a superior educational experience (Bondurant, 1995). Culbreath felt strongly that all children could learn if given the proper opportunities in school. Because Dr. Culbreath emphasized that all children could learn, he was able to build a broad base of support in Dougherty County. Dr. Culbreath's remembrances of his experiences as the first African American school district superintendent in Dougherty County focused on five areas: the application process, gaining support in the Dougherty County Schools System, challenges of the

Dougherty County superintendency, financial troubles in the district, and knowing when to move out of the position.

You Have to Apply

Dr. Culbreath received the superintendency in Dougherty County after a long process of applying for superintendencies and being denied. In fact, Dr. Culbreath applied for school superintendent posts in six Georgia school districts including, Atlanta Public Schools System, Bibb County, Clarke County, Newton County, Rockdale County, and Walton County before he received the appointment as superintendent of schools in Dougherty County. Reflecting on the application and interview process, Dr. Culbreath likened his experience to Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, noting that his appointment as superintendent in Dougherty County was a capstone in a long career in K-12 education and marked the end of a long and perhaps sometimes discouraging application and selection process. Culbreath recounted:

It was the best of times and it was the worst of times. It was the best of times because this [Dougherty County] was the seventh system that I had applied to as superintendent. So, I applied in seven systems [including Dougherty County] and finally got the job. The superintendency was the culmination of my career. My 47th birthday had just passed and my 27th year in the profession had passed. I had three years to go [until retirement]. I signed a three-year contract. I could finally put on my resume, superintendent without the associate or assistant title. I was in rare company just like an NFL coach. Not many African Americans become superintendent.

Dr. Culbreath survived the “best and worst of times” for an administrator seeking a superintendency through contest mobility efforts and at the end of his journey, found himself among an elite group of African Americans in Georgia, as only 41 have served as school district superintendents in Georgia since 1954 (see Appendix B). However, Dr. Culbreath gained invaluable experience during his search for a school district superintendency.

Dr. Culbreath became aware of a pipeline to the school district superintendency in Georgia which closely parallels sponsored career mobility paradigms discussed by Black and English (1986), and Ellerbee (2002). Dr. Culbreath revealed:

So in the process of becoming a superintendent, I realized that one [a candidate] must be in the pipeline in order to obtain a school district superintendency. When I say pipeline, I am describing those people whose names always get dropped by influential people whenever there is a vacancy. These people in the pipeline get on the short list before they even apply. Neither myself or my contemporary African American colleagues were in the pipeline, not blaming anyone we just were not in it.

I discovered during the experience seeking a superintendency that the way into a school district superintendency was through the application process. Even if they aren't seeking particular superintendencies, African Americans, generally, must apply in order to enter the pipeline. How could an African American blame someone for not hiring them or making them a finalist if he or she didn't apply in the first place?

Dr. Culbreath ascended to the Dougherty County superintendency through contest efforts. Dr. Culbreath's career experiences and assertiveness before ascending to a school district superintendency indicated that he possessed the self-confidence and management skills that Ellerbee (2002) cited as factors limiting African American's access to school district superintendencies. Also, Dr. Culbreath's experience in seeking a superintendency indicated that through contest efforts aspirants may be able to place their names into a pool of candidates who have the potential to ascend to school district superintendencies through sponsored career mobility events.

Dr. Culbreath's assessment of the school district superintendent selection process was unique among this study's participants and actually gave credence to a third method of superintendent selection in which school district superintendent candidates are selected by processes that blur the lines between contest and sponsored mobility. Moffett (1981) described the "pipeline" that Dr. Culbreath discussed as the career mobility "nether world." According to

Moffett, “nether world” superintendent selection processes use sponsored and contest mobility criteria in candidate selection with candidates often being unaware of how the process unfolds.

Further elaborating on the experience of becoming superintendent of schools in Dougherty County, Dr. Culbreath provided a deeper rationale for the reason that he first sought a superintendency and accepted the Dougherty County position. Dr. Culbreath noted that the superintendency in Dougherty County was a job that he thought he “needed to do.” Discussing the reason why he needed to serve as superintendent in Dougherty County, Dr. Culbreath provided insights on the perceptions of African American professionals and the positions that they hold.

If we [African Americans] don’t accept superintendencies, NFL [National Football League] quarterback assignments, or head coaching positions the assumption will be that African Americans are not good enough, are not smart enough, or neither smart or good enough to succeed in those posts. So, we [African Americans] have to accept those positions. We have to try them [the positions].

We [African Americans] have to wrestle those bears to the ground and end those myths [about the competency of African American professionals]. Then people will no longer consider Black applicants for those positions unable to perform on the job.

The superintendent interview process in Dougherty County extended through the month of March in 1995. Dr. Culbreath’s competitors for the Dougherty County superintendency were both European American, one was an assistant superintendent in a prestigious urban school district and the other was a well-known high school principal in southwest Georgia. The three finalists traveled to Albany, Georgia, Dougherty County’s county seat, for three rounds of interviews.

During the third and final round of interviews, a change was made in the interview process. The finalists were informed that they would have to travel to three school sites to present their platforms to the public. Dr. Culbreath was uncertain about the change in procedure

thinking at first that it might be some sort of impromptu debate. However, Dr. Culbreath's concerns quickly turned into steely resolve as he realized that someone would have to be the first to go through the new process. Dr. Culbreath related:

After the cut to three finalists, there is usually one more round of interviews and the selection is made. In my particular experience, there was a second cut after the cut to three finalists. Each candidate had to appear at a certain school and people would be invited to hear that person express their philosophy of education and their vision for the school system. I asked if this was a debate because I would not have participated in a three-way debate. No one else had to go through a debate process. So, I thought why now? However, I found out that it wasn't a debate but a presentation and open forum. I agreed to participate. Each candidate moved from the site they began at to the other two sites so they would have seen all three sights and people who came to all three sites would have seen them. I thought no problem.

When I got to the first site, the high school auditorium, I noticed that they officials at the site were passing out flyers. I thought I don't have one of these. I got curious and asked about it [the flyers]. I was told that each person in attendance was given a ballot that would allow the constituents to vote on each of the three finalists and somehow each of these ballots would figure in to the selection of the superintendent. While I thought that the process was interesting, it did not appeal to me. However, I participated because I felt that if I did face the challenge then it would make the process easier for African American administrators that might follow in my footsteps.

When I got before those crowds, I felt that they [the public forums] put the other candidates at a tremendous disadvantage. The requirement for presence, speaking extemporaneously, responding to questions and including a message that was intended to be conveyed were all things that I did well. I felt that it put me at an advantage over the other two candidates by competing in that forum. So, extemporaneous speaking, spontaneous responses to questions and a chance to inject vision, a message, and humor—those were my talents.

Dr. Culbreath did not falter when the rules changed. He adapted. Perhaps in 1995, Dougherty County was seeking a superintendent who could adapt to ever-changing situations and circumstances.

Also, while the superintendent selection process in Dougherty County in 1995 was not by election, the public forums gave the three candidates and the citizens in Dougherty County a chance to see and to hear from the people that they would be working. What better way to begin

in office than with the acceptance of the people in the community? Dr. John Culbreath's candidacy for the superintendency in Dougherty County was successful, and his appointment came after a 27-year career in education

Gaining Support

After his appointment as superintendent of Dougherty County, Dr. John Culbreath began assembling his administrative staff. In an unexpected move, the chairman of the Dougherty County School Board asked Dr. Culbreath to hire his closest competitor from the superintendent selection process as his top assistant. Culbreath was uncertain about hiring a former competitor, especially at the direction of the Board of Education, as he worried about communication and lines of authority. However, Dr. Culbreath embraced his former competitor and because of the way he handled the Dougherty County Board's suggestions for staff assignments, Dr. Culbreath was able to build the acceptance that he experienced in the community after his appointment as superintendent, and he explained:

I was well received by most people in the district. People of different races [Black and White] received me well. This was significant because Albany is a town where people don't mince words. I had been told more than once by some people in the White community that there were some concerns over my appointment. Now, that wasn't the case with everyone. Three ladies [who were European American] baked a cake and brought it up to Atlanta. The ladies said that they were glad that I was coming. That [the cake and the trip] symbolized something that those ladies really wanted me to know because they could have left it unsaid and undone.

The kind of town Albany is though, when someone wants you to know something, they tell you and they make it a point. So there was some opposition to my appointment at first but that soon changed. People began to say, We are glad you came. One man called around and checked all of my references from people who knew me. Based on those he gave me his seal of approval and became extremely supportive. It became so that I couldn't go anywhere without people introducing themselves and saying welcome. Now everyone, didn't have pure motives. Some people wanted you to buy a house from them. Some people wanted you to bank with them. Still, the people in the community were not obligated to be as nice as they were.

Dr. Culbreath established working relationships with local powerbrokers and other professionals and his popularity extended to the business community and into power circles in Albany. The media also gave Dr. Culbreath equal time on television to express his perspectives whenever problems occurred, and Dr. Culbreath was given audience at the meetings of almost all of Albany's civic organizations.

Dr. Culbreath was able to make himself a part of the Dougherty County school community for two reasons. First, Dr. Culbreath made professional decisions when the Dougherty County School Board made difficult requests. Because he remained professional, Dr. Culbreath was able to work with officials throughout the school district. Second, Dr. Culbreath made himself available to the public. Through media outlets, civic organizations, and his "open door policy," John Culbreath let the people "see" their superintendent.

Challenges

As superintendent in Dougherty County, Dr. Culbreath faced challenges that departed from race or gender. The first challenge that Dr. Culbreath faced was getting Dougherty County Schools System parents out of a pattern of thinking that stressed that "Old time education was good enough for me so it should be good enough for my children." Dr. Culbreath wanted to implement a higher level of preparation for the district's students, and the way was not through out-dated educational methods but through programs that used research, technology, and human caring to address the students' needs.

In separating the Dougherty County School System from some of its antiquated programs, Dr. Culbreath knew that he would have to give the district a "makeover." Dr. Culbreath described this process as such:

The school system, in a sense, said just look at me. In response I said, Just look at you; You need to fix yourself up, change your hair style and dress in clothing that becomes

you, walk with an upright posture, smile. In essence the district needed a makeover and a whole new image. After that, the system began to believe in itself. This was not just because of me. The district was performing outstanding feats in certain areas long before I arrived. However, the idea was to make excellence the expectation and not the rare exception within the school district. This was a great challenge. However, that was my mission.

Dr. Culbreath's makeover approach worked in the Dougherty County Schools System. The district was in need of a change and ready to move forward, and Dr. Culbreath implemented programs that helped the district get to where it needed to be. The first of which was a combined kindergarten and first intervention program that affected student achievement across multiple grade levels. According to Culbreath:

One change that was not my original idea but rather originated from town hall meetings and superintendent's forums, where representatives from each school site were invited was the idea for better preparation of our kindergarten and 1st grade students—as these grades formed the foundation of what would become the entirety of our students' educational experiences.

At the time many students were leaving kindergarten meeting the qualifications according to the state test; however, the teachers knew exactly which students would have trouble in the first grade. I said to them how do you know. The teachers said, We know. We have taught them all year. We know which ones met the testing requirement to be promoted but will have trouble in the 1st grade. I then set about determining what I could do to remedy the potential situation.

The combined kindergarten and first grade intervention program became a success for two reasons. First, the program targeted all the kindergarten students who were struggling in reading and their counterparts in first grade who had the same problems. Second and perhaps most important, the kindergarten and first grade reading intervention program was successful because of the monetary and human resources that were allocated to it. Dr. Culbreath enlisted the help of Proctor and Gamble, which has a plant located in Dougherty County, and with monies from the School Board, which doubled Proctor and Gamble's donation of \$200,000, Dr. Culbreath was able to pump \$600,000 into the Dougherty County kindergarten and first grade

reading intervention program. Dr. Culbreath hired a highly qualified reading specialist to work with small groups of students at each of Dougherty County's 19 elementary schools. Dr.

Culbreath shared:

Each reading teacher was to take two or three students, who tested below what our standards were, from the first grade classes and provide them with the additional help that they needed. The teachers formed a bond where they set out to rescue every first grade student that was having trouble reading. As a group of students progressed, they were placed back into the regular classroom and a new group of students received additional assistance. This was done on a rotating schedule so that each group of students would receive additional educational services at various times throughout each school week.

Whatever was needed for each child, those teachers taught children to read, who had been glossed over and moved with the herd and passed on to the next grade. Those students have become some of the highest scoring 6th graders that Dougherty County has had since the program started in 1996-1997.

Dr. Culbreath also implemented an evening high school program while he was superintendent.

The evening high school helped meet the needs of Albany area high school dropouts by allowing them to earn their General Education Diplomas at night. The education and training that the evening high school students received gave them the skills to transition into the southwest

Georgia workforce after graduation. Culbreath explained:

There were people, for whatever reason, who had dropped out of high school. We decided to find out where they left off. We decided to invite them back, at night, with the same teachers from the day time. We decided to create a rigid schedule where if they had a mind to, they could still earn their high school diploma. We served more than just our students. We served students from the surrounding counties as well. Our system became the place to go if a person was seeking to finish their high school education at night. This continued until the program ran out of funding. We had many, many success stories with that program.

So, at both ends of the spectrum we had programs that were tailored to individual needs to help make people better than they were. I think these programs are still paying off in Dougherty County.

The challenges that Dr. Culbreath faced as superintendent of Dougherty County Schools System led to the development of programs that the school district implemented to address the

needs of its constituents. Dr. Culbreath began with the school district's image and continued to implement programs based on the community's needs. By turning school system problems into solutions, John Culbreath was able to help the school community in Dougherty County improve.

Financial Troubles

In Dougherty County, Dr. Culbreath inherited a school district that “vacillated in and out of financial trouble.” By the start of Dr. Culbreath's second three-year term in Dougherty County (1998), the system was experiencing financial troubles. Attempting to “quell the storm,” the district laid off many of its paraprofessionals. Complicating the financial situation were new infrastructure demands which required the district to build several new schools to replace older facilities that were damaged because of their location in the paths of Albany water and drainage flood ways. The situation was “stressful,” but Dr. Culbreath stayed the course determined to lead the district out of its troubled times and to build new schools. Unfortunately, the school construction projects led to even greater problems, and Culbreath explained:

I felt like I needed to stay the course through that time and through the building of the new schools so I signed a second three-year contract. I probably would have gone on to a third but I'm not even sure that I could have gotten three years in a contract because the board that was sitting [in charge] had two members out of the seven of the board that hired me and heard the initial vision and watched it being nourished for its first few years.

[Also] I don't know that I would have wanted to stay because the same fortitude you have when someone is yelling bad things about you over the bullhorn at a football game, when they are yelled on the front page of the paper, totally unfounded and out of the clear blue [it has a different effect]. A board member suggested that I might have gotten kickbacks from a construction manager . . . I did not expect a board member who was on the board when I was told to “make changes that are necessary to get three schools built and open” in 1999 [to make such an accusation].

I signed off on the changes. I was the last person to sign off on the changes. I was nowhere near any money at any time but the board members had amnesia and forgot. So, I had to go back and present the board minutes where I was given permission to sign change orders. It had been implied that I had just taken it upon myself to sign these change orders and there was something mysterious about money changing hands because

things had changed. The accusation arose during the same time when we [the central office staff] were being pushed to finish the buildings. All of a sudden these accusations were made.

Despite accusations, Dr. Culbreath did have the board's permission to sign the "change orders" on the school building projects. Dr. Culbreath was given the opportunity to present his position on Fox 31 television; however, the damage to relationships among school officials in Dougherty County had been done.

The controversy that the situation created along with the tremendous financial strain that the district was under because of past debts was almost too much. Relationships among Dougherty County Schools System officials were damaged, and Dr. Culbreath was reprimanded. Dr. Culbreath shared:

So, I was reprimanded for taking action to spend money from a building fund to borrow to pay operating cost to staff that was required for school district operations. The board got more and more involved [in the daily affairs of the school district after that]. By default every decision that was made or that I recommended was suspect. Once I recommended five principals. The board voted against that package. There were just little signs that there just was not quite the same reception among board members as there once was.

The reception [by the board] was not the same. It was almost to the point where I was only being tolerated. It was almost like [the board said] you have messed up. This is a fatal error that you can never recover from. It was that kind of attitude.

After being reprimanded by the Dougherty County School Board, Dr. Culbreath's relationship with the Board changed. In an attempt to help solve the district's financial crisis, the Dougherty County School Board ordered extensive budget cuts. The budget cuts created some discord as well because some board members wanted reductions that would take the district below its basic operating costs.

Dr. Culbreath held fast during the financial crisis and led the way in making the budget cuts, and he recounted:

Yes, we needed to make some tremendous cuts. I led the way, in making those tremendous cuts, unapologetically. If it was something we [the Dougherty County Schools System] could not afford, I simply said no. I bit the bullet. I took the hard shots. I led the way.

However, some board members clamored for even more cuts. One board member came up with an arbitrary figure, 3.7 million dollars. I asked him how he got the number. The board member said that he felt that he just had to say a number. It was that kind of atmosphere. [Imagine] a major statement about an exact amount that had to be cut [from the budget] out of the blue. I finally told him [the board member who suggested the 3.7 million dollar cut] in December that we had cut as far as we could go and still have school in the county. There were certain requirements that we had that we couldn't cut. You can't set an arbitrary figure out there and expect it to be met. So, I held fast.

Dr. Culbreath was able to lead Dougherty County out of its time of financial crisis and set the district on a steady path to financial health. Also, the financial crisis in Dougherty County drained Dr. Culbreath, and he looked forward to calmer times, indicating:

We [the school district administration] made tremendous progress in clearing up the financial picture in Dougherty County, which had been cloudy for a couple of decades but only catches up with you [a school district] when the money runs out. When there is no automatic growth and the tax value has not increased. When the state passes on mandate after mandate. When the board is committed to not raising taxes then you take the money you have and spread it as far as you can. So, we had made progress with the auditors. We paid back tremendous sums of money that we borrowed against tax collections.

The tax collections came in and we paid the money back on time. So, the attitude was, I had pulled the chestnuts out of the fire. Now, I had put some of them in there because some of it [the financial problem] happened during my watch but some of it was inherited, so I felt then that I deserved some peace.

The financial crisis that occurred during the late 1990s in Dougherty County was a time of extreme tension in Dr. Culbreath's professional career. Infrastructure demands, old debts, and antiquated millege-funding rates caused the Dougherty County Schools System to nearly enter

bankruptcy. However, as superintendent, Dr. Culbreath was able to help lead the district out of troubled times, after which Dr. Culbreath began to seek “calmer times” in his professional life.

Know When to Move On

In 2001, after six years of service and an episode in which he helped pull the Dougherty County Schools System out of its financial trouble, Dr. Culbreath decided to retire. Dr. Culbreath cited the decision to retire as “a mature one that came from having the experience to know when as an administrator you have accomplished all that you can accomplish in a particular job.”

As an initial step in the process of transitioning out of Dougherty County, Dr. Culbreath informed the chair and vice-chair of the Dougherty County School Board during contract negotiations for a potential third term in office that he was ready to retire. The chair and vice chair did not respond favorably to Dr. Culbreath’s decision, and they attempted to persuade him to remain in the position for another year. Culbreath related:

They [the board] wanted me to stay a year. I said no, I didn’t want to stay a year but I told them that I would think about it. I decided that I could not stay for a year. I could do six months but not a year. So for a month, they [the chair and vice chair of the board] just let it [my offer] sit. I was sworn to secrecy and they were too. I guess that they didn’t tell other board members.

One day the board attorney came by to let me know that the chair and the vice chair had made a decision. It was going to be 12 months. It was the only choice I had, not six. I thought, to transition a new person into office it would only take six. I had recommended a person . . . Well, when the board attorney told me that I let out an explicative. I had been carrying [the weight of] the board of education on my shoulders for a long, long time and tried to make sure they were as informed as they could be.

So, I let out an explicative and told the lawyer to tell the chair and the vice chair what I thought. He [the lawyer] expressed alarm because I’m sure they [the chair and the vice chair] had said, you know how good a guy he is, he is going to do this because this is what we need. ‘Well, I said no, I’m going to retire in June; I had taken the school district as far as I could.’

Dr. Culbreath intended to retire in 2001. He had worked as an educator in the state of Georgia for more than 30 years. Dr. Culbreath had done all that he could do in Dougherty County, and he

was ready to move on to other work. The word retirement was a “soothing relief,” and Culbreath shared:

The first time I said that out of my mouth [about retirement] the weight began to lift off my shoulders. By the time I said it a third time when the board assembled [to hear Dr. Culbreath’s announcement] the weight was fully gone. The overtures, sincere and not so sincere, on the part of some board members began to flow. They [the board] wanted me to stay. It was easy to rebuff because I had paid my dues. I had put my time in. I had done two three-year terms. I had watched the school system rebound from a flood. I had rehabilitated several schools. I had improved instruction. I had done a lot in the school system.

[Also] when you have to sit in a meeting with a man who has gone public and said that you should resign. That is not easy. Two or three more probably discussed firing me in a back room but you [a school district administrator] have to weather that too. It is not easy. When you have given very confidential information to board members and then they betray that trust it is embarrassing and disheartening.

Dr. Culbreath had experienced the ups and downs of administration as a school district superintendent and though ready to retire he was not discouraged.

Dr. Culbreath discussed the signs that indicated when it is time for an administrator to move on:

You [a school district administrator] don’t wait until the next crisis. You might not be able to come up with the minutes from a meeting or someone may tell a lie or you may loose your temper and say something to a board member or some other important person that could get you fired. I had the temperament to say and do that [be flippant with a board member]. You have to know when you have done all that you can do. Leave on good terms. Know when it is time to move on.

The Dougherty County Schools System sent Dr. Culbreath out “in style with an extravagant retirement party.” The district showed much appreciation for Dr. Culbreath’s hard work and years of dedicated service, and he related:

So, at the time of my retirement, I had a great reception. They [the Dougherty County Schools System] gave me a reception and a plaque. I received gifts and money. They did a spoof on the song “Big Bad John”. I went out in style. They [the school district] took me out in style. It was a celebration. I cried a lot. It [the decision to retire] was a mature decision. [Knowing when to retire] is a decision that only mature administrators can

make. I had done all that I could do in that county, given the nature of the board, and my nature. That [the job that I had done] was all that I could do. That is when you leave.

Offering a final reflection on his career experiences, ascent to the Dougherty County School System superintendency, and hopes for the future selection of African American school district administrators, Dr. Culbreath stated:

It was pure luck, the first time in gaining access to an administrative post [laughter]. I didn't want to be an assistant principal or principal because it really didn't fit my style. [Then] I preferred to complain about them and give them the devil in the teachers lounge. I used to smoke cigarettes back then. I would go to the [teachers] lounge and smoke and talk about the principal, the assistant principal, the superintendent, the school board, the governor, the state superintendent, all [of them]. I was the last one who wanted to be included in that number called they.

So, I never wanted to become them but it happened. However, I always worked hard. Even while I was complaining [as a teacher] I taught all six classes, assisted the basketball coach after school [at Henderson High School in 1968] out on the clay court because we didn't have a gym. After it got too dark to practice [basketball] I went back up to the school and assisted the play director because I had an interest in drama. So, I helped her [the play director] out with the plays. I did it [took on extra responsibilities] because I thought that was what I was supposed to do. Whatever the principal asked me to, I did it. I worked on weekends. I helped him [the principal] out a little bit in the summer. I helped him with the attendance register, accounting, etc.

John Culbreath's ascent to the superintendency started early in his career and his potential was acknowledged by the principal at Henderson High School. John Culbreath fulfilled the prophecy and more and he has hopes that qualified individuals of all races and both genders will seek careers in educational administration. Culbreath said:

Now the way I came up [through the administrative ranks] is not the only way that selection processes should be defined. You [school district administrative teams] should identify all of the talented people who have the potential to be leaders in the entire school community. Those people should be given opportunities to demonstrate leadership. [Don't] just make them [potential leaders] principal for a day or allow them to shadow principals. Give them responsibilities over the school improvement plan. Allow them to give presentations at faculty and school district meetings. Let them help with the preparation to move into a new school, or merge two schools, or close a school. All of those things present opportunities for a person to learn [what school administration is about].

[Allow potential leaders to] help revise the curriculum, develop new ways to teach, promote effective strategies for teaching certain things. Allow potential leaders to go to off to association meetings and see how other people deal with similar challenges. Deliberately include both genders, all races, and all ethnic groups. Try to build a diverse pool of potential leaders so that when selection time comes it will not matter who does the selection there will always be an inclusive outcome represented in a well-qualified candidate who may be of either gender or any race. Then your assistant principal, instructional supervisor, principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent ranks will be filled with a diverse array of qualified people.

It [the focus on developing qualified leaders of both genders and all races] needs to be deliberate. In those days [when Dr. Culbreath ascended the administrative ladder] it [the selection of a diverse array of school administrators] wasn't always so.

Dr. Culbreath' preparation and skill as an administrator along with connections that he had throughout the state of Georgia were the tangible qualities that helped him to ascend to a school district superintendency. Dr. John Culbreath also brought unique personal characteristics to the position of superintendent which helped him successfully perform his job. He summarized:

[Finally] It did not hurt [in seeking a superintendency] that I had presence. It did not hurt that during the interview for the superintendency I pulled out a list of questions that I had. It [the interview] is a two way street. "I need to ask you folks [the interview panel] some questions." "I may not want to accept this particular position." That created some surprise on the part of some of the board members.

Today Dr. Culbreath is interim Dean of the College of Education at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia returning as a leader to the institution that gave him a leadership foundation.

CHAPTER 5

DR. EVANS HARRIS

Early Experiences

Evans Harris, a native of Taliaferro County, Georgia, was born on June 21, 1925. Evans Harris grew up during segregation. Evans Harris received his K-12 schooling during the 1930s and early 1940s at the Murden School in Taliaferro County. The Murden School was the facility established for the education of African Americans in Taliaferro County during segregation in the south.

Reflecting on his childhood and adolescence, Dr. Harris identified mentoring events in two separate arenas, Taliaferro County and Fort Valley State College (FVSC), as the educational experiences that significantly impacted his direction as a student. Dr. Harris' recollections began with a focus on his experiences as a student at the Murden School and the reinforcement that he received in his home. Harris continued his discussion of the lessons that he learned as an adolescent by focusing on his time as an undergraduate at FVSC (1943-1947). At FVSC, Evans Harris was exposed to quality faculty, staff, and students who further inspired him to excel.

Focusing on his experiences as a student at the Murden School, Dr. Harris revealed that the teachers at the school pushed the students to excel and offered them as many opportunities as was possible to broaden their knowledge of the world around them. Harris' remembrances of the educators at the Murden School and the mentoring that they provided included discussions of two outstanding educators, James Griffin and Thomas Elton.

Evans Harris' resource base extended beyond the mentoring that he received at the Murden School. Evans Harris' early educational experiences were enhanced by his home life. The model for education presented in Evans Harris' home came from stories of about aunts and uncles who attended prestigious Historically Black Colleges and Universities including Spelman and Morehouse Colleges in Atlanta, Georgia. Because of the achievements of close relatives and the potential that his parents saw in him, Evans Harris was inspired to excel in school.

Mentoring

Dr. Evans Harris was raised in humble surroundings by parents who were not well educated. In spite of their lack of formal education and the circumstances in which they lived, Evans Harris' parents encouraged him to excel. Pointing out role models for Evans Harris, his parents highlighted the achievements of aunts and uncles on his mother's side of the family. Many of Evans Harris' aunts and uncles attended prestigious Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Atlanta, Georgia. Harris' parents realized that he possessed the same potential as his aunts and uncles and implored him to make a better life for himself. The key to a better life was education. Dr. Harris indicated:

I heard my mother talk about my uncles and aunts and what they did and how they went to college. So, I just thought that college was something that was magic. I was impressed with the idea of college.

She [Dr. Harris's mother] had us [the Harris Children] wanting to do college work before we fully understood what it was you know. So we wanted to do it [excel]. So I had high expectations.

The mentoring that Evans Harris received in his home was reinforced by the culture of the Murden School. The Murden School, the school for African Americans in Taliaferro County, placed a heavy emphasis on student achievement. The teachers at the Murden School reinforced the expectations that were set in homes of students like Evans Harris and provided educational

opportunities that broadened the students' knowledge. Also, the teachers at the Murden School served as role models for students at the school, as the students got to see first-hand what Morehouse, Spelman, Morris Brown, and Clark Atlanta University graduates looked like.

Evans Harris' remembrances of teachers at the Murden School focused on two outstanding educators James Griffin, an English teacher, and Thomas Elton, the vocational and agricultural education instructor. Griffin, a Morehouse graduate, served as a strong role model for the students and openly praised and encouraged their successful efforts. Elton, a vocational agriculture (vo-ag) instructor, provided excursions for the students in his class allowing them to work on vo-ag projects while venturing beyond the borders of tiny Taliaferro County. Harris recounted:

I distinctly remember a teacher who was also the principal; he taught English. He [Mr. James Griffin] was a Morehouse graduate. He offered great praise for the accomplishments that we [the students at the Murden School] made. He told us [the Murden School students] never to stop striving towards greatness.

That [Mr. Griffin's affirmations] had an effect on me. I wanted to do more because I liked the affirmation that I received and I wanted to please [Mr. Griffin]. So, I worked hard. We [the students in the Murden School] wanted to do well.

Thomas Elton was another teacher at the Murden School. Thomas Elton was a vo-ag [vocational agriculture] teacher. He [Thomas Elton] was very down to earth and he helped us [the students at the Murden School] with projects that we carried out on the farm. He [Thomas Elton] was very approachable and he always wanted to get you [students] involved in activities. He enabled us [the students in the vo-ag class at the Murden School] to go to the bank and borrow money to grow beef calves and participate in shows around the state.

Teachers like Thomas Elton showed students at the Murden School how to properly access available resources to assist their endeavors as young farmers. Teachers like James Griffin and Thomas Elton also helped students see the possibility of life beyond Taliaferro County. Evans Harris was one student who held on to the vision of advancement instilled in him by his early

training. Harris' early training, along with his sense of adventure, helped him to leave Taliaferro County after graduation from the Murden School in the spring of 1943.

Evans Harris' first stop was not college though. Instead, after graduation, young Evans Harris, eager to earn his own money, set off for a job working in the shipyards in Virginia Beach, Virginia. While in Virginia, Harris met groups of African American students from across the southern United States. Many of the students that Harris met were graduates of large urban high schools and their knowledge and sophistication reminded Evans Harris what his real purpose at that time should have been. Harris shared:

I found that students from Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia had a great deal more exposure than we [the students at the Murden School had] because many of them came from urban areas where, perhaps, the schools were better funded.

They [the students from Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia] impressed me greatly. That made me more anxious [about going to college]. When I saw those students, I wanted my education to be the same as theirs. That was an incentive. I knew that I was going to have to put in a great deal of effort to get into a position to compete with those students that I met in Virginia. I decided to go back to school.

Although he grew up poor in a rural community in east-central Georgia, Evans Harris enjoyed an advantage during his childhood and adolescence, community mentoring. Evans Harris' parents, while not highly educated people themselves, provided him with encouragement and tangible models of what he could become if he studied and applied himself.

The lessons that Evans Harris learned at home were reinforced at the Murden School. The teachers at the Murden School pushed the students to excel and were role models themselves, as many were graduates of prestigious Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Evans Harris was inspired to excel in Taliaferro County and his first opportunity to do so occurred at FVSC in 1943.

Exposure to Quality Professors and Students

Evans Harris, one of the first African American male students from Taliaferro County to finish college in the 1940s, began his post-secondary training in 1943 at FVSC. Harris' position as one of the first African American males from Taliaferro County to finish college during the 1940s was notable because of two reasons, poverty in African American communities in Georgia and World War II.

During the early and mid-1940s, many African Americans, male or female, did not possess the financial means to obtain a college education. Poverty and the need to earn an immediate income steered many students away from post-secondary education. Also, many of the African American males at FVSC before 1943 were enrolled in the enlisted reserves. The enlisted reserves program allowed FVSC male students, who were enrolled in the program, to pursue a college education while enlisted in the military. Because of World War II, the FVSC students who were in the enlisted reserves, were called into active military duty during 1943, leaving less than 49 male students on campus during the time that Evans Harris was enrolled at the school (Fort Valley State College, 1945).

As one of the few African American male students at FVSC during the early and mid-1940s, Evans Harris was exposed to quality African American scholars. One of the most prominent scholars at FVSC during the mid-1940s was the college's president, Dr. Horace Mann Bond. Dr. Bond, the father of Julian Bond, University of Virginia Professor, former Georgia senator, and leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, was one of the foremost scholars and thinkers of the 20th Century.

Dr. Harris reflected on the good fortune that he enjoyed as a student in the academic culture of FVSC during the early and mid-1940s. Harris shared:

[At FVSC] We were fortunate. We had some highly qualified professors. For instance, Dr. Horace Mann Bond was an outstanding sociologist. He was considered by many to be a genius. He had gotten a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago at a very early age. He went on to become president of Fort Valley State and subsequently he became president of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and later he became dean of the school of education at Atlanta University. He was an outstanding educator who wrote and published his scholarship and was nationally renowned.

So through the professors at Fort Valley State [University] we [the students] got to see what scholars were. I admired the professors at Fort Valley. I wanted my disposition as a student and a scholar to reflect favorably on their teachings.

Although he was pushed to excel by his parents and teachers at the Murden School and genuinely wanted to succeed, Evans Harris faced an obstacle at FVSC. Once fully immersed in FVSC's academic culture, Evans Harris found that his K-12 training had not fully prepared him for the rigors of a college curriculum. Evans Harris knew that he wanted a college education but had underestimated the dedication that it required.

Dr. Harris noted that he "Didn't realize [initially] what it took to accomplish a first class education." Fortunately, Dr. Harris experienced an awakening at FVSC and rose to meet the schools high standard for students. Harris shared:

It was during my freshman year in college that I realized that I just hadn't worked hard enough in high school. There were students who had been to larger high schools and so forth who were very familiar with what was taking place with freshmen in college and what not. So I had to retool when I went to college [as an undergraduate] to try and catch up to some of those guys who were already prepared. So, I struggled through my freshman year. By my sophomore year, I was on the honor roll. As a result, I went on to make my way in the world.

So, I think the thing I learned is that even if you are from a rural area or a situation where your parents are not necessarily that educated you can make it if you put forth the effort and work hard enough you can accomplish things just like anybody else. So, learning that and then going from a person that was barely hanging on to an honor student and then getting out [in the world] and encouraging other people to aim high and make something

of themselves. I think that I was able to do that as a result of the things that I learned both at home and in school early in life.

Fortunately, Dr. Harris was able to “catch up” to peers at Fort Valley State and become an honor roll student. Also, and perhaps most important, having trained in an agricultural education at FVSC, Dr. Harris left the school in 1947 with a credential that allowed him to enter a professional occupation, teaching, and the confidence and competence to face obstacles in his future.

Teaching

After graduating from FVSC in June of 1947, Evans Harris thought that he would attend graduate school and major in genetics. Harris applied to several schools including the University of Wisconsin. Upon receiving a reply from the graduate school at the University of Wisconsin, Harris learned that while he was a good science student he had not taken the adequate number of prerequisite courses in statistics or biology to enter the Wisconsin graduate program in genetics.

Realizing that he had not completed the proper academic coursework to enroll in a graduate level genetics program, Evans Harris began his career as a teacher. Harris worked as a teacher of agricultural education for 16 years. Evans Harris’ transition into his position as a teacher of agricultural education was facilitated by his training in education with an emphasis in agriculture at FVSC and the end of World War II.

While the connection between Evans Harris’ degree program training at FVSC and the qualifications for the position of agricultural education teacher may seem obvious, the connection between the qualifications for a teacher of agricultural education and the end of World War II may not seem obvious. Mass agricultural education in the United States at the end of World War II occurred as a result of the after effects of the war, which created the need for development of a series of social aid programs. One of the social aid programs that emerged at

the end of World War II was the Veterans Farm Training Program. The Veterans Farm Training Program was a part of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 was also known as the G.I. Bill of Rights (Barker, 1950; Butts & Cremin, 1953; McMurrain, 1952). The G. I. Bill of Rights was offered to soldiers returning from World War II to help them reenter the workforce in the United States. Evans Harris' first job after college, a teaching position in Taliaferro County, was funded by the county's Veteran's Farm Training Program (VFTP).

The training and education of veterans after World War II was significant because many of the returning soldiers were college age (Kennett, 1987). By 1951, The Servicemen's Readjustment Act provided training for more than 8 million veterans at a cost of more than 14 billion dollars (Butts & Cremin, 1953). The VFTP was one of the most pervasive programs developed under the provisions of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (SRA) of 1944 (Barker, 1950; Butts & Cremin, 1953; McMurrain, 1952). The VFTP allowed provisions for stipends, classroom training in agricultural methods, field study, and on site assistance at each veteran/farm owner's farm. Each state regulated the operation of its VFTP.

Georgia's VFTP was approved and implemented by the Georgia State Board of Education (Baker, 1950). Established to provide training for World War II veterans who wanted to pursue farming as a vocation, the Georgia VFTP adhered to an agricultural education philosophy that stated:

The school has the responsibility for the development of individuals who can participate effectively in a democratic society. This means that one of the major objectives of the school should be that of helping individuals to develop good habits of thinking in all basic aspects of living and to promote group living on an intelligent basis of cooperation. One of the major aspects of living in the rural community is that of farm and community living. Through its programs of vocational education in agriculture the school should help farmer[s], farm boys, and other members of farm families to use intelligence in the solution of their many farm and community problems.

This means that the real economic and vocational needs of farmers and farm boys will be discovered and incorporated into instructional programs. In such programs the respective participants will be stimulated to think systematically through the problems involved, to arrive at sound plans of action which take into consideration the welfare of all other affected persons, and to develop the skills necessary for carrying out the plans. Farm families will, therefore, be helped to attain a higher standard of living. We believe that this is an essential part of a total program of education in a school serving rural-farm people. (Baker, 1950, pp. 18-19)

Georgia hired a teaching force of college-educated professionals with degrees in either agriculture or science to implement its agricultural education philosophy. Supporting Georgia's efforts to hire and train a competent VFTP teaching force, the University of Georgia offered professional inservice training for VFTP teachers beginning in the winter of 1946.

To provide assistance in as many locales as possible, Georgia's VFTP was offered in approved high schools throughout the state (Baker, 1950; McMurray, 1952). A basic instructional course in farm training required a minimum of 10 clock hours per week, divided among 2 to 4 hour class sessions, spread over a 12 month period (Baker, 1950). VFTP instruction also took place at various farm sites on request. Each VFTP instructor was allotted a maximum load of 20 students per year.

Evans Harris' first teaching job was with the VFTP in Taliaferro County. Harris taught in Taliaferro County for 2 years before moving to the Hancock County School System in 1949 where he remained for 14 years as a teacher of vocational agriculture. While working in the Hancock County School System, Harris pursued a Master's Degree at the Tuskegee Institute.

Getting Started

Fresh out of college and in his early 20s, Evans Harris was an instructor in the VFTP program in Taliaferro County. The Taliaferro County VFTP program was not at first an easy assignment for Harris, as he had to work at establishing congenial relationships with older adults and to change the local government's perception of the aims of the program.

Because money and job opportunities were in short supply in Taliaferro County during the late 1940s, many in the county saw the VFTP as an easy handout for returning veterans instead of an opportunity for them to transition back into civilian life as productive citizens.

Reflecting on the thinking that initially stymied the establishment of the VFTP in Taliaferro County, Dr. Harris noted:

The thinking [in local government in Taliaferro County] was the program gave the veterans handouts. They [local government] felt that it was too easy. The small monetary stipend that veterans received, about \$90 a month, through the program was resented by local officials and to add fuel to the fire, the veterans felt that they were entitled to the money. They [veterans in Taliaferro County] insisted on it to the point that they were able to get a program started.

After helping get Taliaferro County's VFTP program initiated, Dr. Harris was successful in his work with the veterans. However, new obstacles threatened to derail Evans Harris' efforts with the program. Some members of the Taliaferro County community were motivated by their depressed economic status and Harris' youth. Harris remembered:

That [the VFTP job] was one of the better jobs that was available during that time. It paid less than \$200 dollars a month though. The thinking here [in Taliaferro County] was this is very unusual. Here is a 21-year-old man teaching guys that were old enough to be his father [laughter].

People thought that [Dr. Harris teaching older adults] was just very exciting. Truthfully, I was a lucky person to have that job, even though I had a college degree. So, it was very difficult [to get the VFTP started in Taliaferro County]. The thinking that controlled things during that time created obstacles for those who tried to make progressive movements in the community. However, I did my best and worked with the farmers in the community. I taught classes and made site visits. We were able to help a number of the participants to become more knowledgeable about agriculture and be self-sufficient farmers.

Also, at that time [while working as a VFTP instructor in Taliaferro County] I continued to feel personally challenged in a way. Since I was young, and looked younger than I was, people thought I was still the same little boy who was there [in Taliaferro County before going to college at FVSC] just a few years ago. I struggled with that. It was a respect thing.

Respect was definitely an issue for Dr. Harris as a younger adult with a well paying position of authority in a community where many older adults, who were not involved with the program, were experiencing economic difficulties. Also, Dr. Harris noted that perhaps some of the problem was due to the fact that he was a native of Taliaferro County, stating “Perhaps if I had been from another county it may have been different.” Dr. Harris struggled with the respect issue in Taliaferro County but remained in his position with the VFTP until 1949 when he moved to Hancock County after he accepted a position as an agricultural education teacher.

Raising Expectations

In Hancock County, Evans Harris continued his career teaching agricultural education in the local segregated high school. While the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision outlawed school segregation in 1954, HCSS remained segregated during Evans Harris’ tenure in the district (1949-1963). Evans Harris became aware of the teaching position in Hancock County through friends of his that lived in the county. Hancock County, with a large population of college educated African Americans who worked in professional occupations, welcomed Evans Harris into the community. Dr. Harris noted that he was respected in the community.

Evans Harris’ position required him to teach agricultural education to male students at Hancock County Central High School. Harris did not have an easy time winning the male students over, because they were unaccustomed to academic instruction during their “social hour.” Harris recounted:

When I arrived in Hancock County, the boys [in high school] had not had a class during that period of the day [4th period]. So, the boys felt that I was intruding on their social hour [laughter]. Well, the curriculum at the school included home economics and vocational agriculture. The female students went to home economics but as I said the boys didn’t have anything to do during 4th period and they came to enjoy that. So, I had to really work to get those boys back into the swing of classroom activities.

Dr. Harris corralled the male students at Hancock Central High School and immersed them in the agricultural education curriculum. Harris, with the help of other faculty members at Hancock County Central High School, used classroom and field experiences to give students academic and practical knowledge of agricultural concepts and techniques. Harris indicated:

As a teacher of agriculture at that time, we [the faculty and staff at the high school in Hancock County] thought it [agricultural education] was a viable program in that you [a teacher] got students from rural backgrounds and you were able to teach them about crop production, raising crops, raising livestock, judging livestock, public speaking, etc. As a result, it [the agricultural education program] gave them [the students] good exposure and insights, greater exposure and insights, about rural life. And as a result, some of them were able to go on and become outstanding young farmers.

They [the students] learned to do public speaking. They learned to jury livestock, they learned! They [the students] had a whole variety of experiences that were very helpful at the time.

The students in Evans Harris' agricultural education classes excelled. Harris felt at ease in the HCSS and began to see the community as home. Harris was "accepted, appreciated, and respected" in Hancock County.

Dr. Harris' professional satisfaction produced greater success in the classroom, seen in the advances of his students as they went on to college. Dr. Harris remembered:

The community in Hancock County appreciated my work. Once I got things really rolling in the county people used to say 'Yeah he looks like a little boy but he's a man and he deserves that respect. He treats the children fairly and he's a good teacher. Treat him right.' So, I got along well in the county. As a result I was able to get many of the students to enroll in college programs after high school. Some of them went on to become doctors, professors, etc. I really enjoyed working there [Hancock County].

My students realized that it was possible for them to go to college and do advanced training and so forth just like anyone else. They realized that they could become more competitive in society than they would have by dropping out or not putting forth their best efforts. That was something I really hounded them on. Put forth your best effort. I was impressed with my students' performances and I felt that I was making a lot of progress by helping youngsters who had the capacity but who sometimes were not sufficiently motivated.

Evans Harris was well suited for his position as a teacher in the HCSS. The county was seeking a college educated agricultural education teacher when Evans Harris came to them and he worked effectively in the position. Evans Harris embraced HCSS and its students and in turn, the Hancock County Central High School community embraced him. As a result, Dr. Harris was able to easily work with the students at Hancock County High School and inspired them to excel.

Also, Evans Harris never lost his desire to advance academically and professionally while teaching at Hancock County Central High School as he worked on his Master's Degree at the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee almost every summer between 1955 and 1963.

The Desire to Advance

The lessons that Evans Harris learned during childhood in Taliaferro County and as an adolescent at FVSC remained with him throughout his adult years. As a result, Harris never lost his thirst for learning and achievement. Evans Harris' thirst for knowledge and desire for advancement led him to pursue his Master's Degree in agricultural education at the Tuskegee Institute. With the assistance of borrowed funds, Evans Harris began work on his Master's Degree in the summer of 1955.

While Evans Harris' Master's Degree program began as a solo endeavor, it soon turned into a group effort as he met friends at Tuskegee who were from Georgia. The Georgia educators at Tuskegee formed a close knit group. Harris recalled:

Well, anyway, I went to Tuskegee alone. Now, there were some people [agricultural educators] from various counties throughout Georgia that attended as well. In fact, on the whole, over the course of my time at Tuskegee there probably was at least one agricultural education teacher from each county in Georgia that attended the program.

Anyway, I made connections with some of those guys. There was a man from Watkinsville [Georgia] and a man from Wilkes County [Georgia] and there was also a group of men from Hancock County [Georgia] so we frequently pooled [study] resources and worked together during our studies at Tuskegee.

The Georgia cohort was not the only group of students with a presence at Tuskegee. Because of segregation and because of the school's excellent reputation as a training center for African American educators, Tuskegee attracted African American students from across the United States who enrolled in the school's competitive programs. Harris revealed:

We [the students at Tuskegee] didn't give a whole lot of thought to it [the school's prestige or standing] because at that time Tuskegee was serving as an educational center for African Americans across the country.

We [the program at Tuskegee] had people coming in from Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee. So there was a whole conglomerate of people coming in there. So, we didn't think a great deal about it [the prestige of the program at Tuskegee]. We felt that we were getting a pretty good education there [at Tuskegee]. So, there definitely wasn't a feeling that we were disadvantaged.

Evans Harris completed his degree program at the Tuskegee Institute in 1963. Unfortunately though, the Master's Degree that Evans Harris earned at Tuskegee did not give him the credits necessary to qualify for principalship certification in Georgia. As a result, Evans Harris immediately went back to school after he completed his degree program at Tuskegee, enrolling in a certification program at Atlanta University, earning his P-5/principals certification in a year's time.

Evans Harris' hard work put him in position to take advantage of opportunity when it presented itself in 1963 when he was offered the principalship in his hometown of Crawfordville at his alma mater, the Murden School. The Murden School principalship proved to be a pivotal position for Evans Harris, one so pivotal that it sent him on an unexpected journey that changed the course of his life.

The Principalship

The Murden School served as the public school for African Americans in Taliaferro County, Georgia before desegregation of the county's schools began in 1966. Evans Harris was

appointed principal of the Murden School in 1963. As principal of the Murden School, Evans Harris supervised the educational and community functions of the only school for African Americans in the Taliaferro County School System (TCSS) during the early 1960s.

In 1965, in the midst of tremendous controversy surrounding school desegregation in TCSS, Evans Harris was dismissed from the principalship at the Murden School. Harris' dismissal along with the dismissal of seven other African American educators at the Murden School initiated civil rights demonstrations, protests, and federal civil-court litigation that drew the attention and involvement of high-ranking officials from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). The protests, demonstrations, and federal civil-court litigation surrounding the desegregation of school and other public facilities in Taliaferro County, Georgia lasted through the summer and fall of 1965.

The 1965 civil rights demonstrations, protests, and litigation in Taliaferro County occurred within a larger framework of civil unrest that pervaded the social climate of the United States during 1965. The factors listed in table 5.1 identified the climate of civil unrest in the United States in 1965.

Table 5.1

Factors Contributing to Civil Unrest in Georgia
and the United States in 1965

Factors	Effects
Heavy involvement by the United States in the Vietnam War ^a	Protests against the involvement of America's military forces in the war added to the milieu of political demonstrations taking place in the United States. Citizens in the United States were deeply divided in their views on the war.

Table 5.1 Continued

Factors	Effect
Civil rights protests in Americus and Crawfordville Georgia gained national attention ^b	The civil rights activities in Americus and Crawfordville brought national attention to Georgia and generated debate and litigation surrounding the civil rights of African Americans in Georgia.
Many Georgia school districts delayed the desegregation of their schools ^c	Political conflict increased as desegregation efforts in Georgia intensified in response to school districts' efforts to delay school desegregation. Many Georgia school districts were in peril of losing federal funding due to their delay tactics.
Selma, Alabama ^d	Civil rights protests and intense violence in Selma, Alabama helped to expedite the enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
Los Angeles, California ^e	Following an encounter between an African American motorist, who allegedly was intoxicated, and police, a near weeklong event of massive protests, looting and burnings occurred in Los Angeles, California. The Los Angeles (Watts) riots required the deployment of 3,361 national guardsmen and resulted in 37 deaths and more than \$175,000,000 in damages. The rioting in Los Angeles was ended only after the involvement of top White House officials.

Notes: ^a Call up of 200,000; Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 1963; Keeley, 2003; Kissinger, 2003. ^b Americus Negroes, 1965; Americus Target, 1965; Murphy, 1965; Negroes Asked, 1965; Negroes in Americus, 1965; Negro New Chief, 1965; No Protest, 1965; Taliaferro Negroes, 1965; Thirty One Negroes, 1965. ^c Delay on School, 1965; Eight Hundred Plans, 1965; Fewer School Systems, 1965; Legislative Reorganization, 1965; U.S. Helps, 1965. ^d Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 1999; Daniel, 1965, Selma Police, 1965. ^e Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 1999; Riots in Los Angeles, 1965.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was one of the most significant actions taken by the federal government in reaction to civil unrest in the country during the mid-1960s. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 existed as an effort to strengthen the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The United States Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law on August 6, 1965 (Ball, Krane, & Lauth, 1982).

Directly expressing his view on the need for the Voting Rights Act of 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson stated:

Every device of which human ingenuity is capable has been used to deny the Black citizen his right to vote. It is wrong—deadly wrong—to deny any of your fellow Americans the right to vote in this country . . . The Black American's actions and protests, his courage to risk safety and even to risk his life, have awakened the conscience of this nation. [There must be] no delay, no hesitation, no compromise with our purpose. (Ball, Krane, & Lauth, 1982, p. 47)

President Johnson, who helped get both acts passed into law, showed the same support for the Voting Rights act of 1965 that he did for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were legal remedies effected by the federal government in its efforts to grant African Americans their civil rights and to end turmoil and violence in the United States during the 1960s associated with civil rights protests and demonstrations. In its effect as a federal law, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 applied the voting rights guaranteed to all United States citizens under the 14th and 15th amendments to the constitution to minority citizens in the country (Henderson, 1998).

Ensuring the right of minority populations to vote in the United States, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 had three major effects (Hudson, 1998; The Voting Rights Act of 1965, n.d.). First, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 defined the measures through which non-discriminatory electoral processes were to occur. Second, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 established special provisions to monitor states and counties. Third, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 included a triggering

mechanism that brought most of the south under both federal monitoring and the enforcement provisions of the law. The provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, relative to its major effects, were detailed in Appendix C.

In 1965, a time when the federal government made advances to ensure the civil rights and political enfranchisement of African Americans, Evans Harris was dismissed from his job as principal of the Murden School. Evans Harris recounted his experiences as principal of the Murden School during the 1960s (1963-1965). Harris' reflections, which included discussion of the events that followed his dismissal from the Murden School principalship on May 3, 1965, also focused on his efforts to build a strong academic program at the Murden School, civil rights activism in Taliaferro County in 1965, and trying times in his life immediately following his dismissal from the Murden School principalship.

Building a Strong Academic Program

Dr. Evans Harris' ascension to the Murden School principalship began with the passion for achievement that he developed as a student at both the Murden School and FVSC. Evans Harris was qualified for the principal's position at the Murden School because of the Master's Degree in agricultural education that he earned at the Tuskegee Institute and the principal's certification that he gained through his studies at Atlanta University.

Evans Harris' arrival at the Murden School as its principal in 1963 was the culmination of 16 years of professional preparation, opportunity, and a sponsored career mobility event. Reflecting on his ascent to the school principalship, Harris revealed that he remained motivated to become a principal because of a desire to "gain more exposure" in a position of greater responsibility. Harris' opportunity to gain more exposure in a position of greater responsibility came in 1963 when the Taliaferro County Board of Education recruited him to return to the

county to become principal of the Murden School, the county's segregated K-12 school for African Americans.

In the years since Evans Harris graduated from the Murden School (1943), the school had lost the faculty and staff who had inculcated in him the “can do” attitude. As a result, Harris made improvement of the academic program at the Murden School his first task as principal of the school. Evans Harris’ goal was to have the Murden School send more students to college. However, Evans Harris knew that sending more students who were ready for the rigors of college work to universities would require the school to provide a higher level of academic preparation.

Evans Harris chose school culture as the angle from which he would begin his initiative aimed at improving the academic program at the Murden School. The two groups that Harris affected first were students and teachers. Commenting on the situation that he faced in turning students’ perceptions and expectations around, Evans Harris revealed:

That [building the academic program at the Murden School] was not always easy, I suppose, because they [the students] were not always encouraged to believe that they could accomplish, they had to, I suppose, work on their self-concept, enhance their self-concept, so that they could accomplish what other people accomplished.

Because the students at the Murden School were not confident in their abilities as students and had not been encouraged to excel, Evans Harris realized that the way to change the situation was by first inspiring the school’s teachers.

Evans Harris rallied the teachers at the Murden School establishing a base philosophy for instruction at the school. Dr. Harris recounted:

Also, one of the other main situations [at the Murden School] was to pull the faculty together as far as our philosophy, goals, what it was that we [the faculty] would want to accomplish with children. Our students, [were] from a predominantly rural background, and low socio-economic levels. I worked hard to get the faculty, teachers, and staff to

help the students to feel that they had ability, that they could learn effectively, that they could accomplish what other students accomplished.

Evans Harris' efforts as principal at the Murden School did not end with school culture.

Working with faculty and staff at the Murden School, Evans Harris established programs that addressed facilities concerns and the needs of the students. Harris indicated:

Again, turning the Murden School around was difficult because when I became principal, the school was in poor shape. The school [the Murden School] had not had a yearbook for many years. [The Murden school started a yearbook during Evans Harris' tenure as principal]. The school did not have a place to have plays and assemblies. [The school petitioned the county for use of public facilities including a gymnasium and auditorium in the county during Evans Harris' tenure]. The course offerings at the school were limited. [Evans Harris increased course offerings at the school.] The teachers were not highly motivated. [Evans Harris motivated teachers at the school with his 'can do' attitude.]

There was a shift in ideas going on [in Taliaferro County and the Murden School]. The shift [in ideas] was that at that point in time [1965] it was not expected that Blacks would perform at a high level, academically. But, we [the faculty, staff and students at the Murden School] accomplished a great deal and set high expectations.

Evans Harris was successful in his efforts as principal of the Murden School. The school had several students that went on to college and entered professional occupations. Also, during the time that Evans Harris was principal of the Murden School, 87 students at the school petitioned for entry into the White school in Taliaferro County (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, 1965b, 1965c, 1965d). The students' petitions were denied.

Evans Harris indicated that because of students' achievements at the Murden School and the application of 87 students for admission to the White school in Taliaferro County "some people in Taliaferro County were able to sell the idea that we were causing trouble in the community." Trouble did appear on May 3, 1965, as Harris and his wife Ann, along with Calvin and Florence Turner, Myra Wright, Fannie Blackwell, Geletha McRae, and Henry Eaton were dismissed from the Taliaferro County School System (Taliaferro County Board of Education, 1965).

The dismissal of Evans Harris and seven other educators from the Murden School in May of 1965 started a series of protests and rallies in Taliaferro County that included the involvement of some of the highest profile civil rights leaders in the country, including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In addition, Evans Harris and the others who were dismissed from TCSS sought remedy for their situation in federal court in Augusta, Georgia. The *Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goolsby et al.* court case also drew the attention of national civil rights activists and Donald Hollowell, the same attorney who handled the case in which Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes desegregated the University of Georgia, became the lead attorney for the plaintiffs in the suit.

Civil Rights Activism in Taliaferro County, 1965

The Taliaferro County School Board dismissed Evans Harris from the Murden School principalship on May 3, 1965. Harris returned to Taliaferro County in 1963 to assume the principalship at the Murden School after having taught in Hancock County, Georgia for 14 years.

Dr. Harris reflected on the reasons why he chose to return to Taliaferro County to become principal at the Murden School and the situation surrounding his dismissal from the school in 1965. Harris indicated that there were not many opportunities during the 1960s for African American teachers to move into school administration and so it was common practice to accept a principalship when one became available. Harris further commented on his rationale for accepting the Murden School principalship revealing that the idea was not to “homestead” on a first principalship but to accept it, gain experience, and if necessary “look for something better.”

During the same year that Evans Harris and seven other educators were dismissed from TCSS, 87 African American students at the Murden School attempted and were denied enrollment at the European American school in the county. Also, in an issue that was not fully

realized until the *Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goolsby et al.* case (1965), there was no European American school in Taliaferro County in 1965, as most of the White students in Taliaferro County were attending schools in neighboring counties (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, 1965b).

During the summer and fall of 1965, Crawfordville, Taliaferro's County seat, experienced civil rights demonstrations and protests on its scale similar to those in Selma and Gadsden, Alabama (Daniel, 1965; Negroes, Sing, 1963; Selma Police, 1965). In the courtroom, Evans Harris and the seven other educators who were dismissed sought a legal remedy for their situation.

Offering remembrances of the emotions that were present in the African American community in Taliaferro County in 1965 and the response that African Americans had to the firings of the eight educators at the Murden School, Dr. Harris stated:

As a result of the dismissals, many people [in Taliaferro County] felt that we [the dismissed educators] had been treated wrong. As a result, we [African American citizens in Taliaferro County] had a civil rights movement.

So, the civil rights movement occurred in 1965. Our dismissals [the eight educators who were dismissed from the Murden School in 1965] were the start of the whole civil rights movement in Taliaferro County. The demonstrations were intense. As a matter of fact, Dr. King [Martin Luther King Jr.] came down to Taliaferro County and helped organize some of the civil rights protests.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was involved in civil rights activities in Taliaferro County. The SCLC and its top leadership helped to organize daily protests and demonstrations in Taliaferro County. Evans Harris was in Crawfordville, Taliaferro County's county seat when civil rights protests in the county began, having not departed for school at OU until the fall of 1965.

Dr. Harris reflected on how the SCLC became involved in civil rights activities in Taliaferro County, the forms of assistance that the organization provided, and the leadership that was provided by key members of the organization. Dr. Harris revealed:

They [the SCLC] felt that there was overt discrimination taking place in Taliaferro County [in 1965]. The White school received consideration [monetary] and the Black school was being overlooked. As a result, they [the SCLC] wanted to do what was necessary to help correct the situation in Taliaferro County. As a result, they sent manpower in to help the community [in Taliaferro County] and put forth a bonified protest to the situation in the county. That was what took place. They had demonstrations, marches, and so forth that took place for most of the year [1965].

All of the SCLC leadership was involved in the movement in Taliaferro County. Dr. King [Martin Luther King Jr.] all of them [the SCLC leadership]. Dr. King came to Taliaferro County, Ralph Abernathy, Andrew Young and a lot of the higher officials in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference came to Crawfordville [Taliaferro County].

The SCLC was active in Taliaferro County in 1965. One of the services that the SCLC provided for citizens in Taliaferro County in 1965 was a Freedom School. The Freedom School, which had educators from throughout the Georgia, the south, and the United States, served African American students in Taliaferro County until the issue of school desegregation in the county was settled in 1966. Harris remembered:

The students [African American] in Taliaferro County went on an extended strike after they were not accepted at the predominately White school in the county [while the cases were in court]. So, during the strike they [the African American citizens in Taliaferro County] boycotted the school system in Taliaferro County. As a result, the SCLC assisted the citizenry in starting what was called a Freedom School.

At that time the SCLC went to an existing structure in the community and they brought teachers in to teach the students. The school was in the Springfield community [in Taliaferro County]. The students were taken there and they were taught by people who came in from all over the country as well as teachers who were from the state of Georgia.

It [the Freedom School] enabled the community to see the value of working together. It enabled them to see that by working together they could have a say in who would be in charge of various leadership aspects of the county.

While the Freedom School met the needs of the African American students in Taliaferro County during segregation, the adults who were involved in the civil rights movement in the county faced other challenges. During 1965, Taliaferro County witnessed the appointment of its first African American Sheriff (Negro New Chief at Crawfordville, 1965).

The African American sheriff in Taliaferro County was not sympathetic to the actions of civil rights protestors in the county because the African Americans involved in civil rights activities in Taliaferro County questioned the new sheriff's competency. Dr. Harris reflected on the sentiment of civil rights activists in the African American community in Taliaferro County in 1965, relative to the appointment of the African American Sheriff in the county:

People who were involved in the civil rights movement in the county at that time questioned his [the African American sheriff's] competency to hold the position. Also, I think that some felt disheartened by the fact that an unqualified African American was now policing the activities of the civil rights demonstrators in the county.

To sum it up, the African American sheriff that was appointed was not a part of the civil rights movement that was taking place in Taliaferro County during 1965. Political pressure was brought to bare because he [the African American sheriff] was not qualified to hold the sheriff's position. He [the African American sheriff in Taliaferro County in 1965] eventually resigned from his position.

Civil Rights activities continued in Taliaferro County throughout summer and fall of 1965, and the movement resulted in African Americans receiving voice and agency in the community. Dr. Harris indicated:

That movement [the civil rights movement in Taliaferro County] served to give Blacks some political agency in the community here in Taliaferro County. Before that [1965] Blacks were simply second-class citizens, no questions asked. There was no push for civil rights in the Black community in Taliaferro County before 1965. After 1965, though, Blacks in Taliaferro County began to receive more equal treatment. Also, as a result of challenging segregationist practices the Black community received backing from the federal government. This allowed Blacks to start participating in the mainstream activities in Taliaferro County and to be treated fairly, which is what the Black community was seeking at that time.

In addition to the activities that were taking place in Taliaferro County, court cases surrounding issues raised by the dismissal of Evans Harris and seven other educators from the Murden School were also taking place. Following their dismissals, the group of eight African American educators from the Murden School filed suit in federal district court against the Taliaferro County school district (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, 1965b, 1965c, 1965d). In their court case, the group of eight African American educators contested that Taliaferro County school officials:

1. Maintained a segregated school system;
2. Secretly made arrangements to send Taliaferro County's European American students and the county funding that supported them to neighboring school districts to avoid integrating Taliaferro County's school system;
3. Dismissed the African American plaintiffs in the case after 87 African American students sought admission to the school for European American students in Taliaferro County, Georgia. (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, 1965b)

The federal district court in Augusta, Georgia issued its opinion on the *Calvin Turner et al. v. Kenneth Goolsby et al.* on October 21, 1965. The court opinion stated:

It is the opinion of the Court that the 87 Negro children are entitled to attend a desegregated school on the basis of the plan submitted by the Taliaferro County school board to the Health, Education and Welfare Department having so contemplated . . . They [the 87 African American students] must now be accorded their rights.

There is no White school in Taliaferro County and their [the 87 African American children's] rights may be accorded by reopening the White school or by arranging for them to attend school with the Taliaferro County White children in the schools of the adjoining counties which the White children are attending [school].

The expenditures of public funds for the cost of educating these White children, including tuition, library funds, books and the like, and also for transportation is illegal so long as these 87 Negro applicants for transfer are denied their right to transfer.

The school superintendent was unable to offer any help to the court toward the solution of this problem. The Court is therefore faced with a situation where rights are being denied, public funds are being illegally expended, and the school superintendent and

school board are taking no action to stop the illegal expenditures or to accord the rights in question.

In order to avoid irreparable injury to the White children which would result from enjoining the use of public funds for their education, and to preserve the rights of 87 Negro for transfer, the Court has concluded that in the exercise of its equity power it will be necessary to place the school system of Taliaferro County in receivership. An order to this end will be prepared and the superintendent of schools for the State of Georgia will be appointed receiver with instructions to submit a plan to the Court by October 25, 1965, whereunder the illegal expenditure of funds will be discontinued and the right of the 87 applicants for transfer will be accorded. (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, pp. 12-13)

The court opinion was issued on October 21, 1965. The placement of TCSS into receivership meant that the school system was then under the direct control of the Georgia State

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Claude Purcell (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, 1965b). Also, by December 3, 1965, the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare had rejected TCSS' initial plan for school desegregation, cut off Title I funding to Taliaferro County, and called for the reinstatement of the group of eight African American educators that were dismissed on May 3, 1965 (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965b).

In further developments following the *Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goolsby* case, Dr. Claude Purcell, having expressed disgust with the situation in Taliaferro County, resigned from his position as the Georgia State Superintendent of Schools (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965b). Dr. Purcell's successor as Georgia State Superintendent of Schools was Jack P. Nix, who assumed receivership of TCSS on January 14, 1966. Throughout 1966, Taliaferro County continued efforts to meet United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare requirements for school desegregation. Finally, in June of 1966, receivership was terminated and control of TCSS was returned to the county.

Reflecting on the circumstances surrounding the 1965 lawsuits, Evans Harris' discussion focused on the legal team led by Donald Hollowell, a prominent Atlanta civil rights attorney, who had handled the case in which Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes integrated the University of Georgia in 1961. Harris revealed:

We [the plaintiffs in the Taliaferro County civil rights court cases, 1965] had first class legal representation. There was a firm in Atlanta for which a man by the name of Donald Hollowell worked.

He [Donald Hollowell] had some outstanding young lawyers on his staff as well. So, they [Mr. Hollowell and his legal team] looked into the legal situation in Taliaferro County and decided that we [the faculty and staff members who had been dismissed from the Murden school] couldn't get a fair hearing in the state court. So, the thing to do was to go to the federal court for relief. So, they [Mr. Hollowell and his legal team] filed suits in federal court.

Donald Hollowell was responsible for filing the briefs that allowed the *Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goolsby* case to be heard in federal district court in Augusta, Georgia. The African American community in Taliaferro County was aware of Donald Hollowell and his work with civil rights cases because of his role in the Holmes Hunter University of Georgia desegregation case.

Donald Hollowell's skill as a civil rights and school desegregation attorney was evident. However, Donald Hollowell did not work alone. As Dr. Harris indicated, the attorneys on Donald Hollowell's staff were fine civil rights attorneys in their own rights. Horace Ward, who had attempted to desegregate the University of Georgia Law School before Hunter and Holmes integrated the University, was a member of Hollowell's staff. Horace Ward, the subject of Daniel's (2001), *Horace T. Ward: Desegregation of the University of Georgia, Civil Rights Advocacy, and Jurisprudence*, earned his law degree at Northwestern University [Illinois]. Howard Moore, a Morehouse graduate and Boston University alum who worked tirelessly on

civil rights cases in Georgia and throughout the south was another member of Donald Hollowell's staff.

Dr. Harris also indicated that the connections that Horace Ward and Howard Moore had to other attorneys in the United States, including prominent European American attorneys educated at Ivy League schools, proved useful in the *Calvin Turner et al. vs. Kenneth Goolsby* case. Dr. Harris revealed:

So he [Donald Hollowell] had several outstanding lawyers on his staff, not to mention that he [Donald Hollowell] was an outstanding lawyer himself. So, the lawyers on Hollowell's staff also [by virtue of their schooling and professional experiences] had contact with lawyers throughout the United States, many of whom were White and had been schooled at prestigious universities throughout the United States as well.

Many of them [the friends of the lawyers on Donald Hollowell's staff] were anxious to come down to Georgia and see what was taking place and offer assistance and so forth. So we [African Americans in Taliaferro County] had a whole team of lawyers who were involved in the case. As a result, we had, for the first time, first class legal representation.

Donald Hollowell's staff was one of the premiere civil rights groups in the United States during the mid-1960s. Donald Hollowell's staff helped African American citizens in Taliaferro County gain agency in the community and allowed them to have their children educated in schools in Taliaferro County. In the life of Evans Harris, troubles were just beginning, however, as he was unemployed and unable to find work.

Trying Times

As the civil rights movement and court litigation initiated by the dismissal of the group of eight educators from the Murden School in 1965 came to a close, Evans Harris moved forward in his personal endeavors. Planning to continue his career in education, Evans Harris sought employment in Georgia school districts near Taliaferro County. Unfortunately, school districts in east-central Georgia, the area near Taliaferro County, shied away from hiring Evans Harris because of the events that had occurred in Taliaferro County during the summer and fall of 1965.

Dr. Harris offered remembrances of an incident in Putnam County where he had trouble securing employment:

So [before going to graduate school at OU] I went to another district not too far away, in Putnam County. The person said he could hire me and pay me up to 11 or 12 thousand dollars per year. The catch was ‘OK, you have to go and get a recommendation from your past superintendent.’

There was no way I was going to get a recommendation from the person who fired me [laughter]! So, I told the people in Putnam County that I believed that at that point we [myself and the interviewer] might have been wasting each others time because there was no way I was going to get a favorable recommendation from Taliaferro County.

The personnel official in Putnam County tried to be nice about the situation. He said ‘Well, I don’t expect you to get a good recommendation or so forth but we need something for the record.’ Well, I told him [the personnel person in Putnam County] ‘thank you’ because I didn’t think that I would get anything from the people in Taliaferro County. However, what they didn’t know [in Putnam County] was that I had already gotten the offer [from the Georgia Department of Negro Education] to go to any of those 15 different universities, all I had to do was apply and get accepted at one of them.

Unable to secure employment after civil rights events in Taliaferro County in 1965, Evans Harris applied to and visited several universities throughout the south including the Universities of Kentucky and Oklahoma. Evans Harris selected the University of Oklahoma (OU) for his doctoral studies. The decision to move to Oklahoma and to leave his family in Georgia was a difficult one for Evans Harris, as he lacked the ability to provide sufficient money to support his wife and children during his absence and faced an uncertain future in an unfamiliar state nearly 1000 miles away.

Doctoral Studies

Supported by funds provided by the Georgia Department of Negro Education, Evans Harris began doctoral studies in educational administration at OU during the fall of 1965. Separated from his family and friends in Georgia, Evans Harris worked toward his doctoral degree at OU. Uncannily though, while nearly 1000 miles from his home and first teaching and

administrative experiences in Georgia, Evans Harris' field experiences as a doctoral student focused on the familiar issue of desegregation. In his discussions of the experience of being a doctoral student at OU in the mid-and late-1960s, Dr. Evans Harris's remembrances focused on the difficult start he had at the university, the Fox-Tatums Crisis, and his role in helping develop and implement multiethnic materials for use in Oklahoma's public schools.

A Difficult Start

Evans Harris' journey to OU began with a call from the Georgia Department of Negro Education. The Georgia Department of Negro Education provided a scholarship for Harris to attend any approved school of his choice to pursue his doctorate, providing that he was accepted in the approved university. Evans Harris went through an interview process before settling on OU. The graduate school interview process carried Evans Harris to schools throughout the south where he met with graduate school and educational administration department personnel. Through his meetings with graduate admissions officials, Evans Harris was able assess the graduate programs at the schools and his ability to fit in the school environments. Dr. Harris remembered:

So, I went to one school [in the south] to talk with a graduate admissions official. I talked with the admissions officer at the school and I began to question him about how long it would take to get the degree. He said 'Well, we'll let you take courses for two years and then we'll give you a test and if you do well on the test you can keep going.' I asked him well what if I don't do well? His response wasn't the one that I thought would be promising [laughter], so I thought to myself then well no, my timing is wrong for this place. So, I thought 'No Evans, this might be trouble.' I didn't tell him that but I went ahead and looked at some other schools.

Also, I talked with a guy who went the University of Kentucky, a man named Tate. He was over the Black teachers' association and the integrated one as well. Some other guys I knew had gone to OU. They were trying to do good things at OU. So, I decided that OU might be a good place.

Adjusting to life in Oklahoma was initially a struggle for Evans Harris. Dr. Harris recalled that “it [being away from family for extended periods of time and transitioning into student life] was one of the most frustrating experiences that I had in my life.”

Adding to the stress of being away from his wife and three children was the fact that Evans Harris’ father was extremely ill during his first year at Oklahoma. Also, Evans Harris found the doctoral coursework at OU daunting as he struggled in his first semester statistics classes, indicating:

Despite the inconveniences, living in one place and having family in another, it [going to OU] was a very fulfilling experience. However, in the beginning it [school] was very difficult.

I was placed in some of the most difficult courses from the very beginning, statistics, research, qualitative measurement, and they were all very innocent sounding titles. They seemed very innocent to me [laughter] but they turned out to be nothing but statistics. The catch was if you [a student] flunked statistics that was it. You were finished before you even got started. I mean, you might be able to hang on but at best it would cost you another year.

Dr. Harris struggled in the statistics classes at OU because he had not had the prerequisite training in his mathematics courses as an undergraduate or graduate student at FVSC and the Tuskegee Institute. Dr. Harris laughingly revealed, “here I am in this calculus class, and I didn’t even know at that time what calculus was. I really had to struggle to keep up.”

Fortunately for Dr. Harris, he was able to join a study group composed of other minority students at OU. The study group helped Dr. Harris make it through his first year classes. Harris revealed:

There were two students [in the study group] from Southern University [Baton Rouge, Louisiana], one was a math major. We also had some [students] from Alabama and a few Hispanics who were also members of the study group. So we [the study group members] helped each other and were able to pass the coursework.

Thinking back on it all [the first semester at OU], I think that it was routine for all of the students [the heavy course load]. I mean, there were White students who had just as much

trouble as we [the African American and Hispanic students in the study group] did. There was no favoritism. All students had to prove that they belonged.

Evans Harris made it through his first year at OU. The friends that he made in the study group helped him with difficult concepts that he had not covered in his previous college training. The trips that the Georgia Department of Negro Education provided helped Harris deal with loneliness and anxieties caused by the separation from his family. Almost 1000 miles away from Taliaferro County and the Murden School, Evans Harris started a new life. Evans Harris' life in Oklahoma continued to blossom, as professors at the school gave him the opportunity to apply some of what he learned in Georgia.

The Fox-Tatums Crisis

After adjusting to the rigors of doctoral study and completing his first year at OU, Evans Harris was involved in a situation surrounding school desegregation that occurred in the Fox and Tatums communities in Oklahoma. The desegregation situation in the Fox and Tatums communities was crucial to the state of Oklahoma and was pivotal in the career of Evans Harris, allowing him to use his skills as an educator and a negotiator to help bring the communities and their schooling situation out of chaos.

During the 1966-1967 school year, the Fox and Tatums communities in Carter County, Oklahoma experienced problems occasioned by the desegregation of schools in the county. Fox was a community in Carter County whose population was predominately White and whose school served the White students in the county. Tatums, a predominately Black community in Carter County, had a school that serviced the county's African American and Native American populations.

Problems with the school district in Carter County began when Title I and Title II monies that were earned by the Tatums community were spent on resources that were not used in the

community. Because of the misuse of funds in Carter County, African American citizens in the county protested. The superintendent in Carter County tried to desegregate the county's school system to rectify the situation in the schools caused by the misuse of funds, further exacerbating the situation in the county and causing members of the African American community to boycott the school district by pulling their children out of school.

The disturbances in Carter County drew attention and the federal government began to look into operations in the district. A team from OU, of which Evans Harris was a part, led the investigation. Harris revealed:

The University, through directions from the state, via the federal government, sent liaisons down to Fox-Tatums to assess the situation, provide intervention where necessary, and make a report that was to go back to Washington, DC. I was one of the liaisons.

So we [the liaisons from OU] went there and we talked with the people in the community. Finally, we went to the superintendent. Of course, he had a slightly different version of what had happened in the community but nonetheless we listened and made our report.

The superintendent in Carter County informed the team from OU that the Title I and Title II monies earned by the Tatums community had not been used to buy equipment that was not used in the community. The team from OU did not end its investigation with the superintendent, however, and continued extensive interview sessions with parents and students in the Carter County school community.

After finishing its work in Carter County, the team from OU returned to the university to report to university officials. Dr. Harris recalled:

So the co-director of the program [at OU], Mr. Wester, wanted to know from a confidential group, including myself and a White student who had traveled to Fox-Tatums, what, in our estimation, had happened? We both said the same thing, 'Somebody in Fox-Tatums is telling a lie.' We thought, from what we had seen and heard that the superintendent had indeed misused the funds.

University of Oklahoma officials concurred with the conclusions of the investigative team members and a plan began to help solve the problem in Carter County. As a first step in helping the school district address its needs, the African American children who had boycotted Carter County's school system received compensatory services. Evans Harris was tapped for the job, revealing:

Well a few days later after the university directors had made their assessment of the situation, the co-director of the program approached me. He said 'Evans, you are pretty sharp. How did you know?' I said just because the superintendent said that he didn't spend the money a certain way didn't mean that he didn't. By what was said by most all of the people in the community it was evident where the money had been spent [the Fox community].

The co-director then told me that a salaried position had been created for a university based intervention program designed to get the students in Fox-Tatums back on track. He asked me if I was interested. I said 'I'll consider it.' In my mind though I was thinking 'Man, I'm broke, of course I'll take the job! [laughter]'

So, I got it [the job in Fox-Tatums]. I was recruited into that position by an all White panel. At that time that was surprising. But I'll tell you things were different then [in the 1960s]. Then, few people worked closely with Blacks in efforts to place them in positions where their talents and abilities could shine. Things are different today. I think that many people today want qualified minorities to be successful and have voice and agency in the community.

Evans Harris was placed in a position of great responsibility by OU. As the director of the Fox-Tatums crash program, coordinated through OU, Harris was responsible for providing compensatory educational services for students in the Tatums beginning in March to make up for almost six months of school that the students had missed due to a boycott of the Carter County school district

Dr. Harris reflected on how he and crash team members were able to help remedy the situation in Carter County:

So, I went in to Fox-Tatums to direct the crash program and with the crash program we were able to get the students in March and continue through [with school] until August.

As a result, we [the crash] workers were able to help them to make the grades that they would have lost [because of the boycotts].

So the students made it through with the aid of the crash program. Then, they went on to their regular grades the next year and the situation [in Fox-Tatums] went ahead and smoothed on out.

Evans Harris helped save a school community through his work in Carter County. Also, because of his success in helping remedy the problem in Carter County, professors in the Department of Educational Administration at OU placed Evans Harris in a position of greater responsibility. Harris was appointed as director of a program that developed multiethnic materials that were used in school districts throughout the state of Oklahoma. The multiethnic materials program helped increase students and school communities' awareness of the contributions of African Americans to society in the United States.

A Multiethnic Focus

Evans Harris' work in the Fox and Tatums communities in Oklahoma was successful. As a result, Evans Harris was elevated to a position of higher responsibility during his time as a doctoral student at OU working in a program that focused on developing and implementing multiethnic materials in Oklahoma's schools.

Curriculum was the focus of the multiethnic materials program that Evans Harris worked on because, during the late 1960s, Oklahoma did not have a large amount of material in its school curricula on the contributions of African Americans. In his work in the multiethnic materials program, Harris included information on the achievements of well-known African Americans. The Oklahoma multiethnic materials program covered the accomplishments of African Americans like Booker T. Washington, the father of many of the historically Black Colleges and Universities in the south; W.E.B. Dubois, a late 19th Century African American

intellectual; and George Washington Carver, a scientist whose work with the peanut revolutionized the use of the legume in the food and science professions.

Evans Harris' work in the multiethnic materials program also extended the curriculum beyond knowledge of the achievements of well-known African Americans, emphasizing the idea that all African Americans, even if not widely known, could contribute to society. Harris indicated:

So, the underlying idea was 'Yes there were two or three people that stood out' but the fact of the matter was that there were a number of African Americans who made contributions in a broad base of areas. So, we [educators in Oklahoma] needed to incorporate more of those people [in the curriculum] to give children, Black children, more reinforcement to see that they were from a group [ethnic group] that was outstanding as opposed to [an ethnic group] that didn't do anything. They [African Americans] were making accomplishments just like anybody else.

Harris' work with the multiethnic materials program in Oklahoma made students more aware of the achievements of African Americans. At the same time, the multiethnic materials program affected African American students' self images by presenting them with positive role models, including the program's director Evans Harris. By making African American achievers a tangible reality that students could see in their instructors and read about in study materials, African American students in Oklahoma were given hope.

Evans Harris continued his work with the multiethnic materials program providing innovations and serving students until his graduation from OU in 1968. Harris indicated:

I worked with the desegregation program until I graduated from Oklahoma. During that time, we [the OU desegregation staff] dealt with a number of school districts that had substantial Black populations and helped to facilitate desegregation in those districts. We [the OU desegregation staff] introduced innovative programs to the school districts that we worked with and we brought in outside experts who were very sophisticated and interested in things like the psychology of education and so forth.

The multiethnic materials program like the crash program in Carter County gave Evans Harris a platform from which his skills as an educator could continue to grow and serve the students and parents in the state of Oklahoma.

Dr. Evans Harris graduated with a doctorate (Ed. D.) in Educational Administration in June of 1968. In the fall of 1968, Evans Harris assumed his first position in the professorate, teaching in the Department of Educational Administration at the Tuskegee Institute. The professorate proved both challenging and rewarding, as Dr. Evans Harris trained many administrators throughout the south. Some of Evans Harris' students became prominent in the field of education.

The Professorate

After graduating from OU, Evans Harris began work as a professor of educational administration. Harris' tenure in the professorate lasted nearly 25 years and covered positions at two universities, The Tuskegee Institute and Albany State University.

The Tuskegee Institute, now known as Tuskegee University, recruited Evans Harris to work as the Director of its Educational Administration Program. Tuskegee's recruitment of Evans Harris occurred during the time that he was pursuing his doctorate at OU. Faculty at Tuskegee were aware of Evans Harris because of his Master's Degree at the school.

Evans Harris was the Director of the Educational Administration Program at the Tuskegee Institute and helped the school set up its Master's and Specialist's Degree programs during his tenure there. While at Tuskegee, Harris also helped guide the Educational Administration Program through a change in its philosophical approach toward the preparation of K-12 school leaders. Evans Harris was also instrumental in directing the Educational Administration Program at Tuskegee through a period of decreased funding. Harris ended his 14-

year tenure at Tuskegee Institute in 1982, accepting a position at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia.

As a professor of Educational Administration at Albany State University (ASU), Evans Harris worked to help ASU prepare school administrators, the majority of whom were African American, for leadership positions in Georgia. More specifically, because of ASU's geographic location, the university's Educational Administration Program focused on preparing educational leaders for southwest Georgia school districts.

Evans Harris's work with the Educational Administration Program at ASU included collaborations with faculty at the University of Georgia because ASU sought to make its school administration program one of the premiere programs in the state. Harris worked as a professor at ASU for 10 years.

Assessing the impact that Evans Harris had on the field of education during his tenure in the professorate a dichotomy was recognized in the functions and purposes of the positions that Evans Harris held at Tuskegee and Albany State. At Tuskegee, Evans Harris was primarily responsible for changing the philosophy that guided the program in educational administration by implementing a new form of training for school administrators and setting up advanced degree programs at the school.

At Albany State University, Evans Harris was responsible for completely turning the Educational Administration Program around by affecting test pass rates of African American administrators and changing attitudes at the school related to expectations held for African American students, particularly those who were male and who resided in southwest Georgia. Evans Harris was successful in his work at the Tuskegee Institute and at ASU. Also, Harris' post

at ASU led to a turning point in his professional career, one that led him out of education and then back into the field as superintendent of schools in Taliaferro County, Georgia.

Changing the Philosophy

Dr. Evans Harris was recruited to the Tuskegee Institute by Dr. A. P. Charles, a professor that he had known while he pursued his Master's Degree in Agricultural Education at Tuskegee. Dr. Charles recruited Evans Harris while he was working on his doctorate at OU. Dr. Charles expected Evans Harris to graduate from OU in 1967. However, Evans Harris' work with the multiethnic materials program at the university occupied much of his time, and he did not graduate from OU until 1968.

A. P. Charles held the position at Tuskegee open until Evans Harris graduated. Working as the Director of the Educational Administration Program at Tuskegee, Evans Harris and his colleagues implemented a Specialists in Education Degree and focused on getting their students into top doctoral programs across the country.

During the 1960s, Tuskegee, like other Historically Black Colleges and Universities, served African American students almost exclusively. During segregation, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, especially in the south, functioned as academic training centers for African Americans because many large state schools would not allow them to enroll as students. Dr. Harris recounted that Tuskegee, the first school established by Booker T. Washington, enjoyed a prestigious position among historically Black Colleges and Universities in the United States.

Dr. Harris indicated that Tuskegee is a prestigious university because of its origins and its long history in training African American professionals. Because of Tuskegee's prestige, the college was able to attract high quality students of color from across the globe. The students at

Tuskegee helped increase the prestige of the programs at the college, and many of them became high profile professionals in business and education settings. Harris revealed:

The students that are attracted to the university [Tuskegee] are highly qualified. So, it was relatively easy for us [as an educational administration program] to find students who were highly motivated and highly qualified because of the university and the pool of students we had to choose from. We had students who were from all over.

Once, I had a student [John Gibson] who finished the school administration program that I was in charge of and subsequently went to the University of Colorado and received a doctorate in educational administration and went on to become the president of Alabama A&M University. I also had other students who finished their Master's Degrees at Tuskegee and went on to doctoral programs at Ohio State, Florida State, and Virginia Tech just to name a few.

Lucian Harris was one of my students [at Tuskegee] as well. I helped him get a job in Georgia. He is from Alabama, a little tiny place. However, I helped him get a job in Marietta as a principal of an elementary school. He went on and kept going and went to Vanderbilt and got a doctorate degree. Finally, he wound up as superintendent in Clarke County (Georgia). He stayed there for oh I guess about three or four years. He has done well for himself in his career. In fact, I had several students that were successful that came out of the program at Tuskegee.

The students who were enrolled in the programs at Tuskegee, including those who were in the Educational Administration Department went on to successful careers and helped spread a positive reputation for the school because of their work in graduate degree programs at prestigious majority institutions and their work in the field. Evans Harris also indicated that while he was a professor at Tuskegee, there was a “revolution in training in school administration” programs as colleges of education switched to a theoretical administrator training approach. Tuskegee did not exempt itself from the “revolution” in administrator preparation and switched to instruction based on administrative theory concepts developed at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Harris provided a rationale for Tuskegee's decision to change the method by which it prepared school administrators and commented on the programs effectiveness and its effect on students at the school:

We [the educational administration faculty at Tuskegee] felt that administrative theory gave a great deal more insight and flexibility in the preparation program. So, it [the preparation program at Tuskegee] was pretty much the theoretical approach and as a result of the theoretical element, what was the theoretical approach, the feeling there [at Tuskegee] is that it gave administrators greater insight to the whole structure, the whole picture of school administration.

So, the students, especially I guess the more sophisticated students, grasped the concept [administrative theory] in great detail. As a result, we [the Tuskegee faculty] were able to send a very high percentage of graduate students into doctoral programs at some of the top universities in the United States.

The students at Tuskegee were competent and possessed confidence, two characteristics cited by Ellerbee (2002) as limiting factors in the careers of African American superintendent candidates (see Table 2.1). Not surprisingly, Evans Harris had students at Tuskegee who were able to ascend to school district superintendencies and beyond.

Also, the quality of students at Tuskegee allowed the professors in the Department of Educational Administration to easily switch to a method of theoretical preparation. By providing students with an understanding of the total school community and budget processes and not just administrative tasks, the program at Tuskegee was able to produce analytical school administrators who were able to adapt their skills and conceptual understandings to varying situations.

Evans Harris was successful in his work in the Department of Educational Administration at Tuskegee. During Evans Harris' time in the professorate at Tuskegee, the Educational Administration Program thrived. Dr. Harris indicated that a part of the prosperity that the Tuskegee enjoyed during his tenure there was due "to plentiful government grants." However,

the government grants did not last forever, and by 1982, programs at Tuskegee were struggling due to decreased funding. Tuskegee's president began issuing ultimatums. Harris remembered:

The president put everyone on notice. At a meeting the president embarrassed the school of education saying 'We are not going to have any unproductive programs! The college of education better shape up!'

I didn't understand that [the college President's statement]. We [the College of Education] were productive. Well then I came to a decision. I said to myself, 'Evans, now you know if a man will get up and embarrass a whole department before the entire faculty that's not the kind of atmosphere that is conducive to anyone's survival.'

Thinking back on it, he [Tuskegee's President] just didn't think a lot about the things that he said to his faculty. He shot from the hip. We [the Tuskegee faculty] all understood that the money had dried up too but his message was more of a threat than an attempt to address the issue.

Realizing the nature of the administration at Tuskegee in 1982, Evans Harris sought other opportunities. Fortune presented itself before the fall of 1982, and Evans Harris traveled to Albany, Georgia to interview for a position at ASU. Evans Harris was aware of the position at ASU because of recruiting efforts made by the university's Department of Educational Administration. Evans Harris accepted a \$15,000 annual pay raise, the promise of the opportunity to implement new programs, and the position of professor at the university. The ASU professorship marked a homecoming for Evans Harris because he returned to his home state of Georgia after a career in higher education that had spanned 17 years.

Tuskegee allowed Evans Harris to grow and to mature as a professor. While at Tuskegee, Evans Harris had the opportunity to work with highly motivated, academically proficient students who remained friends of his throughout his professional career. Evans Harris established himself at Tuskegee and further solidified his reputation as an effective administrator and professor of educational administration. During Evans Harris' tenure at Tuskegee, school desegregation and equity cases including *Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education*,

Bradley v. Miliken and *Green v. County Board* provided entry for African Americans into non-segregated public school settings. Entry into non-segregated public school settings was critical in Evans Harris' position as a professor at Albany State University because African American school administrator candidates who had access to opportunities in non-segregated settings struggled to pass graduate school entrance tests and gain the training necessary to become school administrators.

Turning the Program Around

Arriving at ASU in September of 1982, Evans Harris found an Educational Administration Program that "was running but not adequately serving its students." The problem in Albany was an outgrowth of the university's struggles to serve its school community.

ASU, formerly Albany State College, is a historically Black college that served African Americans in southwest Georgia. However, prior to Evans Harris' arrival in Albany, the Educational Administration Program at ASU had difficulty getting students into its programs and then getting them licensed and placed in schools. As a result, there was a scarcity of African American school administrators in southwest Georgia in 1982. Harris revealed that during the early 1980s "it wasn't unusual to see districts [school districts] that didn't have a single Black in administration."

The reason that students were not able to get into graduate degree and certification programs at ASU was that they were failing entrance exams. Harris indicated that very few of the students who applied to Albany State University's advanced training programs were able to score 1000 or higher on the GRE [Graduate Record Exam]. As a result, there was a scarcity of students in the program at Albany State University which translated into a scarcity of African American administrators in southwest Georgia.

Dr. Harris reflected on the atmosphere present in Albany in 1982 and the steps that he and faculty in the Department of Educational Administration took to solve the program's problems. Harris shared:

So, when I got to Albany everybody seemed to be saying 'We don't have any Black principals and we can't find any.' I thought, no kidding, nobody can get the degree or get certified because everyone is flunking the tests.

Well, the faculty and staff at Albany State along with the University of Georgia set up a program that enabled students to prepare themselves for the tests in special study groups. As a result of that, we [Albany State University] went from a very low percentage, almost zero percent [passing rate], to just about a 100% passing rate on those tests. Our 'high water mark' was when we had 33 people take the NTE [National Teachers Examination] and GRE and all 33 passed. Students passed the tests and got into programs! As a result of that, we [Albany State University] got our students through and we had students who went on to get certified at the Specialist Degree level and then we had a lot of them go on to get Doctoral Degrees.

Through an intensive study group program, cosponsored by the University of Georgia, ASU, a member of the University of Georgia system, was able to turn around the situation in southwest Georgia and get more African American school administrators into its degree and certification programs. As a result, the number of credentialed African American administrators in southwest Georgia increased, and qualified African American school administrators were able to gain employment in the area. Harris indicated:

That [the turnaround] was in the early 80s, 1983. From that point forward, we [ASU] had Black men that received principalships all over Albany, Dougherty County, and all the surrounding counties. People started to wonder, 'Where in the world had all these intelligent Black men come from?' Well they had been there all the time, they just lacked proper preparation and confidence. Those men were competent. They just had to learn to apply themselves and believe in themselves.

Dr. Harris' comments indicated that in addition to the academic training that ASU study programs provided, the programs also helped the African American administrators in the area address competency and confidence issues, two factors cited by Ellerbee (2002) as limiting factors in the careers of African American superintendent candidates (see Table 2.1).

The changing of images and perceptions was a familiar theme in the life of Evans Harris, who had worked with such issues in the Fox-Tatums crisis and at the Murden School before that. Also, once African American administrators left the program at ASU, they were able to effect change in their school districts by serving as tangible role models and working as resource people within their school communities. Dr. Harris recounted:

Once they [the educational administration students] were able to go and pass the tests they were able to go into the community and make progress in their individual school systems. Also, the larger community was astounded with the knowledge that was possessed by the students that we trained at Albany State. So, we just broadened the base of knowledge present at the time through our work at Albany State.

As an example, in the curriculum course, we [the Educational Administration faculty and staff] were concerned with making reference materials available to the students. They [students] couldn't implement it if it wasn't available to them. So we tried to make the students more knowledgeable about the accomplishments of outstanding African American educators like Horace Mann Bond and Benjamin Mayes. So, we incorporated those things into the program. The hope was that students' exposure to those materials would broaden their perspectives once they realized that African Americans had made significant accomplishments in education and other fields.

Evans Harris was successful in his work at ASU. In addition to turning around the situation surrounding the degree and certification programs at ASU, Harris was able to help establish a cooperative program with the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Georgia. The cooperative program allowed ASU students to earn University of Georgia Specialists in Education Degrees through coursework taken at Albany State and the University of Georgia. The cooperative program was highly successful and provided African American students in the Albany area access to professors at and degrees from the University of Georgia.

Surprisingly, the notoriety and success that the Educational Administration Program at ASU received during Dr. Harris's tenure was not totally accepted by faculty at the school. Dr. Harris reflected on the experience:

Now you would think that the top administrators at Albany State would have been very pleased with the work that was going on in our department [educational administration]. Think again. There was some discord. I don't know why. It just seemed that since we were doing so well some people in the university community looked for an Achilles Hill so to speak.

To put it in context consider this . . . At that time Albany State had one of the best pre-med programs in the state. However, the administration didn't want any publicity or anything on it. It was to be a well kept secret. That's how peculiar the culture was there [at Albany State]. I struggled with that. It would seem that the pre med program would be something that you would publicize, but not there. They didn't want anyone to know.

Dr. Harris' comments indicated that Albany State University operated as a closed culture, one in which achievements were made but not highly publicized. Perhaps, the attention that the Department of Educational Administration had drawn was not welcome in the university community. Also, during the time that Evans Harris helped the Educational Administration Program at Albany State rise to prominence, there were disputes in the university community surrounding salaries.

Dr. Harris indicated that his salary as a professor, new to Albany State University but not to higher education, was higher than the salaries of some faculty members who had been at Albany State University for many years. Contract disputes soon followed. Harris revealed:

Anyway, nontraditional contracts were implemented at the university [Albany State] With nontraditional contracts you [a professor] get three good quarters [to work]. I asked the president of the university how could we direct the program that we had [in educational administration] shorthanded on staff and only working part time. With what we were trying to accomplish in the department [3/4] time was tantamount to part time work. It was virtually impossible to run the program on a part time basis. The situation didn't change. However, I stayed on at Albany State as long as I could. I was proud of what was being accomplished and I wanted to help as many students as I could succeed.

Thinking back on it now, Albany State was a good place. However, when you [an educator] operate in a situation and you don't venture out and move forward on projects you can get blinded to what you are doing in that particular place. Perhaps they [the Albany State University administration in 1992] had just been stuck in a situation where complacency was the rule. So, with my experience before coming to Albany State University, I had been exposed to a different way of viewing things. So, I moved on.

Dr. Harris could not accomplish his goals for the educational administration program at Albany State University working three quarter time. Also, Dr. Harris could not support his family on the economic realities created by the nontraditional three quarter time contract. Dr. Harris continued his work at Albany State University until 1992 at which time he moved to a position in the private sector, which immediately preceded his election as superintendent in Taliaferro County, Georgia.

In 1992, I moved on from Albany State University; I sold insurance for about a year. When I was selling insurance, I had no immediate plans to return to education.

It started [the position as an insurance salesman] off very well. The person who recruited me wanted me to go to school districts and talk with teachers and get them to understand the insurance business a little better. Well we started off doing very well. However, in a short period of time we had a situation where we entered a bit of an economic recession, jobs were scarce.

Well during tough times, insurance is one of the first things that people will drop. Well, I just found that it wasn't worth while to continue in the insurance business.

Dr. Evans Harris was not in the insurance business long and in 1992 past connections, still simmering ambitions, and opportunity brought Dr. Evans Harris back to his home in Taliaferro County. Harris shared, "Then the right opportunity, one that intrigued me greatly, presented itself. I was asked to come to Taliaferro County and run for the position of superintendent of schools."

Dr. Evans Harris returned to Taliaferro County and won the superintendency in a runoff election in August of 1992. Having left the county almost three decades earlier, Evans Harris enjoyed a successful career in education and had not attempted to move back to Georgia. However, time, circumstance, and opportunity came full circle in the life of Evans Harris.

The Superintendency

Located in rural east-central Georgia, Taliaferro County is the crossroad between Oglethorpe, Wilkes, Warren, Hancock, and Greene Counties in Georgia (History of Taliaferro County, n.d.). Crawfordville, incorporated in 1826, is the seat of Taliaferro County. Home to 574 residents, Crawfordville is also the commerce center of Taliaferro County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

Born June 1, 1925 and raised in Taliaferro County, Georgia, Dr. Evans Harris was elected superintendent of the county's school system in August of 1992 (The Parents, Citizens, 1993). Dr. Evans Harris' election was the first of its kind for an African American in Taliaferro County. In addition, United States census data showed that near the time of Dr. Harris' election, Taliaferro County was home to approximately 11,000 residents including 7,195 Whites, 3,790 Blacks, 14 Hispanics, and at least one resident of a non-specified ethnic origin (U.S. Census, 1990).

A Georgia Public Education Report Card from the time that Dr. Evans Harris served as superintendent of TCSS (1993-1996) revealed that the county's school system served 170 students, including 155 Blacks, 12 Whites, 3 Hispanics, and 4 students of multiracial origin (Georgia Public Education Report Card, 1994-1995). Finally, 97% of the 170 students received either free or reduced lunches. In his discussions of his three-year tenure in Taliaferro County, Dr. Evans Harris identified four themes: recruitment and election, saving the school district, the establishment of programs, and retirement.

Recruitment and Selection

Evans Harris retired from his position as a professor at Albany State University in 1992. After working in the private sector for a short time, Harris sought to return to the field of

education. Through connections with government and community leaders in Taliaferro County, Georgia and because of the work that he had done in preparing educational leaders in Georgia, Evans Harris was recruited to run for the superintendency in Taliaferro County in 1992. With strong local backing, Harris won the 1992 superintendents election in Taliaferro County. Dr. Evans Harris began his term as superintendent of TCSS in January of 1993.

Dr. Evans Harris' term as superintendent of schools in Taliaferro County began in January of 1993. However, the Taliaferro County Board of Education appointed Dr. Harris as interim superintendent of TCSS in September of 1992, hoping that Dr. Harris would be able to serve during the four months that remained on the incumbent superintendent's contract.

Dr. Harris was not able to serve as interim superintendent in Taliaferro County and began his duties as superintendent of schools in the county in January of 1993. Coincidentally, Harris' election as superintendent of TCSS preceded a change in Taliaferro county's local ordinances in 1993, which affected the appointment of Taliaferro County Board of Education members and eliminated the elected office of school district superintendent in Taliaferro County (Taliaferro County Board of Education Hearing, 1993; Taliaferro County Board of Education Redistricting, 1993).

Reflecting on the circumstances surrounding his recruitment to TCSS, Dr. Harris recounted a discussion that took place with the Taliaferro County Commissioner during a trip home to visit his parents. The County Commissioner indicated that some county officials felt that they "needed to do something about the school system" in Taliaferro County, and they wanted Harris "to come to the county to run for the superintendency."

Discussing what "needed to be done" in Taliaferro County, the County Commissioner referred to efforts during 1992 to affect the dissolution of the county's school district by turning

over the responsibility for educating the county's elementary and middle school students to neighboring Greene County that was already providing educational services for Taliaferro's high school students. Dr. Harris made the decision to return to his hometown, and moved back to Taliaferro County.

Dr. Harris viewed the move back to Taliaferro County as a significant one because of events in the county during the time of his election. Harris also indicated that the superintendency in Taliaferro County in 1992, because it was a return home for a significant cause, served as a fitting capstone to a long career in education in which he had served the public in many capacities. Harris stated:

I think that coming back to Taliaferro County as a superintendent was the culmination of a career in which I had worked in many positions. I had previously served as a teacher and as a principal in the county [Taliaferro]. I had also worked in a district adjacent to the county [Hancock County].

Also, by that time [through professional work experiences] I had established a reasonably good reputation as being a good administrator. As a result, there was some sentiment from people in the county [Taliaferro] for wanting me to return as school district superintendent. That [the sentiment in Taliaferro County] really helped me to make my final decision to return.

Even though there were struggles in my position in Taliaferro County, I enjoyed the experience. You see, that is a part of being a superintendent, improving the school district where you can. I was able to access a broad support base that worked to improve the educational situation present for the citizens and school children of Taliaferro County.

Because of he was made superintendent in Taliaferro County through an election, Dr. Harris' ascent to the county superintendency was a contest career mobility event. Harris' education, professional experiences, and connections in Taliaferro County allowed him to become superintendent when the opportunity presented itself.

The 1992 superintendent's election in Taliaferro County was a close one. The three candidates in the race, Dr. Harris and two females, had local ties and had strong support

throughout the community. Fortunate for the Harris campaign, Harris' supporters knew the political climate in Taliaferro County.

Also, Dr. Harris had prior campaign experience because he held public office in Alabama during his time as a professor at Tuskegee. Harris' campaign experience and the support of influential members of the Taliaferro County political community helped him to win the 1992 superintendent's election in Taliaferro County in a runoff.

Dr. Harris received a warm reception as superintendent of TCSS, and he began preparations for the long battle to save the county school district from continued consolidation.

Harris recounted:

After my election, I was received very well [in Taliaferro County]. The community was impressed at having a minority person to represent them as superintendent for the most part. However, there was some concern here [in Taliaferro County] about the children. The high school children [in Taliaferro County] had been combined with Greene County. So, we [Taliaferro County] only had the elementary and middle school children left.

So, there were some political decisions, I suppose, on the part of a portion of the community on whether to allow the elementary [and middle school] children to go to Greene County Schools. That caused some concern on the part of parents in the community [Taliaferro County] who did not want that [the transfer of the elementary and middle school students to Greene County] to occur. That's where the conflict started [with the debate surrounding relinquishing the Taliaferro County school district to Greene County].

Saving TCSS proved to be the struggle of Evans Harris' professional career because of the heated debate surrounding the district's existence. On one side of the debate were county school board members and citizens who saw the district as too expensive to continue operating. On the other side of the debate was Dr. Evans Harris, a group of working professionals in Taliaferro County, and a group of concerned parents in the district who all worked as a political force stressing the value of the school for the students and the small urban community in which the county existed.

The 1992 superintendent's election in Taliaferro County was more than a homecoming for Dr. Evans Harris. With his election to the Taliaferro County superintendency in August of 1992, Evans Harris joined an elite group of 39 African Americans who have held the post of school district superintendent in Georgia since the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision (see Appendix B).

Also, TCCS superintendency allowed Dr. Evans Harris to help save the school district in his home county. Evans Harris' election to the superintendency in Taliaferro County marked the culmination of a 46 year career in public education in which Evans Harris served citizens throughout the southeast as a classroom teacher, school principal, and professor.

Saving the School District

After taking office in January of 1993, Dr. Evans Harris was involved in a struggle to retain the Taliaferro County School District. Taliaferro County's problems stemmed from a lack of funding. The Taliaferro County School District was under-funded in 1992 because Georgia school funding policies, enacted under the Quality Basic Education (QBE) Act of 1984, established a student funding rate and formula that changes over time. Under the QBE Act, Georgia funds the education of each child in a school district based on the formula rate. Each school district in the state only receives the amount of state funds that match its number of students based on their grade and educational service level.

Reflecting on the problem that the QBE formula caused for districts like Taliaferro County, Harris revealed that "Georgia is a big state; however, it has a lot of small school districts. Taliaferro County is one of the smaller ones." As a result of Taliaferro County's small size and small student population, the district received little funding from the state. In addition, the county's number of students was made smaller because the high school students from the

district were educated in Greene County. Because Taliaferro County is largely an impoverished rural district, the county was unable to raise sufficient funds to support school district operations through tax levies.

Citizens and public officials in Taliaferro County maintained a heated debate over the continued existence of the school system when Dr. Harris became superintendent in 1993 (Meeting Turns Red Hot, 1993; Taliaferro Board of Education Discusses, 1993; Taliaferro's Last Public School, 1993; The Parents, Citizens, Taxpayers, 1993). The issues in the in the debate over the Taliaferro County school system included discussion of:

1. The feasibility of maintaining a school system that cost the most per child educated, in the state of Georgia;
2. The logistical and school experience based consequences of bussing elementary and middle school students up to 80 miles roundtrip each day to educate them;
3. The salary of the current school district superintendent;
4. The willingness of neighboring counties to contract with Taliaferro County to educate its elementary students;
5. The impact that dissolving Taliaferro County's school system would have on Taliaferro County as a whole (Taliaferro board of Education Discusses, 1993; The Parents, Citizens, Taxpayers, 1993).

Dr. Harris and others who supported TCSS, struggled to help the district remain solvent.

Forwarding the view of those who favored saving TCSS, Harris cited the community value of the Taliaferro County School as a driving force to save the county's school district. Harris shared:

Schools are very similar in nature to churches i.e. you need a school in the community that it serves. The school faculty in a community based setting can appreciate better, what needs to be done in that community.

Reflecting on the struggle to save TCSS, Dr. Harris recounted that the battle was external to TCSS as well as internal. Offering remembrances on the debate at a community meeting on the school dissolution issue, Harris revealed that some Taliaferro County Board of Education members were in support of the initiative to relinquish Taliaferro County's schools. Dr. Harris recounted:

There was a Taliaferro County board member who indicated that the children [from Taliaferro County] could get a better education by going to school in Greene County. Well, he continued and had a lot of positive things to say about moving the school district to Greene County. It seemed that he wanted to persuade the citizens of Taliaferro County that moving the school district to Greene County was the thing to do. So when he finished his speech I made my appeal to the audience. I tried to reason with the citizens at the meetings.

Think about it , if you [the parents] send your children to Greene County you are going to have to get them up at four or five o'clock in the morning [six year old children] so that you can send them to school in Greene County. Also, by the time the children would have gotten to Greene County it would have been too late for breakfast. Can you imagine, a six year old child not getting anything to eat until 11 or 12 o'clock [at lunch]. The idea of bussing the children [elementary and middle school] to Greene County seemed absurd.

It [the proposition] also potentially inhibited participation in extra-curricular activities because of the transportation factor. Also, the younger Taliaferro County children may have felt as if they weren't necessarily welcome. Imagine kids talking 'Here you are, you don't even have a school, a high school in your county now you've got to come up here and freeload on us so to speak.'

Dr. Harris' appeals to the community in Taliaferro County were rational. Moving Taliaferro County's elementary and middle school students to Greene County would have caused a tremendous inconvenience for parents and put small children in a hardship situation because they would not have been able to enjoy the benefit of school food services during morning hours. Also, TCSS' elementary children may have endured taunting and cruel treatment by elementary students in Greene County because of Taliaferro County's impoverished situation.

Evans Harris' appeals to the Taliaferro County school community were heard and supported by many in the community as well as the Georgia Department of Education. Dr. Harris stated:

Anyway, many of the citizens of Taliaferro County were very supportive of what I had to say. The state department representative at the meeting also said 'Dr. Harris, you're exactly right.' Also, a study had never been done on the feasibility of moving the Taliaferro County school system to Greene County so the whole thing was really based more on feelings or emotions than fact.

It [the merger of the elementary and middle school students] was a potentially unwholesome situation. Also there was potential [with the merger of the elementary and middle schools] for misuse of special education monies.

On March 15, 1993, the Taliaferro County Board of Education voted to maintain the county's school system (Taliaferro's Last Public School). School district employees and members of the school board agreed to salary cuts to help ease the financial strain in the district as well (Letter to the Board of Education, 1993). Also, Dr. Harris indicated that the publicity that the school district received helped to bring in state department officials, who in turn, provided Taliaferro County with the monies it needed through a Sparsity Grant to help the district compensate for its lack of revenue due to a small student population and the consolidation of its high school with the high school in Greene County. Dr. Harris stated:

In sparsity grant cases, additional monies are allocated by the state to offset shortages. So Taliaferro County got sparsity money with assistance from the state department at that time. The exposure [from the conflict over closing the school] led to this because when they [the state department of education] found out what was going on, fair-minded people at the state department said 'Look, what can we do to help this school district overcome the dilemma that they're in.' So we were able to get sparsity money, and we were able to get a bunch of other sources that really saved the school district.

Dr. Evans Harris and Taliaferro County School District supporters were successful in their efforts to save the county's remaining school. The situation in Taliaferro County during the spring of 1993 was controversial but it helped the district to maintain its schools and established

Evans Harris as a capable superintendent. Evans Harris' struggle to save the Taliaferro County school district was not the only challenge that he faced during his time as superintendent. He fought to establish programs to benefit the district's students.

Establishing Programs

After saving the Taliaferro County school district from dissolution, Evans Harris worked to establish programs in the school system to benefit the students. Harris' efforts in this area began with work with the other African American superintendents in Georgia during the mid-1990s. Through his work with other African American superintendents in Georgia, Evans Harris was able to help place the instructional needs of rural Georgia school districts on the agenda at statewide meetings and forums, revealing:

I worked, I thought, reasonably well with other African American superintendents in Georgia at that time [during Dr. Harris's superintendency, African Americans] had a reasonably substantial number of minority superintendents [in Georgia] at that time.

When we had meetings or conferences [on the state level], superintendents [African American] from the various districts would get together. We would discuss issues of concern and worked to project certain issues to the forefront as a group [of African American superintendents] with common problems. We did that as a group. It was often more effective than having one person advocate on a certain issue.

The common problems at that time [that were faced] included most of us [the African American superintendents in the state]. I say most of us because, except for the large urban areas the superintendents, the other minority superintendents were in small school districts that didn't have a large number of students. Often the smaller districts only had one high school and maybe two or three elementary schools.

So, for the most part, we [African American superintendents in small school districts] were concerned about course offerings. Could we offer a full slate of courses with specialists [people certified in specific areas of education]? We needed people who were specialists for each class and subject area. For example, it was frequently necessary to combine the teaching of certain courses if the person [teacher] did not have a major in a particular area. For instance, we [African American superintendents in small school districts] had to use general science teachers as opposed to chemistry, physics, and mathematics teachers who were specialists in their areas of instruction. So if the schools were sufficiently small enough, which they often were, we had to combine courses to meet students' needs.

Dr. Harris' focus on instructional matters did not end with his emphasis on diverse course offerings for Taliaferro County's middle school students. Harris also focused on getting the parents in Taliaferro County more involved in the districts operations. Harris' efforts at increasing parent involvement were difficult because parents in the county lost interest in the school districts' operations after the battle to save the district in 1993. Harris indicated:

Parent participation was a big issue. You would think that it [parent participation] would have been great after 1993 but keeping parents involved was a struggle. It was pretty difficult to get parents to participate because more often than not, you [an administrator] have to . . . approach parents in the most positive way that you can because if they've [parents] had bad experiences in schools, they're more likely to come to school with not such a positive attitude.

If they [parents] come to school angry about something, then it's going to be very difficult to have any meeting of the minds. So, unfortunately during the early part of my superintendency we had some teachers who didn't relate well to students and we had some parents that supported children that caused problems in the classroom. So as superintendent I worked on building school and community rapport.

Dr. Harris maintained an "open door" policy during his time as superintendent and made parent support of TCSS an initiative. Also during his tenure as superintendent, Harris focused on school system security. The focus on security was due to a perceived lack of respect for the county's school district which lingered among some residents and school district property became a target for attack. Dr. Harris indicated:

I think that a part of the problem [with needing enhance security] was that there was sort of a lack of respect that had grown over time for schools. Break-ins were bad. Observation [around the school] was not that good. However, we [the school administration] were able to overcome that by putting up security fences while at the same time opening up the school to the community. We wanted to protect the school's property but open it up to the community.

You see, we [the school district administration] held meetings that included community members on a regular basis. We held in-service programs and tried to get people involved. We met problems head on. We worked through issues as a community. We projected a degree of openness that I think had not been available in the community prior to my serving as superintendent. We empowered people.

Dr. Harris was effective in his efforts as superintendent of TCSS. Dr. Harris noted:

The Taliaferro County School District was successful under my leadership. I make that estimation on the number of our students that were able to go to the high school in Greene County and become valedictorians, salutatorians etc . . . So we think that we saw an upgrade in the level of education that we provided for students here in Taliaferro County under my leadership.

TCSS superintendency allowed Dr. Evans Harris to serve the school community that he was a student in more than 50 years earlier. Through the programs that he implemented in TCSS, Evans Harris was able to increase the level of services provided to students in the county while improving relations between school district officials and citizens in the county.

Evans Harris' four year elected term in Taliaferro County came to an end a year early in 1996, when as his wife Ann suffered with illness that required Evans Harris to retire early from the Taliaferro School District. Evans Harris left TCSS with fond memories reflecting on the change that he implemented in the district and throughout his career as an educator.

Retirement

Dr. Harris' wife, Ann, became terminally ill during his tenure as superintendent in Taliaferro County. As a result, after a three-year term as superintendent, Evans Harris permanently retired from education. Reflecting on the significance and impact of his career as an educator in K-12 and higher education settings, Dr. Harris recounted how his position in Taliaferro County culminated a theme in his career as he often worked to "change the thinking" in areas where African Americans were not accustomed nor expected to achieve. Dr. Harris referenced the book *Gifted Hands* in making his analysis:

Edmonds, from Harvard summed up problems in schools in urban, impoverished areas. He [Edmonds] looked at schools, and found that in any ghetto or any district, or many I'll say, he found that when a student was taught under certain kinds of circumstances where people had high expectations for them to learn, where you had strong leadership, teachers who believed that students could learn, that it [the expectations] became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

You go to Detroit [Michigan] for instance, there was a man that became a doctor. He started out majoring and just failing everything. As a matter of fact, he was from a broken home and so forth. But, the mother got on the case and as a result she made him study, and made him report on each book and so forth, and so he went on to become an outstanding physician. He wrote the book *Gifted Hands*. He was successful in separating the twins from Germany, they were connected at the head and he did that. He was the first one that did that. He was from a ghetto in Detroit,

I think we [Taliaferro County] had that kind of situation where when it comes right down to it we said that we had talented students just like in the urban ghetto and we needed to challenge and develop it [the students' talents] and maintain the school district in the county in making it so.

Dr. Harris, who focused on students throughout his career, made a final assessment of his greatest contribution to education, stating:

So the greatest contribution that I've made everywhere I have worked would have to do with students; going into situations where students, supposedly were marginal at best, and doing work that helped them reach the point where they became college presidents, university administrators, and school district superintendents.

Today, Dr. Evans Harris is retired and lives in Taliaferro County, Georgia.

CHAPTER 6

BEAUTY P. BALDWIN

A Strong Foundation

For nearly a century following Reconstruction at the end of the Civil War, sharecropping served as an economic base in the southern United States (Fite, 1984). Beauty Poole, born March 12, 1942, who after marriage became Beauty P. Baldwin, was the daughter of sharecroppers. Like other sharecroppers' children who grew up in Baldwin and Washington Counties in Georgia during the 1940s and early 1950s, Beauty Baldwin worked alongside her parents in middle Georgia's cotton fields. Beauty Baldwin's work in the cotton fields to help support her family was a circumstance created by the economic realities of sharecropping.

During the 1940s and 1950s in places like Baldwin, Hancock, and Washington Counties in Georgia, wealthy cotton planters owned a large portion of the farmland. In a common practice, cotton planters contracted much of their land to sharecroppers, Black and White, who raised cotton on the planters' lands (Fite, 1984; Schultz, 1999). As payment for raising cotton on a planter's land, sharecroppers received a portion of the profits made when the planter sold the cotton.

Sharecropping appeared to be a convenient exchange between planters and sharecroppers. However, sharecroppers owned no land and lived in poverty. As a result, sharecroppers were often exploited by planters (Schultz, 1999). The problem of poverty among sharecroppers was exacerbated by the fact that they often incurred debts during a growing season because they purchased goods on credit granted by the planters. Credit debts decimated sharecroppers' earnings at the end of the growing season (Schultz, 1999).

In attempts to compensate for the financial losses created by credit debts, sharecroppers, sometimes at the demand of planters, included their children in their work to increase labor production (Schultz, 1999; Fite, 1984). In fact, schools in the south sometimes based their class sessions on the cotton-growing season.

Growing up as a sharecropper's daughter, Beauty Baldwin learned a strong work ethic. Also, because of her experiences working in cotton fields and dealing with the reality of not having sufficient money in her household, Baldwin learned that she did not want to be a sharecropper as an adult.

In the midst of her economic situation as a small child and adolescent, Beauty Baldwin, with the encouragement of her parents, developed a love for math, a thirst for knowledge, and a drive to excel that carried her all the way to a historic appointment as Georgia's first African American female superintendent (see Appendix B). Baldwin's ascent to the superintendency in Buford City, Georgia began at Savannah State College (SSC) in 1959.

In 1959, SSC ascribed to two main purposes. First, SSC provided students with an education that would help them live effectively in a democratic society. Second, SSC offered continuing educational and cultural programs to the people of Georgia. The objectives for SSC in 1959 were:

1. To gain basic preparation, personal qualities, and skills which are essential alike to further study, earning a living, and personal well being;
2. To understand the nature of mental, emotional, and physical health and to practice habits conducive to sound personal and community health;
3. To attain a sharp awareness of social and civic responsibility and live daily as good citizens;
4. To understand the common phenomena of man's physical environment and use scientific advances for human welfare;

5. To cherish a discerning knowledge of man's cultural heritage, respect for foreign peoples and cultures, and aesthetic appreciation of the creative artistic expressions of the human spirit;
6. To know and live by those moral and spiritual values which refine and exalt human life. (Savannah State College, 1959, p. 15)

Student life at SSC in 1959 was characterized by dormitory living that offered students the opportunity to participate in social events, and the mens and womens dorm associations sponsored dorm-wide activities. Activities at SSC included clubs for art, business, dance, and debating. SSC also offered its students access to national sororities and fraternities including Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Alpha Phi Alpha, and Omega Psi Phi. In addition, SSC encouraged the religious growth of its students. SSC retained a minister on its staff. SSC also sponsored weekly church and vesper services (Savannah State College, 1959).

Students from Georgia who lived on SSC's campus attended school for an estimated cost of \$684.00 per academic year. The \$684.00 cost did not include lab or book fees. Out-of-state students were assessed a \$100.00 tuition fee.

In her reflections on her experiences growing up in Baldwin and Washington Counties in Georgia, and then as a student at SSC, Beauty Baldwin focused on three areas. Baldwin's discussions first covered her parents' support of her schooling and their efforts to push her to excel. The support that Baldwin received from her parents was significant and especially important to her mother who did not have much formal schooling but wanted more for her children.

Baldwin also recounted the enormous monetary and human sacrifices that her parents made which allowed her to attend SSC beginning in the fall of 1959. Finally, Baldwin reflected on the mentoring that she received from professors at SSC and how their efforts helped mold her

into a professional and prepared her for work as a classroom teacher after graduation from SSC in 1963.

Be the Best at Whatever You Do

Growing up as a sharecropper's daughter, Beauty Baldwin knew first hand the labor and struggle that people in poverty endured. Instead of becoming a victim of her circumstances, Beauty Baldwin, with the help of her mother who was not highly educated, used poverty as a motivator to rise from its clutches. The talented math student who walked to a two-room red-school house in the country looked toward better days.

Reflecting on her youth, Beauty Baldwin indicated that as the child of sharecroppers she "never had much of anything," in terms of material possessions. Baldwin's parents like many other sharecroppers in Washington and Baldwin counties and areas throughout the south were caught in the vicious economic cycle produced by the subsistence existence that the system provided for sharecroppers.

Because Beauty Baldwin's parents were sharecroppers, they were poor. As a result, Baldwin's family often lacked the financial resources necessary to support its immediate needs which forced them to resort to credit guaranteed by the crops that they grew. When the crops were sold and yearlong debts were paid, the Baldwin family had little money left to support its needs. Beauty Baldwin observed this system firsthand and endured many hours in the hot Georgia sun to help her family's struggle through labor in the fields.

Because of her experiences with sharecropping, Beauty Baldwin knew early that she did not want her life to be that of an adult sharecropper, trapped in poverty, toiling in the sun.

Baldwin shared:

What made me think about what I wanted to do later in life was the fact that I hated the sun [being in the field picking cotton] and of course, I picked cotton a lot. I didn't want

to ever have to do that [be a sharecropper and pick cotton] again.

Knowing that her family was depending on her labor, Beauty Baldwin toiled in the sun as a child and adolescent. While toiling in the sun, Baldwin never gave up her desire to leave the cotton field. Fortunately, Baldwin's parents who always told her "whatever, you do be the best that you can at it" had the same aspiration for Beauty and pushed her to excel in school.

Although barely educated themselves, Sammie George and Beaurena Brown Poole knew the value of education. Beauty Baldwin revealed:

My parents did not finish school. However, My mother just always wanted us to further our education. She couldn't help us [the Poole children] a lot, but she was there for us. When I would stay up and work at night she would be right there by me, even though she really couldn't help me with a lot of stuff. So, she encouraged me to go further. At the time, I was young, very young. I didn't know what I was going to do, but I did know that one day I was going to be a math teacher. I knew when I was in third or fourth grade, that I was going to be a math teacher.

Beauty Baldwin knew early in life that she wanted to be a math teacher. Baldwin traced her desire to teach math to her experiences as a student in segregated school systems in Baldwin and Washington Counties. In Baldwin County, where Beauty Baldwin received her elementary schooling, she and other sharecroppers' children walked to a two-room, red schoolhouse that had two teachers. The Washington County School for African American students housed all its students in the two-room building.

Beauty Baldwin recounted that when she was in the 3rd grade, she was the teacher's assistant for the lower elementary students. Baldwin helped other students in the class with their assignments after she finished her work. As a result, Beauty Baldwin was recommended for an aptitude test during her third grade year that she passed, and she was promoted to the fourth grade.

By the time she entered middle school, Beauty Baldwin's family moved to Washington County, Georgia. In Washington County, the Poole family continued to work as sharecroppers and Beauty attended middle school in the county, later moving on to the local high school, T. J. Elder.

Beauty Baldwin was a top student at T.J. Elder High School and she took all of the math courses that were offered. Baldwin's involvement in the academic program at T.J. Elder High School and her work to help support her family was such that she was not able to participate in many extracurricular activities offered at the school, like band and chorus. However, Beauty Baldwin's hard work in the classroom paid off and she graduated at the top of her class, positioning herself to take advantage of the opportunity to attend college at a time when many African American students were not able to because of financial difficulties. Beauty Baldwin indicated:

Out of the 66 kids in my class, I was number 3 in the class [at graduation]. Not all of the kids that you [a person in the community] thought would go to college went away to college back then. It was a challenge to be able to go to college.

Beauty Baldwin met the challenge and in 1959, with assistance provide by the Pickett and Hatchet Loan Company located in Columbus Georgia, Baldwin began school at SSC. Baldwin was able to secure funding for her education because of her achievements in the classroom. At SSC, Baldwin was fortunate enough to establish relationships with caring professors who allowed her to earn extra money working in their homes. However, before Beauty Baldwin ever met the professors at SSC, she and her family made tremendous sacrifices to allow her to begin her education at the school.

The Cost of Aspirations

After graduating from T. J. Elder High School in the spring of 1959, Beauty Baldwin turned her attention to college admissions. The next step in getting to SSC, the school where Baldwin received her undergraduate training was securing funding. The Pickett and Hatchet Loan Company provided the funds that allowed Beauty Baldwin to depart Sandersville for SSC. At SSC, Beauty Baldwin maintained a job where she made enough money to send some home to her mother who worked in domestics at that time.

Beauty Baldwin was one of a fortunate number of African American students who were able to finance a college education during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Commenting on the financial obstacles that African American students faced during the late 1950s and early 1960s, Beauty Baldwin indicated:

One reason [that a large number of African American students did not go to college] was because nobody had a lot of money, and we didn't have the advantages of scholarships that you [students] have today, and [there were] very few outlets for lending money to people, but we [the Poole family] found this little place called Pickett and Hatchet in Columbus, Georgia that loaned money to kids to go to school. We did the application and we were accepted.

Encouraged by her parents, Beauty Baldwin applied for the college loan from Pickett and Hatchet and was accepted. The loan that Beauty Baldwin received from Pickett and Hatchet covered her tuition, room and board at SSC. The Pickett and Hatchet loan carried with it a four year grace period and the stipulation that Beauty Baldwin maintain a high grade point average while at SSC, ensuring that she would have "little time to doddle." The requirements of the loan agreement inadvertently ensured that Beauty Baldwin would not have time to work while at SSC.

Initially, not being able to work created a hardship in the life of Beauty Baldwin because she lacked the money to take care of her personal needs while she was at SSC. Beauty Baldwin's mother made the sacrifice to help her child stay in school. Beauty Baldwin remembered:

While I was in school [college] my mother worked in domestics, washing clothes etc . . . She would wash clothes and it [the money that Beauty Baldwin's mother made] was \$2.50 a week and she'd send it to me.

Well, I knew that I had to have a job. I was taking all of my mother's few dollars that she was making to make ends meet at Savannah State.

Living on campus and having to rely on her mother's income to support her monetary needs, Beauty Baldwin's situation seemed bleak. However, Beauty Baldwin came under the mentorship of a social studies professor at SSC who paid her \$30.00 a month to baby-sit his four-year-old daughter for three to four hours in the evenings while he taught at the college and his wife traveled home from her job in Savannah.

Beauty Baldwin cared for Dr. E.K. Williams' daughter and helped her with basic literacy exercises. Also, with the money that Beauty Baldwin received from her baby-sitting job, she was able to help improve her mother's financial situation in Washington County by sending her a significant portion of the money that she earned. Beauty Baldwin continued her babysitting job for two years.

With her financial situation at SSC settled, Beauty Baldwin was able to focus on academics. The academic program at SSC proved to be challenging and it focused on students' personal and professional preparation.

Becoming an Educator

Arriving at SSC in 1959, Beauty Baldwin discovered that T. J. Elder High School had not fully prepared her for the academic rigors of a college curriculum. After taking classes to bring her academic skills to the level of students at SSC, Baldwin continued her academic studies with

little difficulty. Beyond the academic instruction that Beauty Baldwin, a math major with a Spanish minor, received at SSC, she also had the good fortune to be mentored by professors who showed her what it meant to be an educator.

The strong African American role models at SSC reinforced much of what Baldwin learned about respect, expectations, and achievement in her earlier schooling experiences. The lessons in professionalism that Baldwin learned at SSC helped mold and prepared her to be an effective educator. Baldwin indicated:

There was just a thing at Savannah State, and not only there but in my high school as well. There's a thing about Black teachers back in those days. Back then they [Black teachers] were different. There was this thing [attitude] with Black teachers that 'You [the student] are gonna do what you supposed to do and you can do anything that anybody else can do.' That was the attitude that I learned at Savannah State. To me, that [the culture at Savannah State] was real important. The professors [at Savannah State] knew 'here are these little country children [laughter].' These country 'chil-en in here. We've got to mold these kids.' And they [the professors] did. They did.

The professionalism that was shown by professors back then, I mean that was great, they emulated what it should be like to be a teacher. I can [only] think of one professor who didn't emulate that, and that was one who never came to class. . . always sent an aide to class. Because of that I didn't learn in that class what I should have learned because the aide was a student just like me, but 99% of my professors were professional, and made sure you knew that, and made sure that if you were going to go into teaching profession you were equipped with the proper skills.

Beauty Baldwin thrived in the professional culture present at SSC, and she grew personally and professionally because of her exposure to professors who "exuded an aura of professionalism." The SSC curriculum did not end with the professionalism that was inculcated by the professors at the school. SSC's curriculum addressed the cultural and religious needs of its students as well. Baldwin revealed:

The college made sure that there were concerts and cultural kinds of things and made sure that whatever your beliefs were when it came to religion, that that wasn't hampered at all because they provided on campus Sunday school, and vespers. Everybody was required to attend vespers, which was a non-denominational church service.

The school made provisions for you to be able to leave campus and go to the church of your choice. Back in the day, women were not allowed to leave campus without an escort or a note written by your parents filed in the office of the Dean of Women. Women couldn't have cars on campus. So, that was just a lot of those things that impacted how I was when I left there [SSC].

Beauty Baldwin's comments indicated that SSC like other Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Georgia functioned as closed communities that insulated students from potential trouble in the world outside of these college communities. There was a purpose for SSC's method, uninterrupted student preparation. As a result, when students left SSC, they were ready for work in their chosen professions. When Beauty Baldwin left SSC in 1963, she was ready to teach. Baldwin recalled:

I was ready to teach when I left school [SSC]. No ifs ands or buts about it. The one thing I did well was teach. You know, somebody asked me 'What do you do the best?' 'Are you the best administrator?' I'm a great administrator, but the best thing I do is teach and its because I was taught how to teach.

A teacher asked me the other day 'How can I get the children on task?' It bugs me when I see a class with 15 kids and the teacher's having problems. When I was teaching math I had a lot of kids in the class with a lot of different levels of ability. I grouped them.

Well how do you keep them quiet? You learn to do these things. You experiment with things. For one thing, kids are not talking if they're busy, so you make sure that every group is working on something and do your concepts and then you can tell which ones didn't get it. Give that one [group] an assignment, give the other three groups an assignment, and work with the groups. One on one. It works. You have to establish that first, though.

Beauty Baldwin learned how to teach while she was at SSC. More than teaching students how to teach, SSC built on the lessons that Baldwin learned in her home and helped mold her into a competent professional.

The environment that Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) like SSC provided during the time of segregation and the civil rights movement was necessary. African American college students needed places where they could study uninterrupted by the turmoil in

the world outside of college campuses (see Table 4.1 and Chapter 2 for details). In addition, HBCUs provided a part of the professional training that Ellerbee (2002) cited as a key element that was missing in present African American communities which limited African Americans chances of ascending to school district superintendencies (see Table 2.1). Fortunately, Beauty Baldwin received that training.

Teaching

Beauty Baldwin's career as a teacher included positions at 5 schools over a span of 15 years. After graduating from SSC, Baldwin began her teaching career at John Lewis High School in Ellaville, Georgia. During the time that Baldwin worked at John Lewis High School, the civil rights movement continued to evolve. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, and protests, demonstrations, and actions by police to subdue civil rights activists in Selma, Alabama heightened consciousness in the United States, leading to the August 6, 1965 enactment of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (Ball, Krane, & Lauth, 1982; Daniel, 1965; Selma Police, 1965).

Beauty Baldwin married her husband, Lucious, in 1963. In the fall of 1965, Baldwin moved from Ellaville to her husband's hometown of Columbus, Georgia. In Columbus, Beauty Baldwin, a math instructor, first taught at Marshall Junior High School. Beauty Baldwin taught mathematics at Marshall Junior High School until 1967 at which time the principal at Marshall (Eddie Lindsay) was transferred to Spencer High School to assume the principalship formerly held by Mr. Charles Duval. Beauty Baldwin was one of the faculty members that Eddie Lindsay took with him to Spencer High School.

During 1968, Beauty Baldwin became pregnant with her daughter, Geri Michele, and took maternity leave from the Muscogee County School District (Columbus). In the fall of 1969, less than six months after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (April 4, 1968),

Baldwin returned to a Muscogee County School District that was beginning the process of desegregation. As a part of the desegregation process that was occurring in Muscogee County, Georgia in 1969, Baldwin was assigned to teach math at Hardaway High School in Columbus.

Mrs. Baldwin continued at Hardaway High School until 1973 at which time she and her husband moved to the Atlanta, Georgia area, settling first in the southwest part of the city and later moving to the city of Lawrenceville in Gwinnett County. The move to Gwinnett County proved to be one of the most significant moves in Beauty Baldwin's life, as she later became superintendent in Buford City, a city school system in Gwinnett County.

Reflecting on her experiences as a mathematics and vocational education teacher, Beauty Baldwin's discussions focused on five themes. First Beauty Baldwin discussed the faculty's efforts to expose the children at John Lewis High School in Ellaville, Georgia to as many opportunities as was possible. Beauty Baldwin also reflected on the continued professional mentoring that she received in her second teaching post at Marshall Junior High School in Columbus, Georgia.

Beauty Baldwin's remembrances continued with discussions of her helping to establish a culture of excellence at Spencer High School in Columbus, Georgia. Beauty Baldwin moved from Spencer High School to Hardaway High School in Columbus and became one of only two African American teachers in the school in 1969. Beauty Baldwin's career as a classroom teacher culminated with her assignment as a mathematics and vocational education teacher at Central Gwinnett High School in Lawrenceville, Georgia.

Exposing Them to Everything She Could

Beauty Baldwin moved to Ellaville, Georgia in 1963 and became part of a school community where few economic opportunities existed for the county's residents. However, in

that same county (Schley), the hunger for learning that existed among the students helped them to persevere, hope for, and seek better circumstances.

John Lewis High School was a small K-12 school that served African American students in Schley County, Georgia during segregation. Beauty Baldwin was the only math teacher at John Lewis High School in 1963. Beauty Baldwin, who was later married to her husband Lucious, whom she met at SSC in 1963, made living arrangements with another single female teacher in the county when she arrived in Ellaville.

Because Ellaville was a rural farming community, the students attended school when they could. However, the students at the school maintained a thirst for knowledge, driven by the hope that some might escape the impoverished conditions in which they lived. Beauty Baldwin shared:

I had kids who wanted to learn because they were just hungry [to learn]. Some [students] knew that they weren't going to leave there [Ellaville] and go anywhere. Most of them didn't leave there at all, but they were hungry for education and those are the ones who stayed behind [after school].

I had kids in my class who were as old or older than I was because in the country students stayed out of school to farm. When they [students] could they came [to school]. However, they were some of the best students that you would ever want to have [desire and politeness]. They appreciated what I did for them. So, I learned early that the secret to getting kids to succeed was to help them. They [the children] would bring all kinds of stuff like collard greens and meat as gifts for my helping them.

Beauty Baldwin became a part of the school community in Ellaville, and the students gave her gifts to show their appreciation. In addition to the academic instruction that was provided at John Lewis High School, faculty at the school helped turn the school into a community center because of a lack of outlets for students in the community.

The faculty's efforts at John Lewis High School resulted in the students at the school enjoying rich educational experiences that went beyond the curriculum and addressed their developmental needs as children and adolescents. Baldwin revealed:

We did community kinds of things and back then we had things for the kids because there was nothing in the community. There was no recreation, nothing like that. The school was the center of the community, so everything happened at the school. We'd have our little dances, and the prom was not held off somewhere, we decorated the gym for the prom and it was just one of those highlights of kids lives, the prom. We didn't have a football team but we had a basketball team.

The faculty at John Lewis High School was dedicated to the work necessary for the school to serve as a community center, and their efforts helped maintain a strong bond between the school and the community in Ellaville, Georgia.

Beauty Baldwin did not let community outreach stop with the school's efforts as she made herself an active part of the African American community in Ellaville. Baldwin revealed:

I made myself a part of the community. I went to church in the community, went to the grocery store there, did whatever they did there, never thought myself to be above any of the people in the school community. Back then we did collaboration [laughter]. We didn't call it that, but we worked together in teams, and I think that the impact that I left on that community was that everybody can learn. Everybody can learn!

Because Beauty Baldwin and other faculty and staff members at John Lewis High School were a part of the African American community in Ellaville, they were able to use their extended "family" position in the community to mentor students. Also, the faculty and staff at John Lewis High School provided students with as many opportunities as possible, and Baldwin elaborated:

For one thing we [the faculty and staff at John Lewis High School] wanted them [the students] to be exposed to as much as we could. We didn't do a lot of field trips during that time because there was no way to do them. Yes, we had a few buses but it was rare that we did field trips. So, we did a lot of things in the school for kids.

We made sure that kids were exposed to things like the math club and the science club, things that other kids did at the other school [the White school]. Even though we were not able to compete against each other [between the segregated schools] we made sure that we did things and competed as often as we could mostly within the school itself. So we tried to expose the children to everything that we knew about that we could expose them to, things that we knew about like 4-H Club. It [4-H Club] was everywhere in the state of Georgia so we made sure that we had a good 4-H Club.

The faculty at John Lewis High School also provided a dram club for the students at the school and other extra curricular activities that helped the children to enjoy a well rounded schooling experience. Because the teachers at John Lewis High School were a part of the African American community in Ellaville, they were able to discipline the children in ways that might be controversial in schools today. The teachers at John Lewis did not abuse children but “some ears were wrung.” The result was that the students at John Lewis High School were schooled in a caring and disciplined environment.

The teachers at John Lewis High School helped students to learn and were proactive in making sure that parents were abreast of happenings in the school community. Beauty Baldwin indicated:

Also, even though the parents were not at the school they were close enough so that if you needed to you could go and see them. Also, back then we did home visits. We didn’t wait for the parents to come to school. We went to them. We did home visitations.

“Imagine getting your ear wrung at school, the news beating you home, and then being disciplined by your parents for the events that had taken place at school.” That was the John Lewis High School community. Also, Mrs. Baldwin indicated that the school’s principal, Mr. Harold, was “strong.” The children and parents in the community viewed Mr. Harold as a father figure and as a result, “there were few questions in the community about how the school was run or who had the best interest of the children at heart.”

Ellaville, Georgia was Beauty Baldwin’s first stop in a career in public education that spanned 31 years. At John Lewis High School in Ellaville, Baldwin continued to grow as a professional and was immersed in a school community where the line between school and community life was almost nonexistent. As a result, the students at John Lewis High School were nurtured and encouraged to excel.

Continued Mentoring

At Marshall Junior High School in Columbus, Georgia, Beauty Baldwin came under the tutelage of the school's principal, Eddie Lindsay. Mr. Lindsay was a pillar in the Marshall Junior High community and provided mentoring for the school's faculty. Also, Eddie Lindsay, an English literature scholar, was one of Lucious Baldwin's former teachers. Because of the reputation that Mr. Lindsay had in Columbus as a leader in the African American community and his effectiveness as an administrator, Baldwin had tremendous respect and admiration for him.

Mrs. Baldwin emulated Mr. Lindsay's professionalism while serving as a teacher at Marshall Junior High School. Mrs. Baldwin's studiousness and professional manner proved especially beneficial when it came to Marshall Junior High School faculty meetings, sessions which Mr. Lindsay added a special twist to, and Beauty Baldwin recounted:

I remember that when we had faculty meetings he [Mr. Lindsay] would say to us that as teachers you should continue learning forever. He said that every faculty meeting we would discuss a book. I can recall that teachers would come unprepared. I know how he related this to us. So, when it was my time to recite. I came in with my book and opened to the table of contents and talked about the book from there. He was so impressed with that. He knew that I had done my homework and it was just a matter of doing the report. That was a little thing but it was little things like that that helped me to grow.

Many teachers at Marshall Junior High School failed to grasp one of the lessons that Mr. Lindsay tried to teach through his reading assignments. Eddie Lindsay wanted his teachers to be professionals at the top of their areas of study. In order to be professionals who continued to grow in their fields, teachers at Marshall Junior High School would have to be abreast of literature in their fields and be prepared to speak about their knowledge, experience, and conclusions at assigned times. Beauty Baldwin was aware of Mr. Lindsay's teaching method and

studied hard to impress him. In the process, Baldwin increased her knowledge and professionalism.

While teaching at Marshall Junior High School, Beauty Baldwin used knowledge that she gained from her undergraduate training along with lessons that she learned from Mr. Lindsay to adjust to Columbus' urban school culture and students, a milieu in which she was not accustomed to working. Mrs. Baldwin shared:

Marshall was a big school. Big, I don't remember numbers, but that junior high was as large as the school [high school] that I came from. It [Marshall] had a lot of tradition. It [Marshall] was in the city and we had back then we didn't call kids 'gangs', but there were a lot of kids from the projects at the school. The kids from the projects took care of each other and if at any time you thought that you're going to do something differently, they would let you know in no uncertain terms that its not going to happen.

Anyway, I thought that they [the administration] gave me all of the kids that were bad [laughter] and the administration said these kids could not function well, and some of these kids had parents that you [teachers] don't even want to come in contact with. Well I made up my mind that I wasn't going anywhere. So, I dug in. My thing was that I called, I always call my parents whether the kids were doing good or bad. I'd say 'Oh Johnathan just did so well on his test today.' Or 'Look, Johnathan was trouble today and we need to get together.'

Also Black students in the 60s were accustomed to having strong female teachers. One thing Black kids knew back then was what the teacher said, he or she meant it. Now it was a little different in the city. In the city kids just got away with things more than rural kids did. So, I found [with the children at Marshall] that first I had to let them know who the adult was. At the same time I let them know that I cared about them.

Beauty Baldwin adjusted her classroom management style in Columbus. Coming from Ellaville where the school community was small and students knew that teachers had the backing of their parents, they automatically gave teachers the respect that they were due. At Marshall Junior High School, Baldwin entered a situation where she had to work harder to establish relationships. Baldwin adjusted well. Reflecting on how she built relationships in the Marshall Junior High School community, Mrs. Baldwin indicated that she "cared about how much they learned" and that she "set some great expectations for them [the students]." At Marshall Junior High School,

Beauty Baldwin also learned about student motivation, and she shared “I learned that a lot of times, kids don’t do anything because nobody expects them to do anything.”

Beauty Baldwin set high expectations for her students at Marshall Junior High School, and she elaborated:

So, my first conversation with them [the students] the first day [of school] was ‘This is what I expect. You can do it. You’re smart enough to do it.’ I think that encouragement is still what we need in schools today. So, that’s what I used with those kids. Then I showed them how we could do it.

The students and parents in the Marshall Junior High School community accepted Beauty Baldwin, and she was able to effectively do her job. Mrs. Baldwin’s hard work at Marshall Junior High School resulted in a promotion in 1967, when Eddie Lindsay, the principal of the school, was promoted to the principalship at Spencer High School in Columbus, Georgia. Beauty Baldwin was one of the Marshall Junior High School faculty that Mr. Lindsay took with him to Spencer High School.

Eddie Lindsay selected Beauty Baldwin to move to Spencer High School with him. While at Spencer, Beauty Baldwin still worked as a math teacher. However, the move to a high school position marked an increase in responsibility and prestige and gave Baldwin the experience necessary to become one of the faculty members who helped desegregate Columbus’ Hardaway High School. Mrs. Baldwin recounted the process that led to her being promoted to a position at Spencer High School. Beauty Baldwin recalled:

Charles Duval was the principal at Spencer High School for many years. So, he retired and of course in replacing him the community had stressed the need to fill the position with someone who was of the same caliber [as Mr. Duval]. So, Eddie Lindsay who was the principal at Marshall at the time had worked for Duval. You see he [Eddie Lindsay] had worked at Spencer High School before he became a principal.

So, his [Eddie Lindsay’s] credibility was way up there. He was an English lit professor etc. Every body loved Eddie Lindsay. He [Eddie Lindsay] had earned the respect of many

important people in Columbus at the time. So, he [Eddie Lindsay] was elevated to that position [the principalship at Spencer High School] because of that [his reputation].

He [Eddie Lindsay] had the opportunity at the time of his appointment to fill some slots that were there [at Spencer High School]. So he chose to take me and a couple of other faculty members at Marshall Junior High to Spencer High School.

Marshall Junior High School was the first setting that Beauty Baldwin worked in after leaving Ellaville, Georgia in 1965. In her position at Marshall Junior High School, Beauty Baldwin was able to adjust to the nuances of being a teacher in an urban school district. Also, while at Marshall Junior High School, Beauty Baldwin was able to establish a professional relationship with an administrative elite in the city of Columbus, Mr. Eddie Lindsay. Mrs. Baldwin's high level of professionalism and preparation, all contest efforts, allowed her to receive the benefits of sponsorship in her career in Columbus.

Building A Culture of Excellence

Spencer High School was one of only two African American High Schools in Columbus, Georgia during segregation. The other African American High School in Columbus was Carver High School, which came into existence in 1962. Spencer High School served a diverse community of African American students in Columbus during segregation. Because its physical plant was located in a housing project, Spencer High School had a heavy population of students from the housing project, some of whom were "unruly at times."

As a new teacher at Spencer High School in 1967, Beauty Baldwin adjusted her classroom management style to fit the urban high school setting, and she learned how to use the presence of "gang members" in her classes to her advantage. Baldwin indicated:

Spencer High School was sitting right in the middle of a project [housing project]. Teachers often asked me how I was able to maintain such good discipline in my class. Well that [my strategy] was why, you do what you have to do. So, I knew what I had to do for those kids to keep order in the classroom.

One of my professors at The University of Georgia [Dr. Carvin Brown, who Beauty Baldwin met several years after moving out of Columbus] said to me in my administration course . . . When you go to someplace new, you find out where the power is and you work within that power.

I didn't know that was what I was doing [at Spencer High School] but those were some of the same things that I was doing then. I knew who had the power with those youngsters. It was that little gang leader. My approach was to help him, when he was having problems I would work with him on those things, one on one types of things. So, you didn't cut up in Ms. Baldwin's class. You didn't. Those things were little things that I learned in how to operate with youngsters.

In her classes, Beauty Baldwin was able to establish productive relationships with students that other teachers found "difficult." Because of her approach, Baldwin was successful in dealing with the "problem students" at Spencer High School.

Spencer High School's mix of African American students was not limited to those who were from Columbus' ghetto. Spencer High School had African American students from middle class and affluent families as well. The culture that Spencer's middle class and affluent students brought to the school helped the administration set its expectation for all students at the school. Baldwin revealed:

Spencer High School also had the 'upper crust' [affluent students] in the student population as well. We [the school] we had the crust, the upper crust whose parents had gone to Hampton, and Atlanta University because during that time African Americans couldn't go to any of the White schools, graduate schools even.

So everybody [African Americans in the Columbus communities who received advanced training] either went to AU [Atlanta University] or they went to New York University. New York University, I think was one of the only integrated universities where African Americans could go and get advanced degrees.

So, we had the upper crust all the way down [in terms of socioeconomic status] at that school. Mr. Duval [the former principal] had set the expectation that everybody had to be upper crust. Everybody was to get all of the culture that was to be found. It was brought in even if you didn't go to it. We brought in a lot of stuff [cultural] for the kids.

The principal that I came over to Spencer with [Eddie Lindsay] was good. So, people knew what to expect at the school, the expectation was excellence.

So, the expectation was set. You [as a teacher] just had to go in and follow those guidelines.

The mix of students at Spencer High School and the strong leadership present in the school combined to provide Baldwin a first opportunity to work in a diverse school setting. Through working with the students at Spencer High School, Beauty Baldwin was able to increase her repertoire of skills in managing relationships with students in a classroom setting. Baldwin took maternity leave from the Columbus school system in 1968. When she returned to work in 1969, Beauty Baldwin was selected to help desegregate Columbus' school system as a teacher at Hardaway High School.

One of Two: A Teacher for All

In 1969, the year following the *Green v. County Board* case, 11 years after *Cooper v. Aaron* and 15 years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Beauty Baldwin helped desegregate the Muscogee County School District. In 1969, Baldwin became a teacher at Hardaway High School in Columbus, Georgia. Baldwin built relationships with faculty and staff at Hardaway High School, and she served as a role model for students.

A 1968 study conducted in Georgia by Johnson and Hall shed light on how successful desegregation efforts in Georgia were facilitated by teachers of both races, White and Black. Johnson and Hall's study was a snapshot from the school desegregation era in Georgia and parallels many of the methods that Beauty Baldwin and other educators at Hardaway High School used to help effectively desegregate the Muscogee County School District:

Those teachers who “hang loose,” yet are realistic in recognizing problems, who do not project prejudice or oversensitivity, who search themselves to understand their own feelings, who try consciously to be equal and fair and accepting in all their relationships and reactions, who study and plan and work to teach well—these teachers supported by firm and understanding principals, they make it.

‘Isn’t it just a matter of being a good teacher, of children being children, of doing the same kind of good job you would do anyway?’ This is what school people ask us, over and over again. The answer is ‘yes if . . .’

The ‘if’ means: yes, *if* you are also aware that disadvantaged children usually enter your classroom with certain handicaps; if you understand that Black children almost always have built-in fears and sensitivities about Whites and a White world and that Whites usually have their built-in stereotypes and misunderstandings about Blacks and a Black world; that minor ‘children-will-be-children’ incidents are usually just that but that they may become something else if not handled wisely; that over-aggressiveness and over-shyness are both natural reactions to feeling alone and rejected and that one must not forget the quiet of the shy while coping with the noise of the aggressive; that inability to understand a child’s talk, shock at his precocity regarding worldly things, revulsion at his strong language or his lack of cleanliness, despair at one’s inability to motivate him are, for school people, *instructional* problems and not moral problems requires in the first and last instance honest confrontation with one’s own feelings and biases.

Being a good teacher *is* the basic thing. But being a good teacher always requires sensitivity and understanding of the whole range of problems among all children. And desegregation does bring additional problems. One teacher, after study of this subject, summed up her position: ‘I’m going to try to continue to be a good teacher, only more so.’ This is wisdom. (Johnson & Hall, 1968, p. 23)

Beauty Baldwin’s experiences as a teacher at Hardaway High School paralleled much of the methodology observed by Johnson and Hall (1968). Baldwin reflected on the experience of establishing herself as a teacher in a desegregated setting at Hardaway High School. Indicating that Hardaway High School served Columbus’ contemporary moneyed European American population, Baldwin recounted how she went into a classroom in the spring of 1969 in which the students were use to affluence and privilege and had run away a European American teacher.

Beauty Baldwin effectively worked with students in her class at Hardaway High School and maintained order. Baldwin revealed:

I went in to Hardaway High School in February, into a classroom that was out of control. So, the children respected me. I had the support of the principal and of the parents. That’s why the other lady left, it was totally out of control. Funny, I went in and I got the respect that I got. That had to be part of it. I went in with the same rules and regulations that I did when I was at Spencer. The children and the parents knew that I was there for one reason, to educate the kids. As a result the children respected me and the school community supported me. I was able to do my job effectively.

Beauty Baldwin's ease in establishing relationships with students at Hardaway High School and her acceptance in the school community was possible because of her genuine love of the profession of teaching and her experiences as a child. As a professional educator, Beauty Baldwin enjoyed children, regardless of color.

Sharecropping had given Beauty Baldwin an advantage. Unlike a large number of African Americans during segregation, Baldwin grew up in a setting that required her to closely interact with European Americans on a daily basis. As a result, Beauty Baldwin was confident and at ease in majority race settings. Beauty Baldwin shared:

I enjoyed [the] kids at Hardaway High School. Color didn't matter. That had to do with my background. It [working in a setting with White adults and children] wasn't anything new for me. I worked right along beside White kids in the country. We hung out at each other's houses. We ate each other's food so it [working in a setting with White adults and children] wasn't a big deal for me.

My mother at the time [when Beauty Baldwin was in College] was a maid and I helped her do jobs when I could. So, I was accustomed to that [working with White adults and children]. Well anyway the administration just couldn't believe that this was the same class. But they respected me, and I tried to earn their respect too.

Beauty Baldwin fit in at Hardaway High School because her childhood experiences had prepared her for work in a desegregated setting. As she had done at John Elder High School in Ellaville and Spencer High School in Columbus, Baldwin embraced the children at Hardway High School and was respected as a professional in the school's desegregated setting. Baldwin's experience with school desegregation at Hardaway High School was unusual because it occurred at a time when many African American teachers chose to return to segregated settings.

Beauty Baldwin provided further insight into the reason why she did not return to a segregated school and was able to function effectively as one of two African American teachers at Hardaway High School. Baldwin revealed:

Let me tell you why that [working with White adults and children] was easier for me than most [African Americans in desegregated settings]. I grew up in the country [as a sharecroppers daughter]. Growing up in the country you work side by side in the field with White adults and children. We were all out there doing the same thing.

There were a lot of White sharecroppers, just like Black sharecroppers. So, I think I learned that growing up that I'm just as good as anybody else is. I'm not better, but I'm just as good. And I think that really helped me function in those areas where other teachers quit and said 'No, I'm going back to the Black school.' A lot of teachers went back to the Black school.

Beauty Baldwin explained why African American teachers left desegregated school settings:

African American teachers left desegregated schools because of comfort. Not that they were bad teachers but they didn't feel comfortable teaching in an integrated setting. That's why some of our kids [African American] are missing out right now because there aren't a large number of African American role models in place in school for them to see. Also, African American kids need to be pushed [academically] and allowed to think just like all kids. Kids period need to explore and think.

Because of her experiences, Beauty Baldwin adjusted quickly to Hardaway High School's desegregated setting. However, the Hardaway High School community in which Beauty Baldwin was immersed was slower to adjust to desegregation. The bussing of more African American students to Hardaway High School after 1969 caused escalating tensions. Relationships had to be built among students and other faculty in the school. Trouble abounded. Baldwin indicated:

Hardaway [prior to desegregation] served the community the way Spencer served its community. However, Hardaway hadn't quite figured out how to serve Black kids when schools in Columbus desegregated. Some Black kids were angry who came in, because year after year more Black kids came into the same situation.

What was happening with Black kids at that time? They were on the school bus, bussed by other schools they would have preferred to have gone to. The Black students were bussed by all these huge, beautiful homes to Hardaway High School. After classes were over the African American students got back on the bus and went back the same route, back to a living condition that was not like that at all [the things they saw in the community surrounding Hardaway High School].

Student comfort and economic disparity caused problems at Hardaway High School. Because the African American students were bussed out of their neighborhoods to Hardaway High School, they experienced school desegregation in unfamiliar and sometimes unwelcoming surroundings. Because many of the African American students at Hardaway High School came from poverty, they did not have the resources and luxuries that the European American students at Hardaway High School enjoyed and consequently they experienced trouble with their self esteem.

The situation at Hardaway High School during the late 1960s and early 1970s led to fights between African and European American students at the school. Reflecting on the climate at Hardaway High School during school desegregation, Baldwin indicated that she “wasn’t sure if that (bussing) wasn’t a mistake” because of the adverse effect that it had on students in the school. The faculty and at Hardaway High School, many of whom had middle class origins, tried to ease tensions during the school desegregation process. Baldwin indicated:

It [the faculty] was a helpful staff. They tried their best to make kids feel like they were part of it [the school], but that’s a lesson that had to be taught. If you were not accustomed to having Black kids then you really had to learn their culture at that time [coming from impoverished homes].

You see, although teachers were not wealthy at that time. Teachers didn’t have Black kids around them. So getting some of the teachers to a point where everyone could work well with one another was the first task and there were some good teachers who did it well [worked with students of both races]. They were just good teachers and they’d be good no matter where they were.

The faculty at Hardaway High School was not alone in its efforts to ease the desegregation process. The school’s principal had to adjust to the nuances of supervision in a newly desegregated school. Beauty Baldwin shared:

Also, the principal made adjustments as well. I think that he really evolved in his view on people and dealing with kids of all types. Also as the years went by, I think that he really developed a sense of how you treat people, no matter what color they are. That kind of thing. I think that we, the faculty helped him with that too. It was a teaching process more

than in the classroom for people like me. I also say that you never put a timid person in a situation like that [desegregation].

Fortunately, Beauty Baldwin was not a timid person and she stayed at Hardaway High School until 1973 when she moved to Atlanta, Georgia. Also, throughout the transition period at Hardaway High School, Beauty Baldwin maintained her professionalism and served as a role model for all students. Baldwin's efforts at Hardaway High School paid off and she was selected as the school's Star Teacher in 1972. Commenting on the impact that her selection as Star Teacher had on the Hardaway High School community, Baldwin revealed that after her selection, African Americans in the school community began to feel, "Yes we can make it we can do it."

Hardaway High School was a proving ground for Beauty Baldwin. Having just returned to the Muscogee County School District from maternity leave, Baldwin elected to accept a tough assignment in 1969, use her skills, and help desegregate Hardaway High School. The experience that Baldwin gained at Hardaway High School, while not new to her, was significant, as gained firsthand experience with work in a desegregated school setting. Further, school desegregation efforts continued nationally during Baldwin's tenure at Hardaway High School as the landmark *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* Case (1971) furthered school desegregation efforts in the United States.

Beauty Baldwin's experience with being one of only a few African Americans in a majority school setting proved invaluable in her gaining employment as a teacher in Gwinnett County, Georgia in 1973. Mrs. Baldwin's employment in the Gwinnett County Public Schools system (GCPS) was especially significant because of the sparse number of African American's that the county hired during the 1970s. In fact, during her tenure as a teacher at Central Gwinnett High School, Beauty Baldwin was the only African American adult at the school.

One in a Thousand: A Future Superintendent

Beauty Baldwin became a teacher in the GCPS system in August of 1973. Baldwin's appointment in GCPS occurred at a time when African Americans were not widely recruited or hired in this system even in the face of sanctions by the federal government (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1969a, 1969b, 1971a, 1971b, 1977). Baldwin's appointment as a classroom teacher in GCPS was significant because it gave her entrée into a circle of administrators that supported her career and this appointment gave her entrée into a county in which she would later become superintendent of one of its city school systems.

Explicating the context of Gwinnett County's hiring practices during the early 1970s, Georgia Department of Negro Education Office of Civil Rights records revealed a dispute between the Region IV Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and the Gwinnett County Public Schools (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1969a, 1969b, 1971c, 1972a, 1977). The dispute between the GCPS and the OCR began in 1969 and lasted through 1977.

OCR began its examination of the GCPS civil rights compliance and school desegregation practices in September of 1969 (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1969a). On September 18, 1969, OCR representatives visited GCPS and examined evidence of the system's school desegregation efforts. The September 18, 1969 visit revealed that the GCPS was unitary and in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibited race, sex, or national origin discrimination against employees in programs that received federal assistance.

Although the September 18, 1969 visit to GCPS by OCR officials did not reveal civil rights violations, questions concerning GCPSs efforts to recruit and to hire African American teachers and administrators did arise. The OCR found that in 1969, the number of African

American teachers in GCPS decreased to 15 while the year-long hiring cycle in GCPS produced 212 new teachers of whom none were African American (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1969b).

By February of 1971, OCR increased its pressure on GCPS to change its personnel management practices by actively recruiting and hiring African American teachers and administrators. Georgia Department of Negro Education records revealed that between 1969 and 1971, GCPS hired 533 teachers (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1971a, 1971b). Six of the 533 teachers hired by GCPS between 1969 and 1971 were African American (1971d). Georgia Department of Negro Education Records for the 1971-1972 school year also showed that GCPS hired an additional 128 teachers for the 1971-1972 school year, none of whom were African American.

In response to GCPS's hiring practices, the Region IV Office of Civil Rights forwarded correspondence to GCPS superintendent, J. W. Benefield stating:

We have completed an analysis of the information available to us, including that received during our visit and information you provided to our office with regard to the implementation of your desegregation plan. Although you have implemented the majority of your plan for establishing a unitary, non-racial school system, our review revealed some evidence of discriminatory practice in the recruitment and hiring of Black teachers.

The information, OE Forms 7001-7002 and OE/CR Forms 102-1, your office submitted revealed a great reduction in Black full-time teachers and Black principals from 1966-1971. Forms 7001-02 dated April 7, 1966 showed 29 Black full-time teachers and two Black non-teaching principals. This represents a 48.3 percent erosion of Black teachers and a 100 percent erosion of Black principals. The OCR team reviewed the payroll records for the period mentioned above and found that two Black teachers had been hired bringing the total to 17, thus, reducing the erosion to 41 percent. Of the 17 currently employed, the team was assured that 11 or 12 were definitely scheduled to return for the 1971-1972 school year.

In the event the other five or six do not return or are not replaced by other Black teachers, there will be a 58.6 percent to 62 percent erosion in Black full-time teachers from 1966 through 1971. This continued reduction indicates a trend of significant erosion of Black teachers and Black staff which needs immediate correction. Your records on employment

further revealed that at the time of the review, 128 new teachers, none of whom were Black, had been hired for the 1971-1972 school term.

It was noted through statistical records (the Forms mentioned above) submitted by your district that between 1968 and 1970, the district hired 533 new White teachers and only three new Black teachers. During the review the team found that actually six instead of three Blacks had been hired.

It appeared that there were Black applicants for varied positions and available sources of possible staff which were not considered for employment. The team reviewed your file of applications which contained 1058 applications of which 27 were from Black applicants. . . The recruiting done by your staff did not include an equal effort to recruit Black staff. It was noted from the Gwinnett County Recruiting Schedule you submitted that only one predominately Black institution, Fort Valley State College, was included among the total of 26 institutions.

Because of your failure to recruit and hire more Black teachers and Black professional staff since 1968, it appears to be a continuous pattern in your district over several years of decreasing the number of Black full-time teachers and Black professional staff members and increasing the number of White full-time teachers and White professional staff members. It appears that no Black principal has been hired since Mr. Lawrence Coleman died in 1968 even though five new schools have opened since then. (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1971d, pp. 1-3)

The Region IV Office of Civil Rights continued to monitor GCPS hiring practices throughout 1971 and 1972 (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1971d, 1972a).

By March of 1972, GCPS appealed to the Georgia Department of Education for help in dealing with the Region IV Office of Civil Rights (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1972b). The Georgia Department of Education referred the matter to Georgia Senator Herman Talmadge. Talmadge and Georgia United States representative, Phil Landrum, then engaged the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare about the activities of the Region IV Office of Civil Rights, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia (1972 c, 1972d, 1972e).

The actions of Talmadge and Landrum made Region IV officials aware of the involvement of Georgia's Congressional representatives in Washington DC. However, OCR continued its examination of GCPS hiring practices throughout the 1970s. In 1973, J.W.

Benefield, superintendent of Gwinnett County schools, hired Beauty Baldwin to work as a teacher at Central Gwinnett High School.

Beauty Baldwin's transition into the GCPS, began with her husband's decision to move to Atlanta to seek different job opportunities. Arriving in Atlanta in June of 1973, Baldwin began her search for a new teaching position. Baldwin's job search covered most of the school districts in the metropolitan Atlanta area including Cobb and Gwinnett Counties. Baldwin was offered a job at McKetchen High School in Cobb County, and was also offered a position at Dunwoody High School in Fulton County, Georgia. Baldwin turned down both positions. During one of her final interviews, she met the principal of Central Gwinnett High School (CGHS), Lex Cassidy.

Beauty Baldwin recalled:

Lex Cassidy was the principal at the time [at Central Gwinnett]. He said I want you to go see the superintendent. So I went to see J.W Benfield, he and I are friends today. We are in the Rotary Club together. He talked with me and said, we want to hire you. CGHS did not have one Black adult at that school. Not even in custodial services or in the kitchen. Not one. I was there for seven years and I was still the only Black adult at that school.

Beauty Baldwin was the only African American adult at CGHS during her seven-year tenure at the school. OCR records substantiated that Baldwin was one of a very small number of African Americans hired by the GCPS during the late 1960s and 1970s. Beauty Baldwin gained her teaching position in the vocational education program at CGHS through contest career mobility efforts.

Beauty Baldwin became the only African American educator at CGHS in 1973.

Baldwin's decision came at a time when she had the opportunity to enter a system like the Atlanta public school district, where she could have worked with more African American colleagues and students. Baldwin indicated that her decision to accept the position at CGHS was

a purposeful one, partially motivated by her knowledge of the African American student population at the school which had no African American adult role models.

Beauty Baldwin's assessment of the student population at CGHS and its needs continued with her reflections on the composition of the student body, the socioeconomic background that the students came from, and why she was able to work in CGHS's culturally diverse environment. Beauty Baldwin indicated:

The school in Lawrenceville was a whole different situation than Hardaway High School in Columbus. The clientele was different [the desegregated setting in northeast Georgia near Atlanta with a mix of kids of both races from every socioeconomic level vs. the high school in Columbus that served affluent Whites and poor Blacks only]. However, I didn't have any problems unlike most. A lot of people did have problems in those situations [desegregated schools] but I was blessed. I didn't have any. I blended really well with the staff.

It [CGHS] was the school and probably one of the better schools in the county because you had everybody there. None of the other schools [in Gwinnett County] had any Black kids. You could go through Gwinnett when I came in 1973, and it was almost totally White. All White staff and students. However, since integration started, Central Gwinnett has always been the school with everybody in [it]. You [CGHS] had rich folks, poor folks, poor Black, poor White, all in the same neighborhood. That is the community of Lawrenceville.

Just as she had at Hardaway High School, Beauty Baldwin fit in at CGHS. After making herself a part of the CGHS community, Baldwin focused her efforts on instruction. With the help of other faculty in the Coordinated Vocational Academic Education Program (CVAE), Baldwin was able to establish a vocational education program at CGHS that received national attention.

Beauty Baldwin shared:

We [the teachers] blended academics with the vocational education. I had my own academic team, math sciences, social studies and I taught the vocational part of the curriculum myself. I put that program in the national spotlight. We got national accolades for that program.

We took those kids who weren't doing well at all and probably never go to college, got them in there, made them feel good about themselves first, made them know that they

could learn just like all the rest of them and they did well and they graduated and then went on to work. It was just a great program.

Beauty Baldwin was successful in her work with the CVAE program at CGHS, and during her first four years directing the program, she enrolled in a Master's Degree program in Vocational Education at the University of Georgia. In 1977, Baldwin was part of an interview panel that hired a new principal at CGHS. Dr. Patrick Mahon, the new principal at CGHS, was impressed with Mrs. Baldwin's work with the CVAE program and when the school's female assistant principal moved to a position in the GCPS Central Office, Dr. Mahon tapped Beauty Baldwin for the assistant principal vacancy. In 1978, Beauty Baldwin began her tenure as an administrator, working as an assistant principal at CGHS.

The CVAE teaching position at CGHS was a significant one for Beauty Baldwin. Through her CVAE teaching post, Beauty Baldwin gained access to a county school system in which African Americans were rarely hired during the late 1960s and 1970s. Beauty Baldwin's insider status in the GCPS put her in the position to experience sponsored career mobility into the assistant principalship at CGHS. Because of her assistant principal's position, Beauty Baldwin returned to school at the University of Georgia to receive her administrator's certification. Beauty Baldwin's ties to the University of Georgia and GCPS' elite school administrators proved beneficial in her continued ascent to the superintendency in Buford City, Georgia.

School Administration

Beauty Baldwin became a school administrator at CGHS in 1978. Baldwin worked as an assistant principal at CGHS until 1980. In 1980 Beauty Baldwin was recruited by Buford City School System superintendent of schools Jim Puckett to work as the principal of Buford City Middle School. Beauty Baldwin met Jim Puckett in one of her classes at the University of

Georgia, which she was attending in pursuit of her administrator's certification. Administrative certification was a requirement of the assistant principal's position that Baldwin held at CGHS (1978-1980).

Reflecting on her work experiences as a school administrator at CGHS and at Buford City Middle School (BCMS), Beauty Baldwin focused on two issues, being the first African American school administrator appointed at CGHS and the experience of establishing a professional culture as principal of BCMS. Beauty Baldwin's work as a site-level administrator began in 1978 with her appointment as principal of CGHS and extended through 1984 at which time Beauty Baldwin was promoted from the principalship at BCMS to the superintendency in Buford City, Georgia.

The First One

In 1978, Beauty Baldwin was appointed assistant principal at CGHS. At the time of her appointment, Beauty Baldwin was the only African American administrator in the GCPS system. Recounting the circumstances surrounding her appointment as assistant principal at CGHS, Beauty Baldwin indicated that in 1977 the female assistant principal at the school, who was European American, accepted a position in the GCPS Central Office.

Dr. Patrick Mahon, CGHS's principal, tapped Beauty Baldwin as a candidate to fill the assistant principalship vacancy. Baldwin was surprised by the principal's request that she apply for the assistant principalship and told Dr. Mahon that she was not in an administrative preparation program. Baldwin remembered that Dr. Mahon told her to "get in a program." Mrs. Baldwin enrolled in an administrative certification program at UGA and applied for the assistant principalship at CGHS. Before she was appointed, however, Beauty Baldwin went through the

GCPS administrative screening process, another first ever event in Mrs. Baldwin's career.

Beauty Baldwin revealed:

I was the first person/administrator to go through the administrative screening in Gwinnett County. There were six people who screened me for that position—he [the principal at Central Gwinnett] was one of them.

The screening process at Central Gwinnett was a little bit scary, but I figured if anybody else could do it, I could do it [become an assistant principal through the screening process]. My whole attitude was 'I can do this' [pass the screening and interview process]. I just answered them [the screening panel] just like I would do ordinarily in my everyday work at school. So I went through that [screening] for a couple of hours with the six-person interview panel and then I left.

Well my principal came back and said 'I am recommending you to the Board; and I was assigned as the new AP [assistant principal] at CGHS. There were no other Black administrators in the county [Gwinnett, in 1978].

Beauty Baldwin successfully passed the GCPS administrative screening procedure and became the first African American administrator at CGHS. Beauty Baldwin was also the only African American administrator in the GCPS system during her tenure as assistant principal (1978-1980).

Because she was already a member of the CGHS school community, Beauty Baldwin did not have to establish herself as an educator in the school community and was more able to focus on the multiple job tasks of the assistant principal. Baldwin indicated:

It [being an assistant principal at CGHS] was really an experience. I always say the APs [assistant principals] are the ones who run the school because they do all the dirty work. They [assistant principals] do. I might have talked about that [the job duties of an assistant principal] while I was in that situation but it made me a great principal. I handled all facets of it [school administration]. I handled discipline. I handled curriculum. I handled the evaluation of teachers, all of the areas that you need to have if you [an administrator] are going to eventually be a principal one day.

Beauty Baldwin gained skills and experience working as an assistant principal at CGHS. Beauty Baldwin returned to some of the techniques that she used at John Lewis High School in Ellaville, Georgia to allow parents to see her in her new role as assistant principal at CGHS. In doing so,

Baldwin kept a focus on helping students achieve, a platform that was well received in the CGHS community. Beauty Baldwin stated:

They [the parents in the Central Gwinnett school community in 1978] were not accustomed to you [African American administrators] helping children to succeed. I don't know why but they [parents] weren't. I stayed after school. I went to their [students] homes. I did whatever was necessary. Now, I'm not just talking about Black kids but all kids. Whatever was necessary [to help students succeed]. I would go to [parents'] businesses, whatever was necessary to help the children succeed, and they [parents] liked that. That's what helped me when hard times came.

Beauty Baldwin was a member of the CGHS “family,” and the relationships that she established as a “family” member paid off when “hard times” came. “Hard times” began in the aftermath of a fight between a White and a Black student at CGHS. The fight was especially stressful on the CGHS school community because it resulted in one of the students being stabbed. Unfortunately and fortunately, the fight and stabbing at CGHS escalated into an event that consumed the school community and the political factions that surrounded it. Emotions ran high and sides were drawn. Reflecting on the fight and stabbing at CGHS Beauty Baldwin revealed:

I had a situation where two boys got into a fight. It [the fight] was racial. Well, one boy cut the other boy. Some of the parents wanted to blame me [and the other assistant principals at the school] had the KKK [Ku Klux Klan] up there, but I had a community that stood behind me, White and Black. They all stood behind me. However, I had a policeman that had to follow me. It was just that bad. The child who was stabbed was really blessed to survive it. But you had those tense times, [it is] all part of administration.

Beauty Baldwin's ties to the school community in Lawrenceville, Georgia, where CGHS is located, helped her get through difficult times and allowed her to flourish. While working as assistant principal at CGHS, Beauty Baldwin was enrolled in an administrative certification program at UGA.

Jim Puckett, superintendent of schools in Buford City Georgia, was a student in one of Beauty Baldwin's classes at UGA. Beauty Baldwin and Jim Puckett became acquaintances and

in 1980, Jim offered Beauty a position in the Buford City School System. Beauty Baldwin revealed:

In my class [at UGA] was the superintendent of Buford City Schools [Jim Puckett]. After my second year at Central Gwinnett, he [Jim Puckett] told me that his district was going to have an opening for a principalship at the middle school. He said that they would really like for me to come and interview for that position. I went to the interview and of course I was offered the job. Then I had to come back and tell Dr. Alton Crews, the superintendent of Gwinnett County Public Schools.

So, I called and got an appointment [with Dr. Crews] and said, 'Dr. Crews, I've got an offer in Buford as principal of Buford Middle School and I want to take it.' Now notice that I said 'I want to take it.' Dr. Crews and I discussed the situation for a while and finally we agreed that the principalship in Buford would be an excellent opportunity for me. However, Dr. Crews never stopped recruiting me throughout my career, until I reached the superintendency.

A sponsored career mobility event made possible by her qualifications as an administrator and enrollment in classes at UGA elevated her to the BCMS principalship. Interestingly, Beauty Baldwin's experience in meeting Jim Puckett at UGA was an event that not only gave her a sponsor in the field but also increased her awareness about potential school administrator openings in north Georgia. Moody (1983) cited a lack of awareness as one of the factors that limited African Americans ability to ascend to school district superintendencies noting that African Americans became aware of network opportunities at conferences while European Americans became aware of opportunities through formal and informal contacts and their schooling experiences.

Beauty Baldwin also was appointed to a secondary school principalship, a key factor noted by Tallerico (2000) as important for women and minorities who were qualified for ascension to school district superintendencies. Finally, Baldwin was selected for the BCMS principalship by Jim Puckett, a White male elite in Gwinnett County, a circumstance which

allowed her to transcend the under estimation of the intellect of African American females cited by Ellerbee (2002).

Establishing a Professional Culture

Beauty Baldwin became principal of BCMS (in Gwinnett County Georgia) at the beginning of the 1980-1981 school year. After transitioning into BCMS, Beauty Baldwin established herself as a leader who was willing to do what was necessary to ensure the school's success. Baldwin noted that she "mopped the floor when spills were on the floor and no one was there to clean them up." Baldwin also helped in the lunchroom when necessary, leading the Buford City school community by example.

Beauty Baldwin's leadership style improved faculty and staff morale at BCMS and helped improve performance. Mrs. Baldwin valued and celebrated all members of the BCMS community. Beauty Baldwin indicated:

I included everybody [in school functions]. It used to be that you had a faculty Christmas party. Only the faculty. Well, we had a school party – the custodial staff, lunchroom staff, everybody was included. Everybody got a gift. Everybody was included at that school. There were no big I's and little you's. That's because I was always taught that. We need all of us to make this thing work.

Beauty Baldwin made things work at BCMS. Because she took a hands-on approach in her leadership, Beauty Baldwin easily gained the confidence of her staff.

Because Beauty Baldwin had the confidence of her faculty, she was able to effectively implement programs at BCMS. Beauty Baldwin chose professionalism as a function of teacher dress as her first initiative as principal of BCMS, revealing:

So, one of the very first things I did [in terms of staff initiatives] was talk about how important it is that kids look up to you as a teacher. They don't need to look to you [a teacher] as their equal. Believe it or not, if you [a teacher] dress like them [students] they're going to feel like you want to be on their level, so they treat you like they treat the other kids. So that first year we had teachers looking like professionals, and that changed the atmosphere at the school totally.

You see, the kids listened to teachers [after the teacher dress code changed] and teachers noticed that. I mean, teachers would come up to me and say “my kids are doing so much better”. They’re listening! I said ‘You’re the adult now, finally.’ Kids look for that. They are hungry for you [teachers] to be an adult to them. They [students] don’t need you to be a peer. So that worked. The change in teacher dress really turned around some things in that school. Everybody was a role model!

Beauty Baldwin’s initiatives did not stop with teacher dress. Teachers who did not teach were dismissed. The Buford City Board of Education and the school community loved Mrs. Baldwin’s approach. The school needed a caring but tough minded leader, and Beauty Baldwin was the perfect fit.

Beauty Baldwin also focused on academics while serving as principal of BCMS. Recognizing the influence that the Board of Education held in the district and realizing the need to improve student performance on standardized tests, Beauty Baldwin relied on the experience that she gained throughout her career to guide BCMS. Beauty Baldwin’s first academic initiative focused on placing subject matter specialists in the school’s classroom ensuring that teachers were working in their areas of expertise. Beauty Baldwin indicated:

The Board there [in Buford City] looks at you [principals], they really look at you yearly, also they were not like most boards of education. They [the Buford City Board of Education] took an active role in what went on in schools. The board would make visits to schools from time to time. But, one of my professors always told me ‘When you go to a system, you learn where the power is and you work within the power.’

So they [the Buford City School Board] listened to parents and parents [of the students at BCMS] loved what I was doing with teachers there, how we’d moved them around to make sure they were teaching in their subject areas. The parents also loved what we were doing with kids there. Well I used all the experience I’d had before to put in there at that school to make sure we were doing things right.

Beauty Baldwin’s success in Buford City did not go unnoticed. Alton Crews, superintendent of the GCPS system, continued his attempts to get Beauty Baldwin to return to GCPS. Though tempted, Baldwin had become a Bufordite and remained loyal to the system that made her a middle school principal.

Baldwin shared:

I told him [Dr. Alton Crews] that I was really enjoying where I was at the time. He again asked me to think about it [coming back to Gwinnett County to be principal of Lilburn Middle School]. I talked to my husband about the conversation and he said that maybe it was time for me to come back to Gwinnett County because there were still no Black administrators in the county.

I then decided that I would write a letter to my board [in Buford City] and tell them that I had gotten an offer from Gwinnett County, it was a promotion. My superintendent then [Jim Puckett] was one of those people who could just read you. I went in to his office with my letter in my purse and when I got there he said 'Beauty let's go for a ride.'

So, we went for a ride and we rode all through Buford City and he talked about Buford City. When we returned he said, how can you leave? He said 'The board said whatever they offered you we will match it.'

So, I told the superintendent in Gwinnett County that I was sorry that I could not leave. They [Buford City] had matched my salary. I did enjoy where I was [in Buford City]. He [Dr. Alton Crews] said 'No hard feelings. I'll just call you next year.' He [Dr. Alton Crews] called me every year and offered me a job for the four years that I was principal, then my superintendent left.

Beauty Baldwin remained at BCMS for four years. In 1984, an opportunity arose after Jim Puckett took a position with a Regional Educational Service Agency based in Atlanta, Georgia. Beauty Baldwin seized the opportunity created by the departure of her mentor and sponsor in Buford City and became the system's superintendent of schools, in the process entering history as Georgia's first African American female superintendent.

The BCMS principalship was a springboard for Beauty Baldwin. Jim Puckett, a male European American elite in the Buford City School System, showed high confidence in Beauty Baldwin and placed her in a position that allowed her to help the Buford City School System while allowing her abilities to shine. When Jim Puckett left the Buford City School System, it became Beauty Baldwin's turn to guide the system.

The Superintendency

Beauty Baldwin was appointed superintendent of the Buford City School System in July of 1984. The year 1984 was also the inaugural year of *The Cosby Show* on NBC (The Cosby Show Debuts on NBC, n.d.). Coincidental to Beauty Baldwin's appointment as superintendent of Buford City's School System, *The Cosby Show* has been widely known as the first sitcom that introduced television audiences in the United States to an African American family in which both parents were white collar professionals. Baldwin's appointment as superintendent in Buford City was a white-collar appointment, the first for an African American female in Georgia.

Beauty Baldwin's appointment as superintendent of the Buford City School System (BCSS) occurred after she had worked in various K-12 teaching and administrative positions in the state of Georgia over a span of 21 years (Buford School Chief Aims, 1985; She Had a Tough Row, 1989; Superintendent Noted, 1989; Students Doing Better, 1985). Also, the Buford City School Board's decision to appoint Baldwin as the superintendent was a historic precedent for two reasons. First, Baldwin's appointment as superintendent of BCSS was the first such appointment for an African American in Buford City School System history. Second, and perhaps most significant, Baldwin's appointment as superintendent was the first such appointment for an African American female in the history of the state of Georgia (Buford School Chief Plans, 1984).

As superintendent of the Buford City School System, Beauty Baldwin was the administrative head of a school district in which the students came from diverse backgrounds. Home to 10,000 residents, and located in the northern half of Gwinnett County, Georgia, Buford City's school system served approximately 1,400 students. Among Buford City's 1,400 students, approximately 73% were European American, and 26% were African American with one third of

the total student population receiving free or reduced lunch (Buford Schools Chief Aims, 1985). When Baldwin became superintendent in Buford City, the school system wanted to improve the academic performance of its students.

Beauty Baldwin reflected on her tenure as superintendent of schools in Buford City. In her discussions, Baldwin identified three areas that defined her career as superintendent in Buford City. The first area that Baldwin discussed was the realization of the significance of her appointment as superintendent in Buford City and as the first African American female superintendent in Georgia. Mrs. Baldwin latter discussed the challenges that she faced as the superintendent of BCSS in managing relationships with the school board, implementing programs, and handling a financial crisis that resulted in massive layoffs in the system's central office. Finally, Baldwin identified the sense of knowing when it was time to retire as a key instinct for superintendents and how that instinct helped her reach her decision to retire.

The First in Georgia's History

Beauty Baldwin was appointed superintendent of BCSS in 1984. Beauty Baldwin's appointment as superintendent in Buford City occurred after she actively pursued and applied for the position. Baldwin recounted:

I applied [for the superintendency]. I sent a letter in [for the superintendents position]. God has been good to me all of my years. I did [apply for the superintendency in Buford City] and there was heavy competition. My major competitor was a hometown son that was born and reared in Buford City. When the Board met they [laughter] they sent me home that night after the meeting. The next morning the Board chair came over, and he said, 'the board had unanimously appointed me superintendent.'

Beauty Baldwin's appointment as superintendent in Buford City was a contest career mobility event. The circumstance of Beauty Baldwin's appointment as superintendent of schools in Buford City was assisted by the community's familiarity with Beauty Baldwin and her work as the principal of BCMS. However, Beauty Baldwin was not recruited for the superintendency in

Buford City; she applied for the vacancy when it became available. Beauty Baldwin's preparation as a professional educator, her proven effectiveness as an educator and administrator, and her work in the BCSS made her a qualified candidate for application and ascension to the Buford City superintendency.

At 42 years of age, Beauty Baldwin, who worked as a classroom teacher for 15 years and as an educator for 21 years, ascended to a school district superintendency nearly 8 years before her 50th birthday. Baldwin's age when she ascended to a school district superintendency was an anomaly when compared to Tallerico's (2000) research which indicated that women generally did not become superintendents until they were in their 50s.

Beauty Baldwin's reaction to the news that she was appointed superintendent of BCSS was shock. Shock, however, soon gave way to even greater surprise as it became evident that Baldwin was the first African American female superintendent in Georgia's history. Realizing the significance of her appointment, Baldwin came to understand the tremendous responsibility that came with it.

Reflecting on the news of her appointment, Beauty Baldwin indicated a sense of surrealism, revealing that her first thoughts were "What have I done? What have I gotten into?" Even though Baldwin had applied for the BCSS superintendency and had been encouraged by her husband to do, the realization that she actually could be appointed had not consciously entered her mind until she actually received news of her appointment. Beauty revealed, "I don't know why but it didn't occur to me even when I was in the running for the position that it really could happen."

Further reflecting on her appointment as superintendent of schools in Buford City, Baldwin recounted the events of her final interview session with the Buford City School Board

and how she was notified of her appointment. Beauty Baldwin shared:

I remember the night that I had my [final] interview. I was the last candidate that was interviewed. They [the board] told me that they would close up for me [meaning that they would give Beauty Baldwin the time and attention that she needed as a candidate no matter the time of evening that it was]. So, the next day one of the board members came across my lawn in blue jeans and tennis shoes and told me that I was unanimously approved as superintendent. I was ecstatic. Then I thought, ‘OK, what am I gonna do now Lord?’ [Then] I knew that I would find a way to do what I was supposed to do.

Local newspapers became aware of Beauty Baldwin’s appointment, and it soon became evident that she was not only the first African American superintendent in Buford City’s history but also the first African American female superintendent in Georgia’s history. Baldwin was awed by the news. Baldwin shared:

So, I couldn’t believe it! I had never even thought about that [being the first African American female superintendent in the state] before. I didn’t realize that there had never been an African American female. At the time, the superintendent [in Hancock County, M.E. Williams] was Black, but he was male. I don’t know how long he had been in that position. There were also a couple of others African American superintendents, but they were males. So, I had never even considered it. So, it was a surprise. I mean being a superintendent was not even in my plan when I started out [as an educator]. My plan was to teach math all of my career. I just didn’t know how to react to it.

After getting over the initial surprise of her appointment as superintendent and its far reaching significance, Beauty Baldwin recognized that it was important for African American children to see her, a sharecropper’s daughter, now working as the superintendent of a Georgia school system.

Beauty Baldwin also knew that her appointment was important for impoverished children who were not African American as well, because she was a symbol of what hard work, good decisions, and dedication could manifest. Baldwin indicated:

My goal [as the new superintendent in Buford City] was that I had to be a role model for all of our children [in Buford City]. Whenever I was away from the system, I was often asked to speak about my appointment in Buford City. I felt that my position was especially important for Black children [to see]. They [African American children]

needed to know that anybody could get to that level [the superintendency] if they did the right things. At, that time I didn't say to kids that I was a perfect person but instead that you have to work [as a professional] at being the best that you could be. So, I did a lot of that [motivational speaking].

The idea was if this girl right here can move from the cotton field, the daughter of a sharecropper, to superintendent of schools anybody can do it. If I could do it any of them at this day and time could do that. That is what I said in each and every one of my messages. I stressed that to all kids, White and Black. I tried to make kids realize that if I could do it just think what you can do.

Shortly after her appointment as superintendent in Buford City, Beauty Baldwin was invited to Washington, DC to attend a special luncheon, hosted by the Congressional Black Caucus. The luncheon was in honor of the 13 African American female superintendents in the United States in 1984. Beauty Baldwin took three of the board members from Buford City to the luncheon with her.

Beauty Baldwin revealed that the luncheon was more than just a gathering to honor the African American female superintendents. It was a chance for the African American female superintendents to network, form alliances, and discuss similar job related issues. Beauty Baldwin took advantage of the networking opportunity and immersed herself in the knowledge of her peers. Because Beauty Baldwin and the other African American female superintendents had brought some of their board members with them, the school boards were able to witness the esteem that the female superintendents were held in by national political leaders in the African American community. Baldwin revealed:

It [the trip to Washington, DC] was a great experience for me for a number of reasons. To be invited by the Congressional Black Caucus and to meet all of the folks on the Congressional Black Caucus and let them honor us, which they did lavishly, that was an honor. I took some of my board members to that event. It was good to let them see how they [the Congressional Black Caucus] treated us [the African American female superintendents]. You talk about some proud people [the Buford City School Board members that accompanied Beauty Baldwin to Washington, DC]. They were some proud people.

Beauty Baldwin's board was proud of her. Offering her assessment of the reasons why the Buford City School Board selected her instead of a male, Beauty Baldwin revealed the following:

Thinking about it, even the superintendency needed something else when it was all male. So, being a qualified female was one thing. Also, as a female I tended to nurture my staff to some degree. Perhaps that was a good thing. I tried to build collaboration. 'We can do this? What can we do to make sure that you are successful?' Also, my attitude towards the male superintendents had a lot to do with my success. I worked with them [the male superintendents in Georgia] not against them. My view was, we're here together. There are some things that you can do to help me and I'm sure that there are some things that I can do to help you. So, I think attitude had a lot to do with my success.

Mrs. Baldwin's leadership style made her an ideal candidate for the BCSS superintendency. Mrs. Baldwin's emphasis on team building and her zest for collaboration were assets. The positive attitude that Beauty Baldwin displayed and the work that she accomplished as BCMS' principal set the stage for her ascension to the district's superintendency.

Nineteen Eighty-Four was a pivotal year for African Americans. Television audiences in the United States had the first chance to see a family of African American white collar professionals on *The Cosby Show*, an indication that not only African American males but also African American females had risen to the level of white collar professionals. Such an accomplishment revealed that African Americans were not only enjoying middle and upper middle class existences but also had gained entry through elite professions. In 1984, Beauty Baldwin, the daughter of sharecroppers, gained entry into an elite position too.

Challenges and Programs

As superintendent of Buford City schools, Beauty Baldwin was the administrative head of a city school system that was partly managed by the city's government. Beauty Baldwin's contract as superintendent was renewed, yearly, in accordance with Buford City ordinances. In

addition, the head of the Buford City Board of City Commissioners also served as the chair of the Buford City School Board.

Beauty Baldwin avoided tensions while working under Buford City's unique form of school and municipal government by performing her duties as superintendent of the Buford City School System (BCSS) and skillfully managing her relationships with Buford City School Board members. One of Baldwin's first challenges in managing relationships with the Buford City Board occurred because of a personnel issue in the district.

When Beauty Baldwin began her tenure as superintendent of the BCSS, a member of the district's central office staff was near the point of contract termination, she was asked to finish the process by terminating the man's contract. Before immediately terminating the central office member's contract, Baldwin asked for a period of reprieve in which she could evaluate the staff member's performance.

BCSS officials saw Beauty Baldwin's request as reasonable and allowed her to evaluate the staff member during her first year in office. By the end of Beauty Baldwin's first year in office the decision to non-renew the staff member's contract was made. The Buford City School Board saw that Baldwin wanted to be fair in her dealings with staff members and that she was capable of making tough decisions.

Other challenges in managing relationships with the Buford City Board came in the way of managing disciplinary issues that involved family members of the Buford City School Board. Beauty Baldwin indicated:

The other challenge was when sometimes you have board people with children in the system who want extra special privileges it was real difficult at times for me to figure out a way for them [the school board members] to see that I could not do more for one child than any of the others including the same disciplinary consequences as any other child. Finally, over the [first] year that was accomplished. Every bit of that [establishing relationships as the superintendent] took time.

Beauty Baldwin established new relationships in her role as superintendent and was fair in how she dealt with student discipline issues. Baldwin never made her troubles with the Buford City School Board public knowledge, a practice that helped maintain harmony among faculty and staff members in BCSS. Beauty Baldwin revealed:

My thing is if there is a problem I will figure out a way to handle it. I don't need to go out and get the sympathy of the teachers because once you [an administrator] do that and everything is settled [with the board] they [teachers] are still in an uproar out there [in the schools]. That was the one thing, nobody ever knew if I had a run in with my board. I think my board liked that.

In terms of administrative initiatives, Beauty Baldwin's first program in BCSS focused on implementing a team approach throughout the school district. Baldwin's team management initiative helped strengthen relationships among faculty and staff in BCSS and allowed faculty and staff at different school sites in Buford City to use the expertise of various members of the BCSS school community.

Beauty Baldwin's team management approach extended to her hiring practices, as BCSS hired a curriculum director that helped the district improve its academic performance. BCSS attracted many other qualified educators. Baldwin indicated:

We [Buford City] hired good teachers who could teach the curriculum. We [Buford City] had a curriculum director who knew what she was doing and could advise school personnel on just how to do a particular thing. She could say this is exactly what you need to do to improve test scores and then work with them [teachers] so that they could get there [help students improve their test scores]. We had strength at the district level as well as the school level. It took a few years to get that accomplished, but it was finally accomplished.

In addition to hiring the best professionals available under Beauty Baldwin's leadership BCSS maintained top facilities. BCSS built a new high school and football stadium during Beauty Baldwin's tenure in the district. However, two of the most significant programs enacted under

Beauty Baldwin's leadership in BCSS had nothing to do with physical plant improvements but focused directly on instruction.

When Beauty Baldwin became superintendent in Buford City, the school district's students were performing in a dismal manner on standardized tests. Baldwin addressed the student performance issue in BCSS by "starting at the beginning." Starting at the beginning, Beauty Baldwin established a kindergarten Head Start Program in BCSS that, over time, impacted students' performances on standardized tests across grade levels. Beauty Baldwin revealed:

We started a kindergarten and a head-start program. The idea was that head start would serve the poor children. My idea was to look at the children who came into kindergarten and test them in first grade. Then I wanted to know which children performed better on standardized tests. Was it the children who came from a family with education and influence or was it the children who came from the projects, who didn't have the experiences that the other children had?

So, we tested the kids the first year [ones who had not been in head start and ones from stable families with affluence and income]. Well, we found that most of the children who failed didn't have any preparation for being in school. So there was a definite need for implementing a head start program in the district.

Getting the Head Start program established in BCSS was not easy because the parents of many of the children who were the worst performers on standardized tests, impoverished African and European American students, did not want to enroll their children in the program. Beauty Baldwin recounted that parents cited kindergarten Head Start program failures in Atlanta as their reason for not wanting the program implemented in Buford City.

Beauty Baldwin was only able to get the kindergarten Head Start Program implemented through collaborative efforts, which enlisted the support of influential clergy and business leaders in Buford City. Baldwin revealed:

I wanted the children [in Buford City] to have the same opportunity to test as well as other children who were entering school who had received enriching educational experiences. Finally, I got some people in the community to help me talk to some of the people. Once we got the results in from the first set of kids that we tested you would have thought that it was their [the parents'] program [laughter]! That was fine. I didn't care who got the credit. My concern was that the children were receiving the instruction that they needed.

Commenting on the impact of the kindergarten and head start programs, Beauty Baldwin revealed that her programs and hiring initiatives impacted student dropout rates and increased the level of services offered in BCSS:

Well for one thing, we had fewer dropouts because kids dropout not because they can't do but because they haven't done. Also, [kids drop out] because they haven't had any good experiences with achievement. One of the reasons [for poor student performance] is if a child comes into first grade and is behind [academically] by second grade he or she is further behind and by the third grade, the child is even further behind and begins to lose interest.

That is when the child starts problems. So by the time the child is in the eighth grade they [teachers] are ushering them [the academically poor, discipline problem children] out of school. That is the time when many children quit school, if they are over age [16] and in the eighth grade. So, nobody would say anything [about a 16 year old eighth grade student quitting school].

Beauty Baldwin's deep understanding of the educational process and insight into the reasons why children drop out of school helped to address the causes of educational problems in BCSS instead of their effects. Baldwin's work as superintendent in BCSS helped improve student achievement and standardized test scores across all grade levels. Newspaper reports from the period of Baldwin's tenure in Buford City substantiated this statement, citing student progress and improvement throughout the district (Buford SATs Up, 1991; Buford Tenth Graders Top, 1988; Buford Test Scores, 1988; Independence Important, 1986; Students Doing Better, 1985).

Beauty Baldwin believed in giving students what they needed for school before they began so that they had the best opportunity once in the classroom to excel. Beauty Baldwin explained:

So, we [Beauty Baldwin's administration] stopped that trend [middle and high school drop outs]. Even now the school district does a very good job with that [lowering the dropout rate]. So, I think a lot of that stems from what we [the school district administration] tried to do when I was in the district. We believed in giving kids a head start so that when they got to school they had the greatest opportunity to achieve. Our program produced results. We had standardized test scores to prove that our program worked.

Beauty Baldwin helped lower the dropout rate in Buford City. BCSS enjoyed much success with Beauty Baldwin as its school district superintendent. BCSS also faced an extreme, externally induced, financial crisis during the time that Baldwin was its superintendent of schools. In response to reduced funding during the summer of 1992, BCSS scaled back on its school district personnel while attempting to maintain the recent academic success that it had enjoyed. During this time, Mrs. Baldwin was highly stressed but used professional connections in the Metro-Atlanta area to help the school district remain on course. Baldwin recounted:

I was so depleted. I didn't know how I was going to approach the situation in the beginning. I knew I had to do what the board said. They [the board] spelled it out in Black and White [very clearly] that we were not going to have the money and the board let me know what they expected to happen.

The board said "Do not bother the schools." So, that only left central office. So, I had to decide where to make cuts. In the end I had to keep the special education director because that is an area where a school district can really get sued if it is not doing the right things. Also, the person that we had was excellent in that area.

Beauty Baldwin had to terminate the contracts of the other members of the central office staff in the BCSS. The staff cuts required Beauty Baldwin to eliminate all nonessential positions, which meant releasing people who were great employees and some of her closest professional friends.

Beauty Baldwin remembered:

I assumed the duties of the personnel director. It was hard for me to cut his job [the personnel director], he was so good. He [the personnel director] initially didn't understand but later he realized what was going on in the district. He told me that 'I hate you had to do this. I want to blame somebody else for this.' I told him 'It's a board decision but it's my job.' We [Buford City] just didn't have the money. We had to cut. I

was so worried about where my people were going to work. What if my job had been cut, could I have survived? The human part came out then.

Beauty Baldwin struggled through tough times in BCSS and used her resources during the budget crisis by calling on former BCSS superintendent, Jim Puckett who was at the Metro-Atlanta Regional Educational Service Agency. Jim Puckett and his staff in Atlanta provided the assistance that BCSS needed. Beauty Baldwin asserted that “Whatever we needed, they provided—because they had specialists in all of the areas [addressed in a school district]. So we utilized the math specialist, the English specialist etc.”

Beauty Baldwin successfully managed school district operations in the BCSS for 10 years. The high visibility level of the superintendency, the significance of Beauty Baldwin’s appointment as an African American female superintendent, and the challenges that BCSS faced during Beauty Baldwin’s tenure, made BCSS a dynamic school system between 1984 and 1994 (Buford Pupils, 1990; Buford School Chief Plans, 1984; Buford School Chief Aims, 1985; Minorities, Women, 1989). By 1994, Beauty Baldwin began to think about other opportunities. A long career in public education brought Beauty Baldwin to the point where she sensed that it was time for a change, “time to do something a little less difficult, time to retire.”

Know When It’s Time To Move On

After 10 years of service as superintendent in BCSS (1984-1994), Beauty Baldwin decided to retire from public education. Reflecting on why her decision was made when it was, Beauty Baldwin revealed that knowing when it is time to retire is an instinct gained from a lifetime of experiences in school systems. Beauty Baldwin shared:

You [an administrator] always know when it is time [to retire]. I had 31 years in education when I retired and I was 52 years old. I had taken Buford City as high as it could go. It [Buford City] was a closed system when I came into office, that changed. Scholastic scores were up. Some of the best teachers that you could find were there. There was an administrative team that worked together. I had accomplished all of my

goals for that system. Also, I had built new schools, the new high school, added to the new middle school, and built a new elementary school. It was time [to retire].

Beauty Baldwin's reflections indicated that a part of knowing when to leave the profession is knowing when you have completed your job as superintendent, in effecting positive change in a school district, directing projects, and implementing as many programs as possible given time, the nature of the position, and the culture and climate present in the school district.

After making her decision on the matter Beauty Baldwin made her husband aware of her intentions to retire. Baldwin shared:

Then my husband and I talked about that [retiring]. You see, being superintendent is a hard job. Every time someone would congratulate me on my performance, I would say that it was just another hard job [laughter]. So, I felt that it was time [for retirement]. It was time for me to do something that wasn't so difficult. I know that I made it look like, to people on the street, so to speak, that it [being superintendent] wasn't that difficult at all but that is because you learn how not to put your troubles [as superintendent] on the street [in view of the public]. You learn to deal with what you have to deal with. You do it [whatever the task is], get it done and that is how you [an administrator] operate. That is the way it is.

After Beauty and Lucious Baldwin settled on her decision to retire, she informed the Buford City School Board. Beauty Baldwin's announcement was met with an outpouring of love as Buford and its school community showed appreciation for Beauty Baldwin's work as superintendent. Throughout the process, Beauty Baldwin stressed that she knew that it was time for her to retire:

The community just could not believe that I was leaving. That was so nice to see because as an administrator you don't always get that [appreciation] when you are actually serving. So, my phone didn't stop ringing for weeks. People didn't stop coming to see me.

[During the months before retirement] I kept telling everyone you need to know when its time. You [an administrator] don't just stay there because everything is going well and you are getting a raise. You just don't do that. You personally know when it is time [to retire]. It's an inner instinct [knowing when it's time to retire]. It's like in professional sports; why would Johnny 'star athlete' wait to retire after the season was over and they were sending him somewhere else? You [an administrator] know when it's time to retire.

Go out in style. Let your retirement [as an administrator] reflect all the good things in your career.

BCSS sent Beauty Baldwin “out in style,” with a huge retirement celebration attended by dignitaries from across the state of Georgia. The accolades and praise that Beauty Baldwin received did not end with her retirement, and BCSS named its valedictorians’ scholarship in her honor and the Gwinnett County chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. established a scholarship for deserving African American females in Beauty Baldwin’s name.

Beauty Baldwin reflected on the reasons why she enjoyed a long and successful tenure as BCSS superintendent of schools:

I was successful because I know a secret. I know what they [school communities] want. They [school communities] want you [superintendents] to be a part of the community. I was an outsider that they [Buford City] didn’t treat like an outsider because I made myself a part of the community.

I gained the confidence of the community even though I didn’t live there [in Buford City] because I immersed myself in it [the Buford City school community]. Somebody asked me ‘Where do you live?’ I said, ‘in Buford. I mean, I sleep on Pleasant Hill [a thoroughfare in Lawrenceville, Georgia another city in Gwinnett County], but I live in Buford.’ And I did! I’m an early riser and I stay late and I went to every single thing that we had [in the Buford City School System]. I even went to things that kids had in the community, anything that was a citywide function, I would attend.

Beauty Baldwin, as she had done in locales throughout her career, embraced Buford City and Buford City embraced her. Buford City is a family and Baldwin was a member.

Offering final reflections on her personal struggles, her impact on education in the school districts she worked, and her hopes for future generations of Georgia’s students, Beauty Baldwin recounted her origins and how no one ever thought that a sharecropper’s daughter turned teacher could ever ascend to such great heights:

I am a person who in 1950 when I was pulling that cotton sack around, nobody ever would have dreamed that I would have done this [become superintendent]. I say this to kids now. If you work really hard, it can happen for you. So, work really hard, prepare

yourself, and you [students] can go as far as you want to go. Sometimes farther than you dreamed you would go, like in my case.

You see, all I wanted to do was be a teacher. That's all I ever wanted to be but look at what happened. Also, I think professionalism, and commitment are two major things that are in this arena we're in today. Teachers must love children and be committed to the profession. You have to want to be in education. If you want to be in education any position may appear. It is something that burns inside you [an educator] and manifests itself in your presence. I wanted to be there [in education].

So, when I talk to kids now, I tell them that you [children] can do anything you want to do, if you want to do it badly enough and you prepare for it. I really talk about preparation. I tell them [children] that at every phase of my career, I had enough preparation so that I could be elevated, and the things that I did not have I went back and got them. You have to be prepared. When somebody asks me I tell them, get it all. Get the doctorate. You [today's students] are going to need it now. That is my view. Get all the education and preparation you can so that nobody can say you didn't get this job because you were not prepared. That's what I say.

Beauty Baldwin prepared for her dreams. Today, she is director of the Hopewell

Christian Academy located in the "City of Hope" in Norcross, Georgia.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYSIS

This study included the oral histories of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. Exploring the career experiences of its participants, this study examined the selection, recruitment, and promotions that led to the ascent of each to a Georgia school district superintendency. This study also explored the role of the social climate on the participants' experiences as African American professional educators and school administrators. Social climate factors were identified as World War II, segregation, desegregation, and the Civil Rights Movement. The participants' professional careers (1947-1968) began during segregation and extended through desegregation in the United States, which formed the background for the oral histories presented in this study.

World War II and Segregation

Because Evans Harris was the oldest participant in this study (80 years old), World War II had the greatest impact on his school experiences. After graduation from the Murden School in Taliaferro County (1943), Evans Harris enrolled at Fort Valley State College (FVSC). Harris' enrollment at FVSC was significant. When Evans Harris graduated from FVSC in 1947, job opportunities in the United States were affected by the end of World War II. As a result, Evans Harris' first job was with the Taliaferro County Veterans Farm Training Program (VFTP).

The VFTP was established to help transition World War II veterans into the work force in the United States. Evans Harris position as a VFTP instructor set his career pattern for 16 years, as he remained in agricultural education before his ascent to the Murden School principalship (1963).

The participants were schooled in segregated elementary and secondary schools in Georgia as a result of segregation. The participants' choice of colleges was limited after graduation from high school. Each participant attended public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in Georgia. John Culbreath studied at Albany State College (1964-1968), Evans Harris at FVSC (1943-1947), and Beauty Baldwin at Savannah State College (1959-1963).

Segregation's affect also impacted the culture of the schools the participants attended as K-12 and undergraduate students. During their segregated school experiences, the participants were immersed in school cultures that "nourished" them while they were mentored for roles in the adult work world. The participants spoke of the "expectations" that teachers held for them in segregated settings and "professionalism" was the theme that pervaded the HBCUs they attended.

School Desegregation

After graduation from college, each of the participants went on to careers in education in segregated settings. Because of desegregation efforts in Georgia and the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, the participants transitioned into careers in desegregated school settings. School desegregation efforts in Georgia began in higher education with the desegregation of the University of Georgia by Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes in 1961 (Hunter-Gault, 1992; Trillin, 1991). The desegregation of the University of Georgia caused the repeal of statutes that mandated segregated schools under the guarantee of terminated funding for any school that desegregated (Daniels, 2001; The Road to Integration, n.d.).

While each participant's career pattern was affected differently by school desegregation, all were able to advance professionally because of the opportunities that it created for African Americans. Desegregation provided entry for African Americans into professional positions in mainstream work settings. Professional positions, especially upper echelon white-collar jobs in mainstream work settings, were not available to African Americans prior to desegregation (Banks, 1994; Bennett, 1993; Jones, 1979).

Desegregation of the Randolph County Schools System (1970) placed John Culbreath in a teaching position in which he worked with European American students and teachers. John Culbreath's teaching experience in a desegregated setting also positioned him for advancement into school administration because it gave him experience with desegregation that many African Americans did not have at the time. This was substantiated by the fact that the participants reported that many African American teachers were not chosen or did not elect to work in desegregated schools.

Evans Harris' experience with school desegregation led to his dismissal from the Murden School principalship in 1965. Evans Harris' dismissal led to an opportunity that allowed him to earn a doctorate in Educational Administration at the University of Oklahoma (OU). The doctorate served as a tool that Evans Harris used to enter the professorate.

Beauty Baldwin's initial experience with school desegregation provided a promotion to a high school math teacher's position in Columbus, Georgia. By 1973, Beauty Baldwin's skill as an educator coupled by school desegregation efforts in Gwinnett County, Georgia combined to provide entry for her into the county and its circle of school administrators. Beauty Baldwin's entry into the Gwinnett County Public School System proved beneficial, and she later became

superintendent of the Buford City School System, the only city school system in Gwinnett County.

Associated with desegregation is the Civil Rights Movement. Davis (2001) asserted that the Civil Rights Movement emerged from three events. The events included the social equality initiatives of President Franklin Roosevelt's 1940s New Deal program, African American World War II veterans' desire for equality in the United States after the war, and the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision. Most significant to desegregation was the *Brown v. Board of Education* case which outlawed school segregation in the United States.

Framework for Analysis

Three research questions guided this study:

1. How did each of the participants first enter education?
2. How were the participants able to ascend to the superintendency in light of challenges that they faced as African American school administrators?
3. What was the experience of being an African American educator and school administrator in Georgia school districts?

Each participant's oral history was unique because of his or her individual experience in various K-12 school districts and higher education settings. Data revealed that the social and cultural climate in which the participants' lives and careers unfolded during segregation and desegregation influenced their career experiences.

The common factors in the lives of the participants were revealed through the data elicited by the interview questions. The themes centered on the participants' experiences in common school cultures (1943-1968), their experiences with career mobility processes in their

ascent to Georgia school district superintendencies, and their experiences as African American educators and school district administrators in Georgia (1947-2001).

Entry into the Field of Education

In their reflections on how they first entered education, two common themes, childhood mentoring and undergraduate schooling at HBCUs in Georgia emerged. The participants' discussions of childhood mentoring and undergraduate schooling at HBCUs in Georgia included extended discussion on segregated schools as extended families, self images and life skills, demanding professors and academic preparation, mentoring as the key to professionalism, and safe havens.

The childhood mentoring that the participants received occurred at school and in their homes. Through a combination of mentoring by their parents and K-12 teachers, the participants increased their thirst for knowledge, gained a sense of competency, learned the value of education, and realized the need for hard work to accomplish their goals.

At the HBCUs that they attended, the participants found environments that were extensions of their home and school environments in Monroe, Crawfordville, and Sandersville. The HBCUs also provided protection from the turmoil of the outside world during World War II (1942-1945), school desegregation (1954-1979), and the Civil Rights Movement (1950-1969) in the United States. The mentoring and schooling that the participants received during their early lives also helped to begin their refinement as professionals, giving them solid foundations from which they began their journeys into the adult work world.

Childhood Mentoring

The participants received their K-12 schooling in rural Georgia school districts. According to the participants, the schools in Monroe, Crawfordville, and Sandersville, Georgia

did not fully prepare them for the academic rigors of college. The fact that their K-12 schooling did not fully prepare them for college work does not suggest, however, that the teachers at the K-12 schools attended by Dr. Culbreath, Dr. Harris, and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin were incompetent. In fact, the opposite appeared to be true as English, agricultural education, and math were cited by Dr. Culbreath, Dr. Harris, and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin, respectively, as areas in which their K-12 instructors were exceptional.

The participants were not fully prepared for college work because the total school curricula at the rural schools they attended did not have extensive breadth or depth. All three participants noted that African American students from larger areas were often “better prepared” for college work.

The most significant experiences in the participants’ K-12 schooling, however, were not based solely on academics. The most significant experiences of the participants’ K-12 schooling occurred because of the culture of the schools they attended. The culture of the K-12 schools attended by the participants was conveyed by the teachers that worked in the schools. These teachers instilled a desire to excel and an unquenchable thirst for learning in students.

To realize the significance of the mentoring that the participants received during their K-12 schooling, one must understand segregation and the conditions that it created socially in the schools in Georgia and the southern United States. Most important in this analysis are the participants’ remembrances of adolescence. Adolescence was the point where the participants’ most detailed remembrances of segregation and schooling began.

Prior to the 1954 *Brown v. Board* court decision, racial segregation in K-12 schools in the United States was legal (LaMorte, 1999; Shujaa, 1996). The *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision reversed the Supreme Court’s position on the premise of separate but equal public

facilities for majority and non-majority citizens established in the *Plessey v. Ferguson* (1896) court case. Though the *Brown v. Board of Education* court decision made racial segregation in schools illegal, school districts in the United States, especially in the south, resisted school desegregation efforts well into the 1970s (Davis, 2001; Shujaa, 1996).

Constitutionally guaranteed school segregation in Georgia was initiated six months prior to the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision (Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954). Legal school desegregation in Georgia did not begin until January 16, 1961 with what Daniels (2001) cited as Governor Ernest Vandiver's "Child Protection and Freedom of Association Defense Package" (p. 156).

More important than the legalities of segregation in Georgia and the south were the conditions that it created within the separate schools. Separate Negro and White schools were not equal during segregation in Georgia. The participants reported that the facilities at the Negro schools were inferior to those present at the White schools in the counties in which they lived. African American teachers used "second hand" materials as instructional aids. African American students studied from texts that were "well worn" and "out of usefulness" at the White schools. Often, the physical plants at the Negro schools were in disrepair and as Dr. Culbreath reported, the only method through which the schools received improvements, like the addition of football fields and "lights" for night games, was after vigorous protest in the community.

Educated with less than ideal materials in less than ideal conditions during segregation, the opportunity for African American students to have schooling experiences that were inferior to European American students in the same counties in Georgia or anywhere that segregation was practiced was evident. Given the conditions that segregation created in schools, especially

those in rural areas, the K-12 instruction and mentoring that the participants experienced was commendable.

The participants credited the outstanding nature of their K-12 school experiences to the teachers at George Washington Carver High School, the Murden School, and T.J. Elder High School. The teachers in these schools, who were viewed as extended family members, gave students a sense of competency and taught them that they could do anything that anyone else could do.

Reflecting on one of the most influential teachers in his K-12 school experience and the impact she had on his life, Dr. John Culbreath recounted the experience of being a student in Mrs. Willie Grace Randall's English class. Dr. Culbreath shared that he "first envisioned" himself as an educator because of Mrs. Randall who taught him English in grades 9, 10, and 11. Mrs. Randall showed great "care and concern" for her students, which helped them to excel. Evans Harris recounted the praises of Mr. James Griffin. Griffin was an English instructor and principal of the Murden School. Griffin encouraged his students to "always strive for excellence." Beauty Baldwin developed her aspirations of becoming an educator during her K-12 school experiences as well. Baldwin was the lower grades "teacher's assistant" when she was in elementary school, helping her classmates with their work when she finished her own.

Segregated Schools: The Extended Family

Teachers in the K-12 schools the participants attended had "parental authority" in the classroom and maintained those same relationships in caring for and educating students. Dr. Culbreath indicated that Mrs. Randall used "care and concern" along with her position as a mother/mentor at George Washington Carver High School to connect with students. Mrs. Randall's role at George Washington Carver High School was solidified by the fact that Monroe

like Crawfordville and Sandersville, Georgia, the homes of Evans Harris and Beauty Baldwin, was a small community.

In rural African American communities during segregation, adult members of the community were often viewed as elders within an “extended family.” The sense of “family” within segregated school settings pervaded the school communities in which the participants were schooled and later worked during segregation. Beauty Baldwin noted that in Ellaville parents were “close enough” that you could “see them” during the school day and, if necessary, make “family visits.” Paternal authority extended to the school administration in segregated school communities as well. Evans Harris noted that the principal of the Murden School, James Griffin, was seen as pillar in the community and “held the authority as student’s fathers.”

The paternal relationship that African American educators had with their students during segregation was important. During segregation, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, the United States was in turmoil as the Civil Rights Movement dominated the social landscape during that time (see Chapter 2 and Tables 4.1 and 5.1). African American students in segregated settings were often schooled in facilities where a lack of resources and social turmoil demanded that students focus on their schooling if they hoped to successfully enter into a desegregated society. The parental relationship that African American teachers had with their students in segregated settings allowed them to care for students, prepare them academically, maintain almost unquestioned discipline in the schools, and deal with esteem issues that older students faced.

Self-Images and Life Skills

Esteem issues were paramount during segregation. Because African American students like John Culbreath, Evans Harris, and Beauty Baldwin lived in poverty, they sometimes suffered with esteem issues related to their socioeconomic origins and battled stigmas that were

attached not only to poor people during segregation but also to African Americans.

Segregationist practices and philosophies cast African Americans as “second class citizens” and lesser beings. Teachers like Mrs. Randall, at George Washington Carver High School, refused to let students succumb to the effects of segregation and prepared them for citizenship in an era beyond its end.

Beauty Baldwin, a schoolteacher during the time that John Culbreath was a high school student, developed her sense of self-worth through her childhood experiences both at home and in school. Growing up as the daughter of sharecroppers in Middle Georgia, Beauty Baldwin worked side-by-side in the field with White sharecroppers. Beauty Baldwin was often the guest of her European American work and play mates and vice versa. Mrs. Baldwin shared that they “ate each others food.”

The intimate nature of the relationships that Beauty Baldwin experienced with European Americans during her childhood and adolescence allowed her to develop a sense of self within a segregated world where she viewed herself as not “better than” but “just as good” as her European American friends. The sense of self-worth that Beauty Baldwin developed in her home, childhood, and adolescent experiences were reinforced early in her schooling by teachers who recognized her aptitude as a student, promoted her past a grade level, and allowed her to work as a teachers’ assistant.

As a teacher in segregated school settings in Ellaville and Columbus Georgia, Beauty Baldwin promoted the same sense of competency and self-worth in her students. That is, during segregation, African American students knew that this teacher meant what she said. The theme of instruction was that African American students were expected to do what “they were supposed to do,” and “they could do anything that anyone else could do.”

“Doing what anyone else could do” was a theme that was also promoted by teachers at the Murden School, the place of Evans Harris’ K-12 experiences. Teachers at the Murden School mentored students and exposed them to opportunities beyond their surroundings in Taliaferro County, inspiring them to excel. Dr. Harris indicated that Thomas Elton, a teacher at the Murden School, helped students in the vocational agriculture class to borrow money to buy “beef calves” and to participate in shows around the state.

Helping create the opportunity for students at the Murden School to participate in shows around the state, Thomas Elton gave impoverished students at the Murden School the opportunity to “do” what students “did” in vocational agriculture classes at other schools, Black and White. By taking his students to the bank and showing them how to borrow money, Thomas Elton showed his students one way to get the funds that were necessary for their endeavors.

Using the loan money to buy cattle and to pay the students’ travel expenses for livestock shows, Thomas Elton showed his students how to make smart investments. Thomas Elton went to the bank and borrowed money during segregation in the 1940s, a time when few African or European Americans enjoyed financial independence in the south because of a lack of industry prior to World War II and many, as evidenced by Beauty Baldwin’s remembrances, sold their labor as sharecroppers. Thomas Elton showed his students an example of responsible competency and industry, skills that students would need in their later lives. Thomas Elton’s teachings translated into knowledge that students could use in their own lives because the students had been shown an example of how money, properly used, could make more money.

The lessons in scholarship, self-confidence, and life skills that the students at George Washington Carver High School, T. J. Elder High School, and the Murden School learned were

important during the time that John Culbreath (1960-1964), Evans Harris (1939-1943), and Beauty Baldwin (1954-1959) were students.

Parents supported the lessons that their children received in segregated school settings. While the parents in the homes of John Culbreath, Evans Harris, and Beauty Baldwin were not highly educated, they supported their children's efforts and inspired them to excel. John Culbreath's mother and grandmother helped "fund" his college expenses. Directly reflecting on the support that she received in her home, Beauty Baldwin revealed that her mother was her greatest inspiration during her K-12 schooling. While Bearena Poole did not finish school herself and was unable to help Beauty with her work, she was "always there" for the Poole children. Beauty Baldwin's mother pushed her to go beyond her circumstances. Because Beauty Baldwin's mother supported her efforts, she had the confidence necessary to pursue her dreams.

Confidence and support were also supplied in abundance in the home of Evans Harris. Just like John Culbreath, who was from a single parent home, and Beauty Baldwin, the daughter of sharecroppers, Evans Harris' came from a home where his parents were not highly educated. However, Evans Harris had aunts and uncles who "went to Spellman and Morehouse" Colleges in Atlanta, Georgia. Evans Harris' aunts and uncles were tangible role models in his life. As a result, the idea of an African American receiving a college education in the 1940s was not an abstract concept in Evans Harris' mind because he "had seen people who had done it."

During segregation, caring African American parents and teachers worked in tandem to mentor students. The culture of achievement promoted in African American communities during segregation instilled a sense of competency and confidence in African American students. The confidence that African American students gained in segregated school settings was important as they prepared for entrance as contributing citizens in a desegregated society. The lessons that Dr.

John Culbreath, Dr. Evans Harris, and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin gained in segregated school settings in Monroe, Crawfordville, and Sandersville Georgia carried them on to HBCUs in the state of Georgia and allowed them to thrive as students there.

The element of self-confidence that the participants gained during their K-12 schooling remained with them in their professional careers and helped them overcome the self confidence-barrier cited by Ellerbee (2002) as a factor that limited African American's access to school district superintendencies (see Table 2.1). The participants' character as human beings and non-prejudicial attitudes carried them successfully through segregation, into desegregated work and school settings, and on to school district superintendencies in Georgia.

Schooling at Historically Black Colleges and Universities in Georgia

The participants received their undergraduate degrees from HBCUs located in the state of Georgia. Dr. John Culbreath attended ASC (1964-1968). Dr. Evans Harris was a student at FVSC (1943-1947). Mrs. Beauty Baldwin received her undergraduate training (1959-1963) at Savannah State College (SSC).

As evidenced by their enrollment dates, the participants were students at three of Georgia's HBCUs from the early 1940s through the late-1960s. During the time when the participants pursued their undergraduate degrees in Georgia, school desegregation efforts were in conflict with the existence of segregationist practices, which continued to permeate social and cultural associations, relationships, and interactions between European and African Americans (Chafe et al., 2001; Davis, 2001; Shujaa, 1999).

The desegregation of the University of Georgia (UGA) in 1961 by Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes marked the beginning of school desegregation in Georgia (Hunter-Gault, 1992; *The Road to Integration*, n.d.; Trillin, 1991). Evidenced by the participants' undergraduate

enrollment dates, the desegregation of UGA occurred after Evans Harris' undergraduate schooling (1943-1947), in the middle of Beauty Baldwin's experience at SSC (1959-1963), and three years before John Culbreath's enrollment at ASC (1964-1968). Consequently, the HBCUs that the participants attended offered post-secondary training to African American students at a time when their choice of schools was limited due to segregation and the newness of school desegregation efforts in Georgia.

Through the post-secondary training offered at HBCUs in Georgia, three ends were achieved, academic training, professional grooming, and the provision of safe havens. The HBCUs that the participants attended provided academic training that extended beyond that received by the participants in their secondary school experiences. The formal academic training received by the participants at the HBCUs was enhanced by the work of demanding professors who groomed students for professional roles after college.

Ellerbee (2002) cited the absence of professional preparation and grooming present in African American communities during the 1960s and 1970s as a factor that limited African American's access to school district superintendencies (see Table 2.1). During segregation and the transition to desegregation, HBCUs in Georgia were one set of institutions that offered a high level of professional grooming. The HBCUs that the participants attended were staffed with demanding professors.

Demanding Professors and Academic Preparation

The professors at ASC, FVSC, and SSC, where the participants attended school as undergraduates, were not demanding without purpose. The professors' methods were used to promote the grooming function of schools for students' later roles as professionals in the adult work world.

During school segregation and the transition to desegregation in Georgia, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, the HBCUs functioned effectively because their campuses protected their students from turmoil and distractions from the outside world. The safe haven function of HBCUs was important, given the social climate present during the Civil Rights Movement and initial school desegregation efforts in the United States and in Georgia.

In Georgia, six months before the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Governor Herman Talmadge moved to block integration of public schools by authoring legislation that terminated funding to public school systems that desegregated (Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954; Roche, 1998). By 1961, amid student riots and national controversy, the University of Georgia was desegregated by Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes (Hunter-Gault, 1992; Trillin, 1991). Also in 1961, Hosea Williams led a series of marches in Savannah, Georgia protesting segregationist political practices in the city (Sitton, 1961). Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Reverend Ralph Abernathy were arrested in Albany, Georgia in 1962 (Powledge, 1962b). The arrests of Dr. King and Reverend Abernathy led to massive protests and civil rights activism in Albany (Powledge, 1962a, 1962c, 1962d).

In 1963, youths in Macon were involved in a series of skirmishes in a local park (Powledge, 1963). The disturbances in Macon led to the involvement of adults in the city and heightened civil rights activism. On August 28, 1963 civil rights activists marched and gathered at the national mall in Washington D. C. At the march, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his “*I Have A Dream*” speech (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 1999). By 1965, civil rights activism in Taliaferro County drew national attention following the dismissal of Evans Harris from the principalship of the Murden School (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a; Murphy 1965, Taliaferro Negroes, 1965). On April 4, 1968 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated

in Memphis, Tennessee (see Chapter 2 and Tables 4.1 and 5.1 for more details on the Civil Rights Movement).

Given the social climate of the 1950s and 1960s in the United States and Georgia, the academic training, student mentoring, and environments that HBCUs in Georgia provided were important. Students at ASC, FVSC, or SSC could have easily become distracted by events in the communities around them. Dr. Culbreath noted that civil rights protests in Albany in 1962 resulted in the school forming a “cocoon” isolating its students from the outside world. Evans Harris indicated that at FVSC students’ needs were attended to on campus. Beauty Baldwin echoed that at SSC, school officials did all that they could to make sure that female students lived on campus.

Despite turmoil in the United States because of World War II, desegregation and the Civil Rights Movement, the HBCUs that the participant’s attended “held school” and maintained their expectations of students. Dr. Culbreath reflected on the high level of academic expectations that the professors at ASC had for students. Dr. Culbreath’s discussion focused on exemplary educators like Mrs. Blaylock, an English professor, who was a “constant taskmaster” that demanded work from John Culbreath and other students at ASC that met her expectations for their roles as students and “campus leaders.”

Demands were also present at SSC during the time Beauty Baldwin was a student (1959-1963). The professors at SSC followed a pattern for expectations for students at Georgia’s HBCUs that was evident in John Culbreath’s experience at ASC (1964-1968) and was seen as early as the 1940s in Evans Harris’ experience at FVSC (1943-1947). Beauty Baldwin’s description of the culture at SSC described the purpose of professors’ intentions for students at HBCUs in Georgia during segregation and the transition to desegregation. Baldwin noted that the

“attitude” was that students were “going to do what they were supposed to do” and that students could do “anything that anybody else could do.”

The culture of achievement and “can do” attitude that was promoted at HBCUs in Georgia was important for two reasons. The two reasons were student academic preparation and student mentoring.

As evidenced by the participants’ reports, many students during segregation and the transition to desegregation at Georgia’s public HBCUs came from impoverished K-12 school districts. As a result, the academic experiences of students like John Culbreath, Beauty Baldwin, and Evans Harris did not fully prepare students for college work. Evans Harris noted that when he arrived at FVSC in 1943, he realized that he “had not worked hard enough” in high school and had to improve to work on the level of the other students at the school. Beauty Baldwin indicated that while she was an honor student at T. J. Elder High School in Sandersville, she had to take extra classes to “catch up” to students at SSC. Because HBCUs allowed students the opportunity to “catch up” to their peers who had received more intensive training at other high schools, all students on their campuses were allowed to flourish and to succeed.

Mentoring: The Key to Professionalism

Student mentoring was also an important characteristic promoted under the culture of achievement at HBCUs in Georgia when the participants were undergraduates. During segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, and school desegregation, African American communities experienced a sense of urgency, uncertainty, and hope as John Culbreath noted the “world began changing.” By the late 1960s, African Americans had made social progress “through the system.”

In anticipation of the opportunities present in the United States after the Civil Rights Movement, HBCUs prepared students for life in the desegregated adult work world. As institutes of higher learning, it was the responsibility of the HBCUs that the participants attended to send competent professionals into the work force. It appeared that HBCUs in Georgia, during the time when the participants were students, fulfilled their role in preparing competent professionals through mentoring which enhanced the academic instruction available at the schools.

As a part of the mentoring of students for roles in the adult work world, the professors at the schools the participants attended demonstrated what it meant to be both scholars and working adult professionals. The type of modeling that the professors at ASC, FVSC, and SSC performed was cited by Ellerbee (2002) as factors no longer present in African American communities. According to Ellerbee, the absence of mentoring now limits African Americans' access to school district superintendencies (see Table 2.1).

Dr. Bond, a renowned African American Scholar and president of FVSC, was the model for student and faculty expectations. Dr. Bond's modeling did not end with the FVSC school community. Horace Mann Bond's son, Julian, a former Georgia state legislator, now works as a professor at the University of Virginia. Professors like Dr. Bond personified what Beauty Baldwin described as the "professionalism" of African American professors at HBCUs.

The "professionalism" displayed by African American professors at the HBCUs that the participants attended was important because many of the students came from impoverished rural backgrounds. Because of their socioeconomic origins, many students at the HBCUs the participants attended had not been exposed to accomplished, professional African American role models. How were students to know what a professional was if they had not seen one? Beauty Baldwin noted the professors knew "Here are these little country children. We've got to mold

these kids.” In the cases of Dr. John Culbreath, Dr. Evans Harris, and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin, the professors at the HBCUs they attended were successful.

The cultures that the participants were immersed in at the HBCUs they attended helped mold their professional identities. The HBCU experience gave each participant a solid foundation as a highly qualified and competent employee. The self-confidence that participants gained at the HBCUs they attended along with the academic training and skills that they received in their undergraduate programs formed the foundations on which their future academic and career experiences were built. Because the participants had strong foundations, they had lengthy careers that ascended many levels to their appointments as Georgia school district superintendents.

While HBCU environments helped students thrive, the academic and professional preparation they offered would have been futile if it had allowed them to become distracted by turmoil present in the United States in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. The dominant features of the social landscape in the United States in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s included World War II and the Civil Rights Movement.

Safe Havens

As one of less than 49 male students on campus at FVSC in 1943, Evans Harris was schooled in an environment that “kept a close watch” on its students. FVSC provided most of the material needs of its students while Evans Harris was a student at the school. Dr. Harris also recounted that most of the activities that students participated in while at FVSC were “offered on campus.” The “close watch” mantra was also carried out at SSC, where Beauty Baldwin was an undergraduate (1959-1963). Beauty Baldwin noted that SSC made provisions to ensure that female students lived on campus and provided non-denominational “vesper services” so that

students did not have to leave campus for worship purposes. Dr. Culbreath provided an account that described the essence of HBCUs efforts to protect students when he described ASC (1964-1968) as a “cocoon.”

The cocoon function of HBCUs during segregation and the transition to desegregation in Georgia was important. The world outside of the schools was in turmoil (see Chapter 2 and Tables 4.1 and 5.1). HBCUs protected their students from the distractions in the outside world. To do otherwise would have meant risking the academic careers of students and their safety as well, as civil rights protests at times ended in violence.

As heightened extensions of African American K-12 school communities, the HBCUs the participants attended were homes away from home. Parents trusted their children to the “Dean of Men,” the “Dean of Women,” and the “Dean of Students.” These authority figures, described by John Culbreath, were members of a larger “extended family” that cared for and monitored the students at HBCUs as if they were their own children. The result was that students completed their degree programs, “got their wings,” and flourished.

The sense of community and need for the professional preparation of African American students appeared to be a shared goal among African American school communities in Georgia during the time that the participants were students in K-12 and higher education settings. The HBCUs the participants attended were extensions of the African American K-12 school communities that surrounded them. As a result, students were schooled in familiar, safe environments and succeeded.

The Ascent to Georgia School District Superintendencies

The second research question focused on the career mobility of the participants. As a result, this study examined the participants’ careers as they ascended to Georgia school district

superintendencies. Research and literature on the career mobility of African American superintendents and superintendent candidates provided a frame for this study's view of the career mobility of the participants.

Career mobility themes from Chapter 2 were reviewed in this section and contextualized to the participants' career experiences as individuals and as a group. This section focused on the participants' career mobility experiences in school administration as the impetus for each participant's ascent to Georgia school district superintendencies. A later section in this chapter addresses the participants' early careers as classroom teachers. The classroom experiences of the participants were examined in light of school segregation and desegregation events in the districts in which they worked. The later section also covers the superintendency and common themes among the participants' careers in the post. Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3 highlight the participant's career paths and mobility.

Career Mobility

Career mobility is the process by which a person ascends through posts of increasing prestige and responsibility during his or her career life. Career mobility of school administrators is closely intertwined with the social processes that govern the type of career patterns possible in a given school district (Black & English, 1986; Moffett, 1981; Tallerico, 2000). African Americans who become school district superintendents ascend through career mobility processes and hold elite positions that few African Americans access.

Since 1954, there has been a dearth of African American superintendents nationally and in Georgia (Scott, 1980; also see Appendix B). In a study published in 1980, Scott identified 46 African American superintendents in the United States and the Virgin Islands in 1974 (Scott, 1980). Scott's research revealed the identities of four African American superintendents who

were termed “the forerunners of current Black superintendents” (p. 42). All of the “forerunners” were appointed between 1956 and 1963, making them the first generation of African American superintendents following the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) court decision.

The first African American superintendent in Georgia, M. E. Lewis, was appointed in Hancock County in January of 1973. M. E. Lewis’ appointment was followed by that of Alonzo Crim. Crim, a California native, was appointed superintendent of the Atlanta Public School System in July of 1973 (see Appendix B). The appointments of Lewis and Crim as superintendents in Georgia were significant. M. E. Lewis and Alonzo Crim were the only African American superintendents in Georgia when John Culbreath (1972) and Beauty Baldwin (1978) served in their first administrative posts, beginning their ascent to school district superintendencies. During the 1970s, Dr. Evans Harris worked in the professorate having served as the principal of the Negro school in Taliaferro County during the early 1960s.

Turner (1960) identified two career mobility archetypes, contest and sponsored. Contest and sponsored systems of career mobility differ in the way “aspirants” ascend to posts of subsequent responsibility and prestige. According to Turner (1960), contest mobility systems operate on the principle of “fair play.” Because contest mobility systems operate on the principle of “fair play,” aspirants advance through what Tallerico (2000) defined as “the chairs.” Contest mobility is achieved through efforts which include advanced education, advanced training, and acquired experience in positions of increased responsibility and prestige. In a contest mobility system, aspirants have the ability to compete for and advance to positions of increased prestige and responsibility throughout their careers.

Sponsored mobility systems have rejected the pattern of the contest (Turner, 1960). Under sponsored career mobility systems, aspirants are chosen by elites in the field (Black & English, 1986; Moffett, 1981; Tallerico, 2000). Sponsored mobility systems dictate that no amount of effort by aspirants may result in the attainment of elite status. In sponsored mobility systems, aspirants either have sponsors or they do not. Elite status is granted or is not.

By virtue of their ascents to school district superintendencies in Georgia, the participants in this study experienced career mobility. Through their oral histories, the participants recounted their career experiences as African American professional educators and traced their career patterns.

The career experiences and mobility examined in this study include Dr. Evans Harris' career which began in 1947 and extended through Dr. John Culbreath's retirement from the Dougherty County superintendency in 2001. During their ascent to school district superintendencies, the participants' career patterns were influenced by civil rights activities and school desegregation events in Georgia and the United States during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

The individual analyses provided detailed views of the participants' experiences with career mobility contextualized by the school systems in which they worked and the research and literature on career mobility are examined in Chapter 2. The comparative analyses provided a view of the broad range of the mobility of the participants in a common social climate in different areas over a span of 54 years.

Dr. John Culbreath

This section detailed Dr. John Culbreath's ascent to the Glynn County Schools System superintendency. Table 7.1 provides a graphic organizer of John Culbreath's career path and

provides supplement to the analysis of John Culbreath's career mobility.

Table 7.1

Dr. John Culbreath: Career Path

Position	Year(s)	Mobility Event
Superintendent, Dougherty County.	1995-2001	Contest Event, application and competitive interview process.
Principal, North Atlanta High School, Atlanta, Georgia	1993-1995	Sponsored Event, recruitment by the Atlanta Public School System Board of Education and superintendent, Dr. Lester Butts.
Associate/Assistant Superintendent Glynn County.	1985-1993	Sponsored Event, recruitment by Glynn County superintendent, Mr. Kermit Keenum.
Principal, Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School, Athens, Georgia.	1983-1985	Contest Event, application and interview process.
Principal, Randolph-Clay High School, Cuthbert, Georgia.	1979-1983	Sponsored Event, recruitment by Randolph County Board of Education president, Mr. Julian Morgan.
Assistant Principal, Monroe Area High School, Monroe, Georgia.	1978-1979	Contest Event, application and interview process. Application heavily supported by Walton County Superintendent, Mr. Joe Bradley.
French and English Teacher, Randolph County High School.	1970-1972	Desegregation of Randolph County Schools resulted in student and faculty placement.
French and English Teacher, Henderson High School.	1968-1970	Contest Event, application and interview process.

John Culbreath's career began in 1968 at Henderson High School in Randolph County, Georgia. In 1970, the Randolph County Schools System desegregated. John Culbreath became a teacher at Randolph County High School (RCHS), the desegregated school in the county. In 1972 when the assistant principalship position at Randolph County Elementary School (RCES) opened, John Culbreath was appointed as the new assistant principal. John Culbreath's appointment at RCES was enhanced by his skill in working in a desegregated setting and his friendship with the outgoing assistant principal at the school, Jay Wansley.

Jay Wansley, an African American school administrator in Randolph County, and John Culbreath were friends "outside of their relationship as professionals in the Randolph County Schools System." Jay Wansley recommended John Culbreath for the assistant principal's post at RCES. Jay Wansley was a sponsor in John Culbreath's career. Literature and research on the African American superintendency by Moffett (1981) and Moody (1983) indicated that African Americans lacked career sponsors in the field. Moffett and Moody found that sponsors enhanced the careers of sponsorees through the opportunities they provided for promotion.

Dr. Culbreath reported that because of school desegregation, the Randolph County School System attempted to "maintain balance" among its school administrative teams during the 1970s. If a principal of a school happened to be male and was African American, his assistant was European American and vice versa. At the time that John Culbreath was appointed assistant principal at RCES, the school system was seeking an African American administrator. Though the Randolph County Schools System may have been seeking an African American administrator for RCES in 1972, the system could have selected other candidates. John Culbreath's promotion represented the culmination of competency and sponsored career mobility effects.

Assessing the effect of sponsored mobility on John Culbreath's promotion to assistant principal at RCES, his promotion was enhanced by his experience as an educator. In 1972, John Culbreath was in his fifth year as an educator. Research by Tallerico (2000) indicated that top candidates for promotion into school administration who became superintendents worked as classroom teachers for three to five years. The fact that John Culbreath had worked for four years as a classroom teacher placed him at the right point in his career for promotion consistent with Tallerico's (2000) "chair" paradigm. However, it was not the chair paradigm that most significantly affected John Culbreath's ascension into school administration.

John Culbreath's appointment at RCES was significant because it gave him the skill that he needed for further advancement in school administration. During school desegregation, Dr. Culbreath reported that African American administrators often received "lesser appointments" at desegregated schools, were assigned to the classroom as teachers, or were "managers of things." Because RCES did not have a principal when John Culbreath was appointed, he learned the "intellectual duties" of the principalship as well as administrative tasks. These skills made John Culbreath a desirable candidate for promotion throughout his career.

In 1976, John Culbreath applied to and was accepted in the Ed. D. program in Educational Administration at UGA. John Culbreath had earned his Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Georgia State University as a condition of his employment at RCES.

By actively applying for and pursuing a doctorate at UGA, John Culbreath engaged in a "contest effort." John Culbreath's enrollment and completion of his degree program at UGA was significant for two reasons. First, the Ed.D. credential from a major research university placed John Culbreath in the upper echelon of candidates for positions in school administration after he

earned the degree. Second, and perhaps most important to John Culbreath's career development as a school administrator in Georgia, UGA provided exposure to the elite circle of education officials in Georgia.

It is well known that UGA has trained a large number of Georgia's elite business, education, and political leaders for many years. Because John Culbreath was schooled in a doctoral program at UGA, professors and other important education officials in Georgia were aware of him and knew his capabilities. The UGA credential also indicated that John Culbreath experienced rigorous training at one of the top graduate schools of education in the south. The doctorate, the highest academic award, allowed John Culbreath to be a top competitor in contest efforts throughout his career and also verified his competency as a trained professional. Because John Culbreath was a trained professional, he received sponsored promotions in his career as well.

In a contest effort where he used the "common sense" that Turner (1960) noted as necessary for mobility, John Culbreath sought out Joe Bradley, the superintendent of the Walton County Public School System and applied for an assistant principalship in the system. Dr. Culbreath indicated that Joe Bradley had openly stated that he was seeking "a qualified minority candidate" for the assistant principalship at Monroe Area High School in 1978. John Culbreath, a native of Walton County, applied for the assistant principalship at Monroe Area High School (MAHS), and he was appointed in 1978. John Culbreath's appointment at MAHS was significant because he gained chair experience as a high school assistant principal and learned the value of school and community relationships.

Tallerico (2000) noted the “complex nature” of the high school principalship and the experience it provided as necessary for superintendent candidates. Tallerico indicated that the superintendency was similar to the high school principalship on a district level. The assistant principalship at MAHS provided John Culbreath experience in the complex role of a high school administrator. In 1979, the experience that John Culbreath gained at MAHS resulted in a sponsored mobility event in his career. Randolph County School Board President Julian Morgan recruited John Culbreath to work as principal of Randolph-Clay High School in Randolph County. Julian Morgan was aware of John Culbreath because of his work in Randolph County prior to his return to graduate school at UGA. Because John Culbreath had gained experience as a high school assistant principal, he was a desirable candidate for the principalship at Randolph-Clay High School (1979-1983). As principal of Randolph-Clay High School, John Culbreath consolidated two schools and their school communities across county lines.

Dr. Culbreath assumed the principalship of Burney-Harris-Lyons Middle School in 1983. Dr. Culbreath, aware of the principalship through statewide vacancy postings, interviewed for the position. Reflecting on his contest mobility effort, Dr. Culbreath viewed the move back to Athens as a “tactical one” that allowed him to be closer to home and near the UGA community where he could be more conscious of the “pulse of education in the state.”

Dr. Culbreath was a natural fit for the BHLMS principalship because of his skill in working in consolidated school communities. The BHLMS principalship was similar to Randolph-Clay High School in that BHLMS was formed from two middle schools, one urban and the other rural, in the Athens area. Dr. Culbreath worked at BHLMS until 1985 when he was recruited by a man whom he had met in Athens to work as an assistant superintendent in the Glynn County School System.

In 1985, contest efforts that John Culbreath made in 1976 in deciding to return to UGA to pursue a doctoral degree, resulted in a sponsored career event. Kermit Keenum, superintendent of the Glynn County School System in 1985, was aware of John Culbreath because of his work in the Athens area. Kermit Keenum “intervened” in Culbreath’s career path and served as a sponsor for him. Kermit Keenum’s intervention in John Culbreath’s career was significant.

Rose (1969) noted that during sponsored mobility processes, sponsors often intervened in the careers of sponsorees to “enhance the career progress” of the sponsoree. Prior to his recruitment by Kermit Keenum, John Culbreath had no experience at the central office level. Experience at the central office level was reported as significant for superintendent candidates by Dunlop (1997) who found that of the 205 participants in his study 52% reported that they served as assistant superintendents prior to becoming superintendents.

Kermit Keenum recruited John Culbreath to work as assistant superintendent in Glynn County. Kermit Keenum, a European American male elite in Glynn County, was known in Georgia for his efforts in selecting highly qualified African American professionals to work in positions of responsibility. John Culbreath received an opportunity. Although Kermit Keenum left Glynn County for a position in Cobb County in 1989, John Culbreath remained in Glynn County as assistant and later associate superintendent until 1993.

By 1993, Dr. John Culbreath established a reputation as a school administrator with skills in school and community building in Georgia. Dr. Culbreath had lived and worked in three major regions of the state—northeast, southwest and southeast—and was known to education officials throughout Georgia. Dr. Lester Butts and the Atlanta Public Schools System School Board took note and recruited Dr. John Culbreath to work as principal of North Atlanta High School (NAHS), a magnet high school located in the Buckhead shopping and residential district in

Atlanta. John Culbreath's move to NAHS was a sponsored career mobility event because the Atlanta Public Schools System recruited him. In Atlanta as he had done in Randolph County and in Athens, John Culbreath built a school community while leading NAHS through a transfer to a new physical plant in 1994.

During his time as principal of NAHS, John Culbreath searched for school district superintendencies. In 1995, John Culbreath's seventh try for a superintendent's post came to fruition, and he became superintendent of schools in Dougherty County, Georgia.

Dr. John Culbreath became superintendent of the Dougherty County School System in 1995 through contest efforts. The Dougherty County superintendency fit John Culbreath's skill and experience level. Similar to NAHS, the Dougherty County School System was a large urban district as well and required Dr. Culbreath to be visible on a level beyond that of the high school principalship.

When John Culbreath was appointed superintendent of the Dougherty County School System, he had worked in 7 administrative "chairs" over the span of 27 years. John Culbreath's 27 years of experience at the time of his appointment was more than the 22 years of experience cited by Dunlop (1997) as necessary for school district superintendents at the time of appointment. John Culbreath was also 47 years old at the time of his appointment as superintendent which placed him at the upper end of the 40 to 49 year old age range identified by Dunlop as the common age of appointment for superintendents. Because of sponsorship at various points in his career, John Culbreath had experiences that lessened his time in the "chairs."

In 1995, John Culbreath returned to Albany, Georgia, the city where he received his undergraduate training, as superintendent of the Dougherty County Schools System. John

Culbreath ascended to the superintendency in Dougherty County through contest efforts that included an interview and application process. John Culbreath competed against two other finalist for the superintendency in Dougherty County. John Culbreath successfully worked as superintendent in Dougherty County for six years.

Dr. Evans Harris

Dr. Evans Harris' career path is detailed in this section. Table 7.2 graphically organized the positions in Evans Harris's career path. Table 7.2 provides a point of orientation for this section's analysis of Evans Harris' ascent to the Taliaferro County School System superintendency.

Table 7.2

Dr. Evans Harris: Career Path

Position	Year(s)	Mobility Event
Superintendent, Taliaferro County Schools.	1993-1996	Contest Event, Dr. Harris candidacy for office was supported by political elites in Taliaferro County.
Educator Insurance Sales and Consulting, Albany, Georgia.	1992	Contest Event, position secured during transition out of professorate.
Professor of Educational Administration, Albany State University, Albany, Georgia	1982-1992	Sponsored Event, recruited by the Department of Educational Administration at Albany State University
Professor of Educational Administration, Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, Alabama.	1968-1982	Sponsored Event, recruited to Tuskegee by Dr. A.P. Charles.

Table 7.2 Continued

Position	Year(s)	Mobility Event
Research Assistant and Extension Specialist, The University of Oklahoma, Norman Oklahoma.	1965-1968	Sponsored Event, opportunity made possible by a stipend granted to Evans Harris from the Georgia Department of Negro Education
Principal, Murden School, Crawfordville, Georgia	1963-1965	Sponsored Event, recruited by Taliaferro County Board of Education.
Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Sparta, Georgia.	1949-1963	Contest Event, awareness of position, application and interview process. Evans Harris' application was supported by friends in the Hancock County school community.
Veterans Farm Program Training Teacher, Taliaferro County.	1947-1949	Sponsored Event, recruited by Taliaferro County Veterans Farm Training Program Board.

After working for two years as a VFTP instructor in Taliaferro County, Evans Harris became a school teacher in Hancock County in 1949. The Hancock County Board of Education was aware of Evans Harris because of his friends who worked in the area. Evans Harris' friends by "intervening" in his career worked as sponsors. The Hancock County Board of Education recruited Evans Harris to the area to teach vocational education. Evans Harris was qualified to teach agricultural education because of his work with the VFTP post-World War II program in Taliaferro County. Evans Harris fit well in the community of college educated African Americans in Hancock County.

While working as a teacher at Hancock County Central High School, Evans Harris engaged in contest efforts, which resulted in greater opportunities in his professional career. Seeking to advance professionally, Evans Harris began work on his Master's Degree at Tuskegee University in the summer of 1955. Limited in his choice of graduate schools because of segregation, Evans Harris selected Tuskegee University for graduate studies because of its excellent reputation for training African American professionals.

Evans Harris' work at Tuskegee University proved significant for two reasons. First, the Master's Degree that Evans Harris earned at Tuskegee University along with the principal's credential that he earned at Atlanta University later in 1963 allowed him to become a school administrator. While Evans Harris studied at Tuskegee University, professors at the school became aware of him and were impressed with his prowess. Evans Harris' familiarity with Tuskegee University and its professors proved useful in a sponsored career mobility move back to the university in 1968.

Evans Harris received his Master's Degree from Tuskegee University in 1963, completing his contest effort in earning the advanced credential from the school. After graduation from Tuskegee, Evans Harris, through contacts in Taliaferro County, became aware of a principalship opportunity at the Murden School. The Murden School was the Negro School in Taliaferro County. Because of his Master's Degree, experience in education, and familiarity with the county, the Taliaferro County School Board recruited Evans Harris for the Murden School principalship. Evans Harris accepted the position.

Because of contest efforts, including advanced academic preparation and active pursuit of positions, Evans Harris ascended to a high school principalship at the Murden School after working 16 years as a teacher. Evans Harris' time as a classroom teacher extended beyond the

three to five year range indicated by Tallerico (2000) and Moffett (1981) as the time that top candidates reported spending in the classroom before gaining entry into administration through contest efforts.

The extended time that Evans Harris spent in the classroom may have been an effect of available opportunities. During the early 1960s, many Georgia K-12 school districts maintained segregated school systems. As a result, the only opportunities that African Americans had for advancement into administration were in segregated schools. Evans Harris noted that segregated schools, like schools today, “had only one principal.” Because principalships are desirable positions, a candidate in a rural area might have run into a “numbers game” where there simply were not enough Negro schools during segregation to provide opportunities for African Americans to advance into administration. Moffett (1981) indicated that a lack of opportunities limited the career mobility of African American aspirants. Evans Harris’ appointment as principal at the Murden School gave him experience as a High School principal, a necessary qualification for superintendent candidates as identified by Tallerico (2000).

In 1965, Evans Harris and seven other educators were dismissed from their positions at the Murden School because of the school desegregation efforts of the 87 African American students at the school. The educator dismissals were not well received in the African American community in Taliaferro County in 1965, and a series of civil rights protests and rallies began. The publicity that Taliaferro County received in 1965 brought Evans Harris to the attention of the Georgia Department of Negro Education.

Officials at the Georgia Department of Negro Education saw potential in the unemployed Evans Harris and “intervened” in his career as a sponsor. The Georgia Department of Negro Education provided a stipend for Evans Harris to pursue a doctorate in Educational

Administration. The intervention in the career of a sponsor was cited by Rose (1969) as one method by which organizations or individuals act in the careers of sponsorees. Though Evans Harris had been fired from his position in 1965, he had served as a principal. The fact that Evans Harris served as a principal meant that he had been given access to an elite group and was still a desirable candidate for career sponsorship.

Evans Harris chose and was admitted to the University of Oklahoma (OU) for doctoral studies. At OU, Evans Harris' doctoral field experiences focused on problems occasioned by the desegregation of schools and he worked on several large state projects. Evans Harris graduated from OU with an Ed.D. in Educational Administration in 1968.

Prior to Evans Harris' graduation from OU, Dr. A.P. Charles, a university administrator at Tuskegee University, recruited Evans Harris to work as a professor at the school. A. P. Charles was a sponsor in Evans Harris' career. Consistent with Rose's (1969) findings concerning the intervention of sponsors in the careers of sponsorees, A. P. Charles "intervened" in Evans Harris' career and brought him back to the school where he received his Master's Degree. A. P. Charles' intervention in Evans Harris career was important. As a June (1968) graduate of OU, Evans Harris, similar to his circumstance in 1965, was reentering the job market. A. P. Charles made sure Evans Harris found employment in a welcoming environment. Dr. Evans Harris worked as a professor at Tuskegee University for 14 years.

In 1982, discord among faculty and administration at Tuskegee University led Evans Harris to accept a position with increased pay and responsibility at Albany State University in Albany, Georgia. Though Evans Harris was recruited to Albany State University (ASU) through sponsored career efforts of faculty at the school, the increased pay and benefits of the ASU position were contest mobility "incentives" that helped attract Evans Harris to the position.

The faculty at ASU was aware of Evans Harris because of his work in the Educational Administration Program at Tuskegee University. Evans Harris continued at ASU until the winter of 1992 when he retired from the professorate and took a position in the private sector.

During the summer of 1992, Charles Ware, a member of the Taliaferro County Board of Commissioners, recruited Evans Harris to return to the field of education. Charles Ware's "intervention" in Evans Harris' career as a sponsor changed Evans Harris career pattern. Though Charles Ware could not appoint Evans Harris to the superintendency in Taliaferro County, he worked as a member of his campaign committee. As a result, Evans Harris won the Taliaferro County School System superintendent election in August of 1992.

Evans Harris ascended to the Taliaferro County School System superintendency through what, perhaps, was the purest form of contest effort, an election. Winning the superintendent's election in Taliaferro County required Evans Harris and his supporters to use all of their political resources including, intelligence, common sense, and successful risk-taking. All were cited by Turner (1960) as tools used by persons competing under contest systems.

Though he ran for election in Taliaferro County in 1992, Evans Harris probably would have been appointed as superintendent in the county but local ordinances called for the election of the school district superintendent. Taliaferro County ordinances changed to allow the appointment of the Taliaferro County superintendent of schools after Evans Harris took office (Taliaferro County Board, 1993). Evans Harris worked as school district superintendent of the Taliaferro County School System for three years, retiring in 1996.

Mrs. Beauty Baldwin

This section details Beauty Baldwin's ascent to the Buford City School System superintendency. As Tables 7.1 and 7.2 detailed the career paths of John Culbreath and Evans

Harris, Table 7.3 provides a capsule of Baldwin's career path. Table 7.3 is important to the analysis presented in this section.

Table 7.3

Mrs. Beauty Baldwin: Career Path

Position	Year(s)	Mobility Event
Superintendent, Buford City Schools.	1984-1994	Contest Event, application and interview process. The Buford City Board of Education unanimously appointed her superintendent.
Principal, Buford City Middle School.	1980-1984	Sponsored Event, Buford City superintendent of school, Mr. Jim Puckett, actively recruited Beauty Baldwin to position.
Assistant Principal, Central Gwinnett High School.	1978-1980	Sponsored Event, selected and recruited into the position by the principal of Central Gwinnett High School, Mr. Patrick Duhon.
Mathematics and CVAE Teacher, Central Gwinnett High School.	1973-1978	Contest Event, application and interview process.
Mathematics Teacher, Hardaway High School, Columbus, Georgia.	1969-1973	Desegregation of Columbus school system resulted in student and faculty placements.
Mathematics Teacher, Spencer High School, Columbus, Georgia.	1967-1968	Sponsored Event, selected as faculty member by mentor, the former principal of Marshall Junior High School, Mr. Eddie Lindsay.
Mathematics Teacher, Marshall Junior High School.	1965-1967	Contest Event, application and interview process.

Table 7.3 Continued

Position	Year(s)	Mobility Event
Mathematics Teacher, John Lewis High School.	1963-1965	Contest Event, position sought to relocate near hometown of spouse, Mr. Lucious Baldwin.

After working two years at a segregated school in Schley County, Georgia, Beauty Baldwin became a math teacher at Marshall Junior High School (MJH) in Columbus, Georgia. Columbus is the hometown of Beauty Baldwin's husband, Lucious. At MJH, Beauty Baldwin was mentored by her first career sponsor, Mr. Eddie Lindsay. Eddie Lindsay was the principal of MJH and was one of Lucious Baldwin's former English teachers. In 1967, Eddie Lindsay received a promotion to the principalship of Spencer High School in Columbus, Georgia. Eddie Lindsay "intervened" in Beauty Baldwin's career in 1967, taking her with him to Spencer High School as a math teacher. Eddie Lindsay's intervention in Beauty Baldwin's career was consistent with Rose's (1969) finding concerning the actions of sponsors to enhance the careers of aspirants.

The teaching position at Spencer High School, a segregated school for African Americans, gave Beauty Baldwin increased classroom responsibility and prestige. In 1968, Beauty Baldwin became pregnant and took the required maternity leave from the Muscogee County School District. In 1969, less than six months after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Beauty Baldwin returned to work and helped to desegregate the Muscogee County School District as one of two African American teachers at Hardaway High School in Columbus. Beauty Baldwin worked at Columbus High School until the Baldwin family moved to Atlanta, Georgia in 1973.

In Atlanta, Beauty Baldwin searched for a position as a teacher and accepted an offer with the Gwinnett County Public Schools System at Central Gwinnett High School. Beauty Baldwin's appointment at Central Gwinnett High School was significant. Prior to Beauty Baldwin's appointment in Gwinnett County, the Region IV Office of Civil Rights and Gwinnett County superintendent of schools, J.W. Benefield, had been engaged in a lengthy struggle over school desegregation in the county (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1969a, 1971a, 1972a). Between 1969 and 1971, Gwinnett County Public Schools hired 533 new teachers, 6 were African American. Beauty Baldwin had a skill set similar to the one John Culbreath developed at RCHS. Because of her work at Hardaway High School, Beauty Baldwin had experience as an African American teacher in desegregated majority school settings.

Beauty Baldwin was the only African American teacher at Central Gwinnett High School during her seven-year tenure there. Significant to Beauty Baldwin's career mobility after her hiring in Gwinnett County was the fact that the position at Central Gwinnett High School made her visible to the elite circle of European American male school administrators in Gwinnett County. After five years at Central Gwinnett High School, Beauty Baldwin was sponsored by the school's principal and promoted to the position of assistant principal at the school. Rose (1969) and Cadman (1989) noted competence and access to sponsors as traits necessary for sponsorees, Beauty Baldwin possessed both.

A European American female assistant principal formerly held the assistant principalship that Beauty Baldwin was promoted into at CGHS. Beauty Baldwin's predecessor in the assistant principalship at CGHS was promoted to a position at the Gwinnett County Public School System Central Office. Dr. Duhon, the principal at Central Gwinnett High School, wanted to fill the assistant principal's vacancy with a female, and Beauty Baldwin was a veteran educator with 14

years of classroom experience. Beauty Baldwin's assistant principal appointment in 1978 was significant as Tallerico (2000) noted that women and minorities faced greater challenges than their male counterparts in accessing administrative positions. Beauty Baldwin's appointment as assistant principal made her the only African American administrator in the Gwinnett County Public School System in 1978.

Beauty Baldwin worked a total of 14 years as a teacher before being promoted into school administration. Tallerico's (2000) research found that three to five years was the maximum time spent by top candidates in the classroom before becoming administrators. Beauty Baldwin's 14-year tenure put her nine years beyond Tallerico's indicated timetable. The researcher noted that the majority of Beauty Baldwin's teaching career was spent in the Muscogee and Gwinnett County Public School Districts, seven and five years respectively. As a result, Beauty Baldwin's ascent into school administration began five years into her teaching career in Gwinnett County, placing her within Tallerico's (2000) three to five year range for ascension of top candidates into administration.

As a condition of her employment as assistant principal at Central Gwinnett High School (CGHS), Beauty Baldwin had to become certified as an administrator. Beauty Baldwin was enrolled in the Educational Administration Certification Program at UGA while she worked as an assistant principal at CGHS. In one of her classes at UGA, Beauty Baldwin met Jim Puckett, then the superintendent of schools in Buford City, Georgia.

As a sponsor, Jim Puckett "intervened" in Beauty Baldwin's career by recruiting her to work as principal of Buford City Middle School (BCMS). The BCMS principalship was a promotion for Beauty Baldwin and marked a sponsored mobility event in her career. Beauty Baldwin worked at BCMS for four years (1980-1984). In 1984, Jim Puckett accepted a position

with the Metro Atlanta Regional Education Service Agency and Beauty Baldwin applied for the vacant superintendent's post.

Interestingly, Tallerico's (2000) research indicated that former high school principals were the most desirable candidates for superintendent posts. Beauty Baldwin never served as a high school principal. Beauty Baldwin was appointed superintendent in Buford City in 1984 after having worked as a professional educator in Georgia for 21 years and in Buford City for 4 years. Beauty Baldwin's appointment as superintendent at age 42 occurred before her 50s the age most commonly observed for female superintendents in Tallerico's research. With 21 years of experience, Beauty Baldwin's appointment occurred a year before the 22-year experience minimum-range cited by Dunlop's (1997) research as most common for superintendents.

Board of Education members and the Buford City School System community knew Beauty Baldwin. Buford City school officials knew the type of administrator and professional that Beauty Baldwin was and even though Beauty Baldwin applied for the superintendents' position in Buford City, her candidacy was enhanced, if not solidified by her work in the district. Black and English's (1986) findings indicated that the "chair" effect with experience in each post could be mediated by existing relationships within a school district. Baldwin, a former principal in the Buford City School System, had established relationships in the district. Beauty Baldwin successfully served as Buford City's superintendent for 10 years (1984-1994).

Career Mobility: Participant Comparative Analysis

Born and raised in three separate regions of Georgia, the participants' career mobility experiences were diverse. However, the participants' careers developed in a common social climate during school segregation and desegregation in the Georgia and the United States. The

participants' career patterns and mobility were also affected by common factors as each worked as K-12 teachers, administrators, and superintendents in the state of Georgia.

At 56 years of age, Dr. John Culbreath, who was born in Monroe, Georgia and received his undergraduate education at ASU (1964-1968), was the youngest participant. Dr. Evans Harris, schooled at FVSC (1943-1947), was the senior participant at 79 years of age. Beauty Baldwin schooled in Sandersville, Georgia and an alumnus of SSC (1959-1963), was the second youngest participant in this study at 62 years of age.

The participants' ages were significant to the comparative analysis of their career mobility and age at appointment as superintendents. The participants' ages provided clues to the eras in which their careers emerged. While each participant lived through segregation and desegregation, the range in their ages represented two distinct eras in which varying events dominated the social climate of the United States.

Evans Harris grew up in the 1930s and early 1940s. During Evans Harris' adolescence, the dominant feature of the American landscape was World War II. Because of World War II, Evans Harris was one of less than 49 male students at FVSC when he enrolled in the fall of 1943. Evans Harris' enrollment at FVSC during World War II was significant because of its timing. By the time Evans Harris graduated from FVSC in 1947, job opportunities in Georgia and the United States were significantly affected by the end of World War II.

As a result of World War II and the training that he received in education with an emphasis on agriculture at FVSC, Evans Harris gained employment as a teacher in the Taliaferro County VFTP (1947). The VFTP was part of a government program established to help returning World War II veterans join the workforce (Baker, 1950; Butts & Cremin, 1953). The VFTP was

funded through the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, also known as the GI Bill of Rights (Butts & Cremin, 1953).

Evans Harris' age was significant in analyzing the career mobility of the participants. Evans Harris, born in the 1920s was 26 and 17 years older than John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin throughout their respective career lives. Because Evans Harris was significantly older than the other participants, his career, although it evolved during segregation and desegregation, began in the World War II era. Conversely, John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin's careers developed at a time closer to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and widespread efforts to desegregate schools in the United States and Georgia.

The timing of the careers of John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin allowed them to enter desegregated K-12 school settings in the first decade following their graduation from college. Evans Harris also worked with desegregation programs in K-12 school communities while at OU. However, Evans Harris' experience in higher education during the 1960s placed his career in that arena until his superintendency in 1993.

At 68 years of age, Evans Harris was older than the 40-49 year age range noted by Dunlop (1997) as the common age of superintendents at their first appointment. Evans Harris was the oldest of the participants at the time of his appointment because of his career in higher education after desegregation efforts in Taliaferro County in 1965.

Focusing on school desegregation, the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case marked the first national effort to outlaw racial segregation in schools in the United States (LaMorte, 1999). *Brown v. Board of Education* was followed by a second case commonly known as *Brown v. Board II* (1955), which addressed the speed of school districts in carrying out the Supreme Court's mandate to desegregate schools.

Though *Brown v. Board of Education* outlawed racial segregation in schools in 1954, school segregation remained constitutional in Georgia and was ensured through the guarantee of terminated funding to any district that desegregated (Daniels, 2001; Report of the Georgia Commission on Education, 1954). Because of Georgia's constitutional stance on school segregation, desegregation efforts in the state did not begin in earnest until the desegregation of UGA by Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes in 1961. The desegregation of UGA was significant because it forced a repeal of Georgia's segregation statutes. Georgia's citizens would not allow UGA to close because of funding termination guaranteed by the state constitution (Roche, 1998; *The Road to Integration*, n. d.). The desegregation of UGA allowed wide-spread school desegregation throughout the state.

John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin were high school (1960-1964) and college (1959-1963) students, respectively, when school desegregation became "legal" in Georgia. As a result, John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin assumed professional positions in education during the time when opportunities for advancement in desegregated settings were made available to African Americans in the state. Access to positions in desegregated settings was noted by Crain and Strauss (1985) and Banks (1994) as critical for minorities in aspiring to advance to top positions in their professions. By the late 1960s and early 1970s when John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin worked in professional positions in desegregated settings at Hardaway High School (1969-1973) and Randolph County High School (1970-1972), Evans Harris was a professor in higher education at Tuskegee University.

As a professor at Tuskegee University, Evans Harris trained African American K-12 school administrators (1968-1982). Evans Harris arrived at Tuskegee University after his graduation from OU in 1968. Similar to John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin in K-12 settings in

Georgia, Evans Harris also worked with desegregation projects while he was a doctoral student at OU (1965-1968). OU also provided Evans Harris with schooling in a desegregated setting. However, because of timing and the change in Evans Harris' career pattern in 1965, he participated in and was "mobilized" to desegregated school settings as a professor and K-12 administrator in Georgia later in his career than did John Culbreath or Beauty Baldwin.

In retrospect, John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin had experiences that were more alike at similar times because they were closer to being "age mates" than was Evans Harris to either of the two. Evans Harris' return to Georgia and eventual return to K-12 education occurred after a sponsored career mobility event initiated by faculty at ASU in 1982. Evans Harris' return to Georgia in 1982 was critical because it placed him in a parallel role to John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin. From 1982 forward, the participants worked as administrators in K-12 and higher education settings in Georgia.

Prior to the 1980s, "age mates" John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin worked as teachers and school administrators in school systems in Georgia (1972-1984). John Culbreath began his career in administration in a desegregated school, RCES, in 1972. John Culbreath's entry into administration was a sponsored mobility event. The outgoing assistant principal at RCES, who was also John Culbreath's friend, Jay Wansley, initiated his "entry." Beauty Baldwin, six years older than John Culbreath, entered school administration in 1978 at CGHS. CGHS' principal, Dr. Duhon, sponsored Beauty Baldwin's assistant principalship.

John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin continued in school administration through the late 1970s and 1980s. Culbreath assumed principalships at Randolph-Clay High School (1976-1983), BHLMS (1983-1985), and served as assistant and associate superintendent in the Glynn County School System (1985-1993) before returning to the principalship at NAHS (1993-1995). Beauty

Baldwin served as assistant principal at CGHS until 1980. In 1980, Beauty Baldwin became principal of BCMS through a sponsored mobility event. In 1984, she became superintendent of the Buford City School System. Beauty Baldwin's appointment in Buford City (1984) was the first for an African American female in Georgia (see Appendix B).

In 1982, Evans Harris began work as the head of the Department of Educational Administration at ASU. Working at ASU for 10 years, Evans Harris helped aspiring African American administrators pass graduate school entrance exams and professional licensure exams. Evans Harris shared that the result was that southwest Georgia, the location of ASU, became "filled with Black administrators." African Americans were appointed to principalships throughout the region where there had once been relatively few.

Beauty Baldwin was in the second year of her principalship at BCMS in 1982. Buford City School System superintendent of schools, Jim Puckett, sponsored Beauty Baldwin's principalship at BCMS. Beauty Baldwin met Jim Puckett in a class at UGA while working on her administrative certification in the late 1970s. Beauty Baldwin pursued administrative certification at UGA as a requirement of her job as assistant principal at CGHS.

Teaching and School Administration in Georgia

There were three common factors that influenced the participants' experiences as teachers, school district administrators, and superintendents in Georgia. The three common factors included school desegregation as the impetus for advancement in the participants' professional careers, financial challenges of the school district superintendency, and knowing when to retire.

Supplementing this section, Appendix F provides a view of the participants' career experiences contextualized by major court cases and events during desegregation (1954-1980).

Desegregation began during 1950s and continued through the late 1970s in the United States. Because of its timing, desegregation helped initiate and coincided with the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. Desegregation court cases were important because they influenced district culture, the hiring of minority administrative candidates, and desegregation efforts in the school districts in which the participants worked. Tables 4.1 and 5.1 also detailed major events during desegregation and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States.

School Desegregation: An Impetus for Advancement

Each of the participants' careers was affected differently by desegregation efforts in Georgia. The common experience with desegregation for the participants is that it placed them in positions in majority school settings at a time when many African American educators opted to remain in or return to segregated schools. In desegregated settings, the participants gained work skills that gave them access to subsequent positions that helped their advancement as professional educators.

In the career of Dr. John Culbreath, school desegregation in 1970 led to a position at RCHS. At RCHS, Dr. Culbreath worked with a "cadre of caring educators," African and European American, who focused on providing the best education possible for all students in desegregated settings. Working with a special "cadre of caring educators" was a theme in the schools that John Culbreath and his "age mate" Beauty Baldwin worked in during their initial experiences with desegregation. Beauty Baldwin noted that in 1969 at Hardaway High School in Columbus, Georgia the members of the school's staff were "helpful" in facilitating the desegregation process.

The cadres of “caring educators” that helped facilitate school desegregation in the Randolph County School System and the Muscogee County School District (Columbus, Georgia) were necessary. Dr. Culbreath noted, many felt that school desegregation was still “too new” in the late 1960s and early 1970s. As a result, there were often delays to school desegregation in the school districts that John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin worked in.

Dr. Culbreath noted that prior to the desegregation of RCHS in 1970, Randolph County School System Superintendent, Fred Darden, informed the staff at Henderson High School that desegregation was only taking place in the district because “all legal remedies had been exhausted.” Beauty Baldwin also noted that initially working in a desegregated setting “was a learning process” for all who were involved.

The lessons that John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin learned at RCHS and Hardaway High School served them well later in their careers. Because John Culbreath gained experience and was a leader in the RCHS community (1970-1972) he earned a “Star Teacher” award. Culbreath’s distinction as an accomplished educator in a desegregated setting, his acquaintance with the outgoing assistant principal at RCES, and the Randolph County School System’s focus in maintaining “racial balance” among its administrators helped him enter school administration in 1972 when he was promoted to assistant principal at RCES.

Beauty Baldwin’s experience at Hardaway High School helped her gain employment in the Gwinnett County Public School System in 1973. Baldwin noted that during desegregation many African American teachers went back to segregated settings because of “comfort.” Beauty Baldwin, who grew up working beside White sharecroppers in Middle Georgia’s cotton fields, was comfortable in majority desegregated school settings. John Culbreath also knew that in a desegregated setting he simply had to “teach” as he had done in segregated Henderson High

School. Dr. Culbreath noted that students, White and Black, needed the teachers in desegregated schools to be “effective educators” then “more than ever” because of external stressors including student fights and boycotts in desegregated school communities.

John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin gained experience in desegregated settings at a time when many African American educators in the Georgia chose to remain in or return to desegregated settings. Work in desegregated K-12 settings was a skill that allowed John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin to access opportunities unavailable to educators, White and Black, who lacked such experience. Part of the access that John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin experienced was promotion into school administration in desegregated settings, Culbreath at RCES (1972) and Baldwin at CGHS (1978). From those platforms, John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin began their ascents to school district superintendencies in Georgia.

Interestingly, Braddock and McPartland (1982) called for studies to examine the effect of desegregation in the professional career attainments of African Americans. Crain and Strauss (1985) conducted one such study, analyzing a longitudinal sample of African American students from Hartford, Connecticut from the 1960s. To the researcher’s knowledge, a proliferation of the type of studies suggested by Braddock and McPartland (1982) and conducted by Crain and Strauss (1985) has not occurred.

John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin entered school administration and began their ascents to K-12 school district superintendencies in Georgia during the 1970s. During the time John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin were K-12 educators, Evans Harris worked in the professorate at Tuskegee University (1968-1982). Dr. Evans Harris arrived at Tuskegee University after earning his Ed. D. from OU in 1968. Dr. Harris became a student at OU after

being dismissed from the principalship at the Murden School in Taliaferro County, Georgia in 1965.

Prior to becoming a student at OU, Evans Harris worked as a schoolteacher for 14 years. However, Evans Harris never worked as a K-12 teacher in a desegregated school because of the time when his career began in the World War II era, prior to desegregation in Georgia. Evans Harris was a VFTP teacher in Taliaferro County from 1947 until 1949. In 1949, Evans Harris began teaching at Hancock County Central High School, the school for Negroes in Hancock County. Evans Harris taught in Hancock County until 1963 when he returned to Taliaferro County as the principal of the Murden School. Though he never worked as a classroom teacher in a desegregated school, Evans Harris' career pattern was significantly affected by school desegregation efforts in Taliaferro County.

School desegregation efforts in Taliaferro County in 1965 caused Evans Harris' dismissal from the school system (Georgia Department of Negro Education, 1965a, 1965b, 1965c, 1965d). As a result, Evans Harris with the assistance of a stipend provided by the Georgia Department of Negro Education, pursued his doctorate at OU. Because Evans Harris was older than John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin and because of the change in his career pattern, his experience as a professional during desegregation was divergent but not less significant than Culbreath and Baldwin's experiences.

As a professor, Evans Harris "turned keys and opened doors." Many of Evans Harris' former students from Tuskegee University went on to high profile careers in education. Two of Evans Harris most successful students were John Gibson, President of Alabama A&M University and Lucian Harris former superintendent of the Clarke County, Georgia school system. Evans Harris also worked as a professor at ASU (1982-1992). At ASU, Evans Harris

helped African American students who could not pass graduate school entrance exams or administrative licensure tests to pass their exams, enter the school administration program at ASU, graduate, and obtain licensure. Subsequently, Dr. Evans Harris, whose career pattern was changed because of desegregation, maintained an influence on K-12 school administration throughout the south while in the professorate. The reputation that Evans Harris built as a professor during and after segregation allowed him to return to his home in Taliaferro County in 1992. In 1992, with the support of political elites in Taliaferro County, Evans Harris campaigned for and won the school district superintendency.

The participants' experiences with desegregation varied. However, a significant outcome resulted from each of their experiences with desegregation. Because their experiences in desegregated schools, the participants were placed in mainstream work and educational settings that provided practical experiences and opportunities for advancement. The participants gained entry into school administration and higher education settings in areas where their experience with desegregation was beneficial. As a result, the participants were elevated to other positions of greater responsibility in non-segregated K-12 and higher education settings, eventually ascending to school district superintendencies in Georgia.

Financial Challenges of the Superintendency

The participants served as superintendents in three very different school districts. Dougherty County, the urban county in which Dr. Culbreath worked (1995-2001), is the commerce and trade capital of southwest Georgia. During the time that Dr. Culbreath served as superintendent of the Dougherty County Schools System, he was the administrative head of a school system that provided educational services for approximately 18,000 students. Dr. Evans Harris worked as superintendent of the Taliaferro County School System (1993-1996) in rural

east-central Georgia. While Dr. Harris was superintendent in Taliaferro County, the system served 170, K-8 students in a county with a population of 11,000. Beauty Baldwin was superintendent of schools in Buford City, Georgia (1984-1994). Buford City is an urban suburb of Atlanta, Georgia. Between 1984 and 1994, Buford City was home to approximately 10,000 residents and provided services for 1,400 K-12 students.

Financial crisis surfaced as a theme that was central to the career of each participant as superintendent. In the Dougherty County Schools System, past due debts, damage to facilities caused by a flood in the summer of 1994, and infrastructure demands led to a financial crisis during the late 1990s (Dougherty County Schools Loose, 1995; School Enrollment, 1996). The Taliaferro County School System faced dissolution in 1993 because of its low student population and lack of funding. Buford City School System endured massive central office staff reductions during the summer of 1992 because of a reduction in state funding and the district's inability to produce additional revenue.

The significance in the financial crises in each of the participants' school systems is that they tested the participants' skills in managing district finances and other operations while under extreme duress. Ellerbee (2002) cited competency, business and politics, and general awareness as three factors that limited African Americans access to superintendencies (see Table 2.1). The participants displayed skill in all three areas cited by Ellerbee (2002) in managing the financial crisis in each of their districts. The participants' management of financial crisis situations was important because they could have marked significant turning points at the pinnacle of the participants' careers if they had not been successfully managed.

Emotions were heightened during the financial crises in the participants' school systems. Dr. Culbreath, accused of receiving "kickbacks" from building contractors, indicated that he was

“reprimanded” for signing change orders that he was authorized to make on the district’s building project. Dr. Culbreath revealed that after his reprimand the school board gave him the sense that he had committed “a fatal error” that he could not recover. In 1993, Dr. Evans Harris, struggling to save the Taliaferro County School System, impassionedly pleaded to parents, community, and state leaders, stating that schools were just like “churches” in that they served the communities.

Beauty Baldwin was told by the Buford City School Board in 1992 that severe budget cuts were to be made and “Do not bother the schools.” Beauty Baldwin indicated that she was emotionally “depleted” by the situation in Buford City because making the budget cuts meant that she would have to layoff almost her entire central office staff, many of which were her professional and personal friends.

The feelings and emotions that the participants’ experienced were significant, as they could have clouded their judgment in handling the financial crises in their districts, perhaps leading to different outcomes. The participants managed feelings and emotions and executed their duties with precision, leading their districts “out of the financial woods.” Also, Ellerbee (2002) cited the ability to manage school district finances as a skill that limited African Americans’ access to superintendencies. The participants adapted to changing financial circumstances in their districts and survived.

Dr. Culbreath indicated that auditors “lived with” Dougherty County Schools System officials throughout the 1999 school year and into 2000. Dr. Culbreath, focused on the good of the system, worked with auditors, and “led the way” in making budget cuts. In Taliaferro County, Dr. Evans Harris worked closely with officials from the Georgia Department of Education (DOE) and helped secure supplementary funding for the district through a “Sparsity

Grant” provided by the DOE. Beauty Baldwin shared that although “depleted” she let central office employees know that the budget cuts were “a board decision” and that it was “her job” to carry out their wishes. Beauty Baldwin laid off central office staff in the Buford City School System (1992) and enlisted the help of former Buford City superintendent, Jim Puckett, from the Atlanta Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA). Jim Puckett and RESA helped manage school based administrative operations in the Buford City School System during the district’s financial crisis.

After working as educators in professional careers that lasted more than 30 years each, the participants retired from public K-12 education in Georgia. Dr. John Culbreath, Dr. Evans Harris, and Mrs. Beauty Baldwin reflected on why they chose to retire when they did, the signals that indicated the need to retire, the responses they received within their school districts, and their aspirations for future generations of students and school district administrators in Georgia.

Knowing When To Move On

The participants in this study worked as public school district superintendents in Georgia between the years of 1984 and 2001. John Culbreath and Beauty Baldwin were appointed as superintendents. Evans Harris was elected as superintendent. The participants became superintendents after working more than 20 years in the field of education. While each of the participants worked in different locales in the state of Georgia, they faced a common experiences as they approached the end of their tenure as superintendents, retirement from K-12 education in Georgia.

Reflecting on the reasons why they decided to retire from K-12 education when they did, the participants offered insight into personal and professional experiences that signaled the need for each to move on to new opportunities. Dr. John Culbreath reached his decision to retire in

2001 after working six years as superintendent in Dougherty County, Georgia. Dr. Evans Harris decided to end his 49-year career in education in 1996. Beauty Baldwin's 10-year tenure as superintendent in Buford City, Georgia ended in 1984.

In 1992 Beauty Baldwin led the Buford City School System through a series of staff reductions and budget cuts that left her emotionally "depleted." In 1993, Dr. Evans Harris helped save the Taliaferro County School System from dissolution in what, perhaps, was the struggle of his career. During the late 1990s, Dr. John Culbreath guided the Dougherty County Schools System through a financial crisis. Correcting the financial situation in Dougherty County caused Dr. Culbreath to nearly exhaust all of his personal energies.

At the end of their professional careers, after having established successful student programs and improved student services in their school systems, the participants faced enormous challenges. After leading their school systems through supreme challenges, the participants having completed their tasks, considered personal circumstances, the length of their service, and the restored climate in the districts in which they worked and looked toward retirement.

Retirement marked a welcome new phase in the careers of the participants. Beauty Baldwin noted that the superintendency was "a hard job." Because the superintendency is a "hard job" and considering the crises the participants faced as superintendents, the position consumed a tremendous amount of the participants' personal energies. John Culbreath shared "The first time I said that out of my mouth [about retirement] the weight [of the superintendency and the Board of Education] began to lift off my shoulders." Evans Harris also looked toward retirement, as his wife, Ann, was terminally ill.

Though tired and having faced personal and professional challenges at the end of their careers, the participants did not retire in times of crisis. The Dougherty County Schools System,

Taliaferro County School System, and Buford City School System were operating smoothly when the participants retired. The participants noted that they retired because they had done all that they could do as superintendents in their school districts. Announcing their retirements after positively impacting the school systems they worked in, and “doing all that could be done” as superintendents was significant because it “set the stage” for their retirements.

Commenting on the timing of his retirement, John Culbreath noted, “I had taken the school district as far as I could. I had watched the school system rebound from a flood. I had rehabilitated several schools. I had improved instruction. I had done a lot in the school system.” Beauty Baldwin’s sentiments echoed those of John Culbreath’s “I had taken Buford City as high as it could go.” Beauty Baldwin implemented innovative instructional programs in the Buford City School System and had an administrative team and teaching staff that included “some of the best educators you could find” when she retired in 1994. In Taliaferro County, Evans Harris led the school system through a threat of dissolution and established programs to improve instructional services in the district as well.

The ability to retire at a time of their choosing with their school districts operating smoothly was a testament to the participants’ skill as administrators. Because the participants made significant contributions to their school districts and retired when they were operating smoothly, their careers in public K-12 education ended peaceably. Beauty Baldwin shared that superintendents should “leave on good terms.”

Evidence of the participants’ success as superintendents was seen at their retirement parties as Buford City sent Beauty Baldwin “out in style,” Evans Harris was noted for improving the educational situation in Taliaferro County’s “rural ghetto,” and the Dougherty County Public

Schools System gave Dr. John Culbreath money and gifts while doing a spoof on “*Big Bad John*” at his retirement ceremony.

The honors that the participants received at the time of their retirements were significant for one reason. They solidified the participants’ reputations as successful African American school district superintendents in Georgia.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This study included the oral histories of three retired African American superintendents who were natives of Georgia. The participants' careers spanned 54 years (1947-2001). This chapter focused on the researcher's conclusions on the significance of the experiences presented in this study relative to three areas. The areas included the ascension studies examined in Chapter 2, themes for future research, and final reflections on the study by the researcher.

Through its focus on the significance of the experiences in this study in relation to the ascension studies in Chapter 2, themes for future research, and the researcher's final reflections on the study, Chapter 8 brought closure to this phase of research on African American superintendents in Georgia. Future research might be influenced by this study's findings.

Ascension Studies

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature and research for this study. A section of Chapter 2 reviewed literature and research on the African American superintendency. In the section that reviewed literature and research on the African American superintendency, three key studies that examined the ascension of African Americans to superintendencies were explored. The ascension studies were those conducted by Moody (1983), Dunlop (1997), and Ellerbee (2002). This section of Chapter 8 reflected on the significance of the experiences in this study relative to the focus of the studies conducted by Dunlop, Moody, and Ellerbee.

Moody and Dunlop

Moody (1983) and Dunlop (1997) conducted studies that explored the career mobility of African American superintendents. Moody and Dunlop's studies used surveys to gain insight

on the career mobility of African American superintendents. Moody's sample included 94 African American superintendents from the United States and the Virgin Islands. Dunlop's sample included 205 African American superintendents in the United States and the Virgin Islands.

The major findings of Moody's (1983) study focused on sponsored mobility as the controlling factor in the careers of African American superintendents. Dunlop's (1997) study produced findings that stressed contest mobility as the system that most influenced the career mobility of African American superintendents. The ideas of sponsored and contest mobility have been traced to Turner's (1960) study in which he identified the two social mobility archetypes.

While Moody (1983) and Dunlop's (1997) research were key studies that focused on the career mobility of African American superintendents, they were descriptive in nature only. Career sponsors and contest systems such as the "chair" paradigm were identified by name and only described in Moody and Dunlop's studies. As a result, the experiences in the present study were important because they added perspective to literature and research on the career mobility of African American superintendents.

To the researcher's knowledge, no oral histories have explored the career experiences or career mobility of African American superintendents. Through oral history research, this study added rich perspective to the ideas of contest and sponsored mobility systems. In the experiences of John Culbreath, Evans Harris, and Beauty Baldwin, contest efforts and sponsorship shaped their career patterns. More importantly, this study revealed that each participant's final ascent to the superintendency was through contest mobility efforts. Because the experiences in this study were revealed in the participants' own words, the accounts provided intimate detail on each participant's ascent to the superintendency. Those studying how mobility systems affect the

careers of African American superintendents may use the participants' experiences for reflection on literature and research on the African American superintendency, their own experiences, and the participants' insights.

Ellerbee

In his 2002 research, Ellerbee used quantitative and qualitative research methods to explore the career mobility of African American superintendent-level administrators. Ellerbee defined superintendent-level administrators as those who held positions with superintendent in the title, and who ascended to high-level administrative posts in school districts but did not become superintendents. Ellerbee's study used questionnaires and telephone interviews to collect data from 23 superintendent-level administrators in California.

Ellerbee's (2002) study was significant because it focused on reasons why African Americans did not become superintendents. Ellerbee's major findings are found in Table 2.1 of the present study. Many of the rationales provided by Ellerbee's participants were viewed in comparison to the career experiences of the participants in this study, all of whom served as superintendents. Because this study added perspective to factors affecting African Americans' access to the superintendency in a way that Ellerbee's study did not, a deeper exploration of factors listed in Table 2.1 was provided.

Relative to the mentoring factor listed in table 2.1, John Culbreath, Evans Harris and Beauty Baldwins' experiences during their K-12 and undergraduate schooling were significant. Ellerbee (2002) cited the lack of mentoring and community support present in African American communities in the 1960s and 1970s as factors that limited African Americans' access to superintendencies. Because of their competency as professionals, the participants in the present

study also were selected for sponsorship throughout their careers. Ellerbee also cited the lack of sponsors as a factor that limited African American's access to superintendencies.

Also, Beauty Baldwin, a member of the Buford City School System for four years before her appointment as superintendent, was the first African American female superintendent in Georgia (see Appendix B for African American superintendents in Georgia since 1954). Interestingly, Ellerbee (2002) cited gender as a factor that limited African American females' access to the superintendency. The participants in the present study also displayed competency, general awareness, and strength during their tenure as superintendents. All were cited by Ellerbee (2002) as factors that limited African American's access to superintendencies. Finally, the participants became superintendents through contest efforts in school districts where minority and majority race community members supported their efforts.

The present study added perspective to factors cited in Ellerbee's (2002) research as those that limited African Americans' access to superintendencies. This was significant because the participants' perspectives extended knowledge of African American superintendents' experiences with career limiting factors. Further, the data in this study shed light on factors identified in Moody (1983), Dunlop (1997), and Ellerbee's research on African American superintendents and showed divergences in the participant's experiences relative to the literature. Because of the perspectives that the findings of this study added to research on the African American superintendency, this study might elevate the use of oral history research in future studies of the career lives of superintendents.

Themes for Future Research

In this section, the significance of six common factors, identified in Chapter 7, were explored in relation to their potential impact on future research on African American

superintendents. The six factors included:

1. Childhood Mentoring
2. Schooling at Historically Black Colleges and Universities
3. School Desegregation as the Impetus for Advancement
4. Career Mobility
5. Financial Challenges of the Superintendency
6. Knowing When to Move On

Each of the factors provided insight into the professional careers of the participant's from different perspectives. Each of the factors provided data on experiences in the participants' lives. As a result the insight and data that they provided, the six factors formed the basis for new studies on desegregation and the professional career lives of minority superintendents.

Childhood Mentoring

During segregation, African American students like John Culbreath, Evans Harris, and Beauty Baldwin received significant mentoring in the African American communities in which they lived. The community mentoring of the participants in this study took place in their homes and in the K-12 segregated schools that they attended. The mentoring that the participants received at home and at school reinforced each other, providing consistency in the training received by the participants.

Focusing more closely on the type of mentoring that African American K-12 students received during segregation, two factors were common, hard work and achievement. John Culbreath is the product of a single parent home. Evans Harris' parents were not highly educated. Beauty Baldwin was the daughter of sharecroppers. In the midst of bleak and perhaps

desperate circumstances, the participant's parents supported their schooling, provided assistance with schoolwork if they could, and presented the participants with tangible role models.

At George Washington Carver High School, the Murden School, and T.J. Elder High School, teachers like Willie Grace Randall and Thomas Elton pushed students to excel and exposed them to places beyond the impoverished rural counties that they lived. Great literature and excursions to different parts of the state of Georgia were the vehicles that teachers in segregated schools used. The teachers in the segregated K-12 schools that the participants attended showed great confidence in their students, encouraged their efforts, and never let them quit.

The "can do" attitude that was inculcated into African American K-12 students in the schools that the participants attended during segregation was important. Because segregation was as much a psychological institution as it was a body of laws and physical circumstances, African American students had to believe that they could achieve. If African American students schooled in segregated systems had ever doubted their worth as human beings or ability to achieve, all the benefit of being schooled in caring, achievement oriented communities would have been negated.

Because it acknowledged the significance of the mentoring that the participants received during their years as K-12 students, this study might serve as the impetus for new studies on segregation and school desegregation. Studies focused on mentoring experiences, identity and esteem issues of those who lived through segregation might prove interesting. Also, studies focused on the impact of the K-12 mentoring and school experiences of those who lived during segregation and success outcomes in later life could provide invaluable information. This study

might also inspire the proliferation of similar studies focused on the experiences of non-African American minority groups in the United States.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

George Washington Carver High School, the Murden School, and T.J. Elder High School worked to prepare African American students for the world. While the teachers at the segregated K-12 schools that the participants attended worked hard, and used the limited resources and facilities that they had to the best of their abilities, their students required higher levels of training for successful entry into the workplace. Three of Georgia's Historically Black Colleges and Universities provided access for the participants to the next level of training after high school graduation.

At Albany State College, Fort Valley State College, and Savannah State College, the participants improved in academic areas in which their high school curricula had been deficient. The Historically Black Colleges and Universities that the participants attended provided time and space in which the participants could seek niches and adjust to college life. Professors at Albany State College, Fort Valley State College, and Savannah State College, some of whom were top African American scholars of the 20th Century, were unyielding and expected quality work from their students as they prepared them for the adult work world. College wide administrators at the Historically Black Colleges and Universities that the participants attended ensured that the environment was safe and that students focused on their studies.

The environments at the Historically Black Colleges and Universities that the participants attended were heightened extensions of the K-12 school communities that the participants were schooled. Studies on the impact of Historically Black College and University school communities during segregation on the educational and career attainments of students could add

knowledge to the research community. Also, studies on current Historically Black College and University school communities and their function in preparing African American students for graduate school or the professional workplace could provide insight into the career development of African American professionals. Studies on African American higher educational school communities might also inspire studies of non-African American minority or religious groups in higher education settings (e.g., Brigham Young University, Notre Dame).

School Desegregation

School desegregation was a slow and sometimes cumbersome process. In Georgia and other parts of the south, schools continued the desegregation process throughout the 1970s. School desegregation significantly impacted the careers of the participants in this study.

Because the participants in this study were working professionals during school desegregation, they did not receive their K-12 schooling in desegregated settings. However, school desegregation placed the participants in places in their professional careers that afforded them access to desegregated work settings and graduate school experiences. The participants gained experience in desegregated work and school settings during a time when few African Americans received such opportunities. The participants gained skills and credentials in desegregated settings that made them extraordinary candidates for advancement within their peer groups. As a result, the participants were selected for administrative posts, graduate school opportunities, and positions of responsibility in areas at times when many African Americans struggled to gain access or remain in desegregated settings.

On a broader scale, this study might inspire research that examines the impact of experience in desegregated school and work settings on the educational and career outcomes of African Americans. Braddock and McPartland (1982) suggested similar research but to the

researcher's knowledge, their call has been largely unanswered in research and literature. Perhaps it is time to revisit Braddock and McPartland's ideas. While it may be too late for longitudinal studies similar to those suggested here, retrospective event studies are possible. Again, the methods used in studies on the impact of desegregation on the educational and occupational attainments of African Americans can be applied to studies of non-African American minority groups.

Career Mobility

An earlier section in this chapter focused on key ascension studies on the African American superintendency. This section focused on the career mobility of the participants and the significance of those events to future research on the career mobility of African American superintendents.

The participants in this study ascended to Georgia school district superintendencies. Each participant in this study was the first African American school district superintendent in the district in which he or she worked. Beauty Baldwin was the first African American female superintendent in Georgia's history.

Because the participants in this study ascended to school district superintendencies, they experienced career mobility. While contest and sponsored career mobility archetypes effected the career patterns of each participant in this study differently, several commonalities were evident.

The participants' work in desegregated majority school settings early in their careers gave them an advantage over their peers who had not worked in desegregated settings. The study's participants had specialized experience. Because the participants had specialized experience with desegregation, they were prime candidates for promotion to work in areas where problems were

occasioned by desegregation or where desegregation was still new. The participants had experience in desegregated settings which helped them access later opportunities.

In addition to experience in desegregated work settings, the participants received advanced graduate training at major research universities. John Culbreath received his Ed. D. from the University of Georgia. Evans Harris received his Ed. D. at the University of Oklahoma. Mrs. Baldwin obtained her M. Ed. and advanced administrative certification from the University of Georgia. Because the participants prepared academically and credential wise, they were elevated to positions of higher responsibility when the opportunity arose. Experience and preparation assisted the participants' career pattern development.

Future studies might provide further insight into the interplay between experience, academic preparation, and the career mobility of minority candidates in a range of professions. Such studies might provide a wide array of perspectives on minority professionals and their career lives. Practitioners and researchers alike might find value in such studies.

Financial Challenges of the Superintendency

Beauty Baldwin said that the school district superintendency is a "hard job." A part of the hardness of the job comes from the challenges that superintendents face on the district level. The participants' skills in using professional contacts, building school community support, and making budget and staff reductions where necessary helped them guide their school districts through difficult points in time.

While school administrators are well trained in budget and finance in school administration preparation programs, a welcome addition to preparation programs and the research community might be found in studies of how practicing school administrators handle financial crises. Financial crisis management action-research and training might help school

administrators better understand the myriad of situations that arise and provide strategies for preventing them or managing outcomes. No magic bullets would be produced but careful study of the “crisis side” of school finance might prove useful.

Knowing When To Move On

The participants’ tenures as superintendents ranged from 3 to 10 years with 6 years as the median. During their time as superintendents, the participants faced various challenges and were able to effectively manage their school districts during the process. When the participants felt that they accomplished all that was possible for them to accomplish in their respective school districts, they retired.

It is common knowledge that superintendents keep their “psychological bags packed” because superintendent firings are not uncommon (Black & English, 1986). The superintendents in this study served successfully in their school districts and retired when it was time. None were fired. The ability to retire at an appropriate time of their choosing, with their school districts functioning smoothly is a testament to the participant’s skill as administrators.

The participants’ choices to retire also presented a new area for exploration in the career lives of superintendents of all races and ethnic origins, retirement. What is the phase leading up to retirement like? When do you know that it is time to retire? This study addressed such questions and future studies might focus exclusively on the retirement of school district superintendents. What is it like? Most superintendents are appointed after long careers in education (more than 20 years). What is left when you step away from the occupation that defined a major part if not all of your entire adult work life?

Also, future studies on the retirement phase of superintendents' careers, using oral history research, might be conducted at the time of superintendent retirement. This will increase the available sample of superintendents, as the participants in the present study reported that the majority of their counterparts died shortly after retirement. Such studies will be further enhanced because of the emotional closeness of the participants to retirement events.

Final Reflections

This study provided insight into the careers of three retired African American superintendents in Georgia. The dearth of research on African American superintendents and the lack of perspective seeking studies in the area revealed gaps in the literature that oral history research addresses. As a result, oral history was selected as the research method for this study because of its effectiveness in giving voice to populations that are not widely studied, and its ability to document information that had been previously unavailable.

In this section, two areas of the oral histories in this study are explored. The two areas are lessons learned from the study, and the contributions of this study to the research community.

Lessons Learned From the Study

Because this study added perspective to an area of research that has not been widely explored it is important. Through the oral histories in this study, insight was gained into the factors that molded the participants as individuals, guided their careers, and affected their ascent to superintendencies.

The participants in this study were molded by their backgrounds. The backgrounds that molded the participants were the nourishing cultures of achievement that they were schooled in during segregation and the Civil Rights Movement.

The United States was in turmoil during the time that the participants were K-12 and undergraduate students, especially during the 1950s and 1960s. Because the United States was in turmoil during segregation and the Civil Rights Movement, the participants' school culture experiences were important. If the participants had not been given the proper intellectual and social tools in school, and encouraged to excel, they would not have succeeded in their endeavors to advance academically and professionally after segregation.

Significant to the success that the participants experienced in desegregated school settings during the late 1960s and early 1970s were the non-prejudicial attitudes that they held. Because of their attitudes, the participants worked successfully in desegregated settings during the late 1960s and early 1970s. This was significant because many African Americans chose to remain in or to return to segregated settings because of "comfort." The participants in the present study did not return to segregated settings and they flourished. Also, because of their competence as professionals, the participants experienced sponsorship in their careers from African and European Americans alike.

In administrative and higher education posts, the participants gained practical work experiences that increased their knowledge and exposure to elites in the field. The participants' work experiences allowed them to advance to successive levels of responsibility in administration and the professorate. The participants' work experiences were complimented and enhanced by their attitudes, competency, and timing of promotion.

Sponsorship also affected the participants' careers. Sponsorship provided initial access to school administration and the professorate for each of the participants. Sponsorship also provided the participants' with the work experiences that gave them the administrative skills they needed in posts they held before ascending to the superintendency.

Kermit Keenum recruited John Culbreath to Glynn County as assistant superintendent in 1985. Dr. Lester Butts recruited Culbreath to the Atlanta Public Schools System in 1993. Culbreath's experiences in Glynn County and in the Atlanta Public Schools System provided administrative experience in large urban districts similar to Dougherty County where he became superintendent of schools in 1995.

Evans Harris was recruited to Albany State University to direct its Educational Administration Program in 1982. Harris' acceptance of the position at Albany State led him back to Georgia and allowed him to reestablish his reputation in school administration in the state. In 1992, Evans Harris won the superintendents' election in Taliaferro County.

Jim Puckett, then superintendent of the Buford City School System, recruited Beauty Baldwin to work as principal of Buford City Middle School in 1980. The Buford City Middle School principalship gave Baldwin entry into the Buford City School System. Baldwin established relationships in the Buford City School System and became superintendent of schools in 1984 when Jim Puckett departed for another position.

As superintendents, the participants managed relationships in their school districts, and established programs to benefit students. Most significant to the participants' experiences as superintendents was that each endured a financial crisis and helped return his or her school district to normalcy afterward. John Culbreath helped guide the Dougherty County School System out of financial trouble in the late 1990s. Evans Harris fought to save the Taliaferro County School System from dissolution in 1993. Beauty Baldwin survived major budget and staff reductions in the Buford City School System in 1992.

Because the participants performed useful work in their school districts and endured tough times, they were successful and were able to retire from their positions as superintendents. Retirement from the superintendency is uncommon as research and literature has indicated that the complex and political nature of the job often lead to superintendent firings (Black & English, 1986; Tallerico, 2000).

Contributions to the Research Community

The researcher hopes that this study has contributed to the research community and to the state of Georgia. The researcher's hopes are based on the recognition of a need for research that produces consideration of its findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and the effectiveness of oral history in documenting previously unrecorded histories of populations that are not widely studied (Dunaway & Baum, 1996).

As a contribution to the research community, this study attempted to fill a gap in research and literature on African American superintendents. To the researcher's knowledge, there were no oral histories on the career experiences or mobility of African American superintendents. By exploring the career experiences and mobility of African American superintendents, this study added to literature and research on African American superintendents.

The researcher hopes that this study's contribution to research and literature on African American superintendents in the form of an oral history will have two effects. First, this study may elevate the use of oral history research in documenting the professional lives of minority populations. Documentation of the career lives of minority populations through perspective seeking oral history research is important because it gives voice to and preserves the history of populations that are not widely studied. The voice and documentation value of oral history research is intertwined with this study's second contribution, the advocacy of continued oral

history research on African American superintendents in hopes of the formation of a collective biography or prosopography of African American superintendents.

Research has identified prosopography as a powerful analytical tool in the study of progressive education (Cunningham, 2001; Depaepe, 1997). Prosopographies coterminously provide insight into individual and collective experiences within a given historical period or context (Cunningham, 2001). This is important because few analytical tools have provided heightened information concerning the interrelation among documented experiences in an effort to promote broadly based, contextualized histories of teaching and education (Cunningham, 2001; Depaepe, 1997). Through prosopographies further insight into the transmission of teaching and administrative methods, practices, and ideals can be gained.

Prosopography was important to the contributions of the present study. This study explored the schooling experiences, teaching methods, administrative experiences, and ideals of the participants in segregated and desegregated settings. This study also viewed the participants' experiences individually and explored common themes which connected experiences in their career lives during segregation and desegregation. The participants' experiences, positions as African American school administrators and superintendents, and successes evidenced throughout their careers. As a result, the population examined in this study along with the powerful research method used to explore their career histories combined to provide a first study, to the researcher's knowledge, in what is hoped will become continued research toward a prosopography of African American superintendents.

Finally, this study was also designed to contribute to Georgia. The participants were natives of Georgia and their careers as K-12 educators and superintendents occurred in Georgia. Because of these facts, this study is important to Georgia as a small part of its history. The

researcher hopes that through this study he has given back, in a small way, to the place where he received doctoral training.

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APPENDIX A

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Why Education

I have always enjoyed music. My interest in music developed during my childhood, during which time my father introduced me to eight track tapes and vinyl records. On Saturday afternoon my father and I rode in his 1972 Cutlass Supreme, relaxing to the sounds of Stevie Wonder, The O’Jays, Bob Marley, Santa Abraxis, and Earth Wind and Fire. After returning home from our Saturday afternoon ride and “ice cream run”, my father and I would spend hours listening to his record collection. I often, selected the tracks that my father played on his turntables. Those were fun times in my childhood and I developed an appreciation for good music.

It was through music that my father and I later discussed my college plans. My father told me:

I know that you love music; I raised you that way. Let your “song” be one that is concerned with helping people. That will bring you happiness. A job helping people will lead you to a profession that will be different each day and more fulfilling as the years go by.

In college, I chose a field of study that I felt would allow me to help people throughout my professional work life. Biology was a natural fit. I felt that a biology major would allow me to continue in a field that I had great skill in high school and position myself to work in a profession that would allow me to help others. I graduated from Northwestern State University with a degree in Biology in the spring of 1998. During the summer of 1998, I began graduate school, hoping to become a science teacher

I began my Master's Degree work at Northwestern State University in June of 1998. Majoring in Secondary Education, I focused on gaining the skills necessary to become an effective secondary school teacher. The Teacher As Model For Learning curriculum in my Master's program helped me to reflect on the significance of the teacher's role in: instructing students, modeling learning processes for students, and explicating the logic used in the creation of connections between science subject matter, practical life applications, and other core subjects in a secondary school curriculum. The teacher as model for learning curriculum was designed to develop within teachers the skills to design curricula and facilitate learning activities that promote higher order thinking among students and generative learning.

In terms of effectiveness, the Master's Degree curriculum in Secondary Education enhanced my professional skill set and development as an educator. My Master's Degree curriculum allowed me to reflect on the competencies and thought processes involved in student learning. The curriculum in my Master's program also allowed me to consider the significance of my position as a classroom teacher in ensuring that the conditions necessary for learning were promoted through the culture and climate in the classroom. Realizing the previous fact I gained a greater understanding of what I believe teaching is really all about, producing thinkers.

Through my experiences as a graduate student at Northwestern State University, I also developed my interest in Educational Leadership. Sitting in my Curriculum Theory and Design class, I thought “. . . if the teacher can have this much impact on student learning at the classroom level, what might a motivated principal or superintendent be able to accomplish?” I have since compared the previous point of intellectual questioning to an epiphany moment. It was similar to the time in fourth grade when I realized that my teacher did not want answers to

her brainteasers. Instead, she wanted logical, workable, creative solutions. Sitting in my curriculum theory and design class, I knew that I wanted to be a school district administrator.

Professional Experience

As a professional educator, my professional experiences spanned two vastly different settings. My first teaching experience was in a K-12 school with approximately 500 students in a rural community in northwest Louisiana. My second teaching experience was in a middle school, based on the Knowledge Is Power Program model, in southwest Ohio. I learned much about working with students in both settings and increased my personal and professional skills during both experiences.

An hour-long one-way commute each day brought me to Converse High School where I was the science teacher. I had four teaching preparations at Converse, including 7th grade Life Science, 10th grade Biology, 8th grade Earth Science, and a section of 11th and 12th grade Chemistry. Through my teaching experiences at Converse High School, I learned time management, both inside and outside the classroom. The school used a rotating 90-minute block schedule, which was different from my training as a student teacher and experiences as a student in high school. So, my first task at Converse was learning how to teach and manage time on the block schedule.

My second task at Converse involved time management outside of the classroom. I used the morning and afternoon commutes as reflection time for the coming day's lessons. My afternoon drives were for reflection on lesson plans and classroom activities. This skill became especially useful during my work on this dissertation, as my participants' places of residence required me to travel up to five hours one way to conduct interview sessions. During my travels to and from the interview sites, I was able to mentally prepare for the congenial but rigorous

interview process, debrief by writing my field notes on each interview session, and review the salient points of each interview.

I learned how to be an effective teacher while working at Converse High School. I worked hard at translating my knowledge of science and pedagogical theory into effective learning for my students. In addition, my desire to work as a school district administrator continued to grow while I worked at Converse High School. I observed the progressive democratic leadership style of the principal at Converse High School and attempted to incorporate those characteristics into my professional repertoire. I remember thinking “I want to be a great school administrator some day. How can I better prepare myself?”

In 2000, at the prodding of a small group of close friends, I moved to Dayton Ohio. While in Dayton, I worked as a middle school science teacher at the Omega School of Excellence (OSE). Working at OSE, I observed the necessity of schools’ close links to their surrounding communities. During my time at OSE, I was immersed in a skill that became the focus of my doctoral studies, leadership.

Doctoral Studies and Research Focus

In, 2002 I became a doctoral student at the University of Georgia (UGA). Reflecting on my time as a doctoral student at UGA, I have begun to understand how the processes of education and life are intertwined. I have gained advanced knowledge of school leadership theory, principles, and application. Further, I developed a full appreciation for the tie that exists between academic scholarship and practice.

Continuing the exploration of my experience as a doctoral student, I came to UGA to professionally study educational leadership. I brought to this experience my origins as an African American male who formerly worked as a K-12 science teacher in Louisiana and Ohio. As a

direct result of my origins as a professional educator, doctoral student, and educational researcher, my doctoral coursework focused on educational leadership, the cultural and historical foundations of education, and qualitative research design and methods. The previous combination led me to consider varying perspectives of the American superintendency as an area of research.

Guided by my personal interests and the insights of my major professor, I narrowed my research dissertation topic to the African American superintendency. Exploring the African American superintendency, I became especially interested in the career patterns and experiences of African American superintendents. How did African Americans who became superintendents ascend to their posts? What experiences did African American superintendents have as they climbed the “career ladder” in educational administration? What did research literature reveal about the career experiences of African American superintendents? These were questions that drove my doctoral studies at UGA.

As I studied the research literature on African American superintendents two facts became evident. First, few scholars have studied the African American superintendency since Moody’s dissertation in 1971. Second, to my knowledge, the studies on African American superintendents have been descriptive in nature only! There appeared to be an absence of perspective seeking studies focused on the African American superintendency in research and related literature. Hence, the gap in research and related literature produced the need for this study.

Finally, it has been my hope that this study has been assessed according to its success in presenting an accurate, historically contextualized, account of the professional career experiences of its participants. Further, the histories in this study, perhaps, have been especially significant to

the state of Georgia and the research community for three reasons. First, prior to this study, the oral histories of African American superintendents native to Georgia had not been documented. Second, this dissertation may have provided greater insight into the professional career lives of African American professionals who worked through segregation in the United States and transitioned into mainstream school districts during segregation in Georgia. Finally, this study, perhaps, may elevate the use of oral history research in the study of professional minority groups of non-African American origins.

APPENDIX B

AFRICAN AMERICAN SUPERINTENDENTS IN GEORGIA SINCE 1954

* Native Georgian, **First African American Female Superintendent, ***First African American Superintendent

Superintendent	District	Tenure
Robert Aaron*	Terrell County	1993-Present
Samuel Allen*	Valdosta City	1997-Present
Nicholas Antone	Hancock County	2000-Present
Beauty Baldwin**	Buford City	1984-1994
Dr. John Bembry*	Dooly County	2003-Present
Dr. Johnnie Brown	Dekalb County	2002-Present
Alvetta Butler*	Calhoun County	2002-Present
Dr. Lester Butts	Atlanta Public	1990-1994
Dr. Benjamin Canada	Atlanta Public	1994-1998
Robert Clay	Sumter County	2001-2002
Heyward Cordy	Jenkins County	2000-Present
Dr. Alonzo Crim	Atlanta Public	1973-1988
Charles Culver*	Warren County	1995-2002
Christine Ejlali	McIntosh County	2000-2003
Dr. Phyllis Edwards	Decatur City	2003-Present
Jewel Faison*	Quitman County	2001-Present
Dr. Beverly Hall	Atlanta Public	1999-Present
Dr. Evans Harris*	Taliaferro County	1993-1996

Appendix B Continued

Superintendent	District	Tenure
Dr. Jerome Harris	Atlanta Public	1988-1990
Dr. Lucian Harris	Clarke County	1993-2001
Buford Hicks*	Dooly County	1998-2003
Dr. Mildred Howard*	Clay County	2000-2002
Dr. John Jackson	Greene County	2002-Present
Bobby Jenkins*	Randolph County	1997-Present
Charles Larke	Richmond County	1996-Present
M.E. Lewis***	Hancock County	1973-1995
Dr. Ida Love	Decatur City	1997-2003
Dr. Tom Maddison*	Bibb County	1992-1996
Dr. Ervin Mitchell	Twiggs County	1996-1998
Betty Orange*	Early County	2003-Present
Robert Patrick*	Talbot County	2000-Present
Franklin Perry	Sumter County	2002-Present
Barbara Pulliam	Clayton County	2004-Present
Dr. Betty Ray*	Stewart County	2000-2003
Hosie Waters*	Macon County	1992-Present
Dr. Wanda West	Twiggs County	1998-Present
Bowman Wiley*	Webster County	1996-Present
Jerri-Lynn Williams	Clay County	2002-Present

Appendix B Continued

Superintendent	District	Tenure
Melvyn Williams*	Hancock County	2002-2003
Fountain Wims*	Stewart County	1993-1999

(Sources: Georgia Department of Education, 2003; J. Culbreath, personal communication, February 17, 2004)

APPENDIX C

PARAMETERS OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965, SECTIONS II-IV

Section II of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 made it unlawful for any state to establish voting qualifications based on the race or color of any citizen. Section III of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 included provisions that allow the Attorney General of the United States to send examiners to districts in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1965. Section III allows federal examiners to oversee voter registration, and ensure that necessary conditions for voter registration exist.

Section IV of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 defined the “automatic trigger.” Under Section IV, any state is subject to federal intervention in its voting process if it maintains any “device” that is a prerequisite to voter registration. The automatic trigger was also invoked if the total number of registered voters in a state was less than 50% of the voting age citizens in the state or if in 1964 less than 50% of the voting age citizens voted in the presidential election. Section IV also requires the suspension of all “tests” and “devices” in voting districts that do not meet non-discriminatory practices as defined by the automatic trigger. The test and device suspensions last for four years at which time a district can appeal for release.

Section V of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 defined the federal government’s right of preclearance in voting districts that use discriminatory voting practices. Through the right of preclearance, the federal government can forbid voting districts to modify their voting practices in any way without gaining the permission of the Attorney General of the United States or the D C area federal district court.

Through the enforcement provisions in Sections II-IV, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 ensured the federally protected right of minorities to vote. Further, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 eliminated the need for county-by-county civil rights related voting litigation in the southern United States. The elimination of the county-by-county civil rights related voting litigation method was important, as the Voting Rights Act of 1965 created a broad enforcement base from which the federal government and court systems throughout the United States could approach voting rights. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been amended three times, once in 1970, 1975, and 1982.

Through amendments passed in 1970, the enforcement provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were extended to 1975. The 1970 amendments also gave 18 year olds the right to vote. Because of amendments passed in 1975, the Voting Rights Act of 1965's enforcement provisions were extended to 1982. The 1975 amendments also defined language as a "device" or "test" in districts with a foreign population of more than five percent. The 1982 amendments to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 extended the acts enforcement provisions until 2007. The 1982 amendments also required voting districts to show that protected classes were afforded no less opportunity than other members in their districts to elect the representatives of their choice. (Hudson, 1998). The voting protections that United States citizens received through the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 have helped provide full political enfranchisement for minority populations in the United States.

APPENDIX D

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

Composed of nine separate legislative initiatives, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 changed the way in which civil rights policy implementation was approached (Collier-Thomas & Franklin, 2000; Grofman, 2000). The broad scope of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 allowed it to bring the southern United States and its school districts into compliance with anti-segregation court rulings in a way that individual court cases, perhaps, never could have. As a result of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, subsequent civil rights activism focused on legislation instead of litigation (Grofman, 2000; Loevy, 1997).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 also redefined the role of the federal government relative to discrimination in the United States. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 gave the Justice Department the right to:

- File civil rights litigation and absorb the monetary costs when individuals or groups were unable to maintain the case because of the monetary costs of litigation;
- Monitor civil rights activities in the United States;
- Fund technical assistance, teacher training, and ease transition to desegregated schools;
- Prohibit segregation in programs that received federal funds;
- Mandate the desegregation of public facilities;
- Prohibit race, color, sex, religion, and national origin discrimination in hiring practices;
- Negate the use of literacy tests as a standard for voter registration or voting. (Grofman, 2000; Thurber, 1999)

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ushered in a series of federal initiatives that helped solidify the civil rights of minority populations in the United States.

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANTS' CAREER PATHS

John Culbreath	Evans Harris	Beauty Baldwin	Year(s)
Superintendent, Dougherty County School System	Retired	Retired	1996-2001
Principal, North Atlanta High School	Superintendent, Taliaferro County School System	Superintendent, Buford City School System (Retired in 1994)	1993-1995
Associate Superintendent, Glynn County School System (1992-1993)	Professor, Albany State University (1982-1992)	Superintendent, Buford City School System	1985-1992
Assistant Superintendent, Glynn County School System (1985-1992)			
Research Assistant, University of Georgia (1976-1978)	Professor, Tuskegee University (1968- 1982)	Mathematics and CVAE Teacher, Central Gwinnett High School (1973- 1978)	1977-1984
Assistant Principal, Monroe Area High School (1978-1979)		Assistant Principal, Central Gwinnett High School (1978- 1980)	
Principal, Randolph- Clay High School (1979-1983)		Principal, Buford City Middle School (1980- 1984)	
Principal, Burney Harris Lyons Middle School (1983-1985)			

Participants' Career Paths Continued

John Culbreath	Evans Harris	Beauty Baldwin	Year(s)
French and English Teacher, Henderson High School (1968-1970)	Professor, Tuskegee University (1968-1982)	Mathematics Teacher, Hardaway High School (1969-1973) Mathematics and CVAE Teacher, Central Gwinnett High School (1973-1978)	1969-1976
Student, George Washington Carver High School (1960-1964)	Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Hancock Central High School (1949-1963)	Mathematics Teacher, Spencer High School (1967-1968)	1960-1968
Student, Albany State College (1964-1968)	Principal, Murden School (1963-1965)	Mathematics Teacher, Marshall Junior High School (1965-1967)	
	Doctoral Student, Research Assistant, and Extension Specialist, University of Oklahoma (1965-1968)	Mathematics Teacher, John Lewis High School (1963-1965)	
		Student, Savannah State College (1959-1963)	
Childhood	Vocational Agriculture Teacher, Hancock Central High School (1949-1963)	Student, T. J. Elder High School (1954-1959)	1951-1959
Birth (1/17/48)	Veterans Farm Training Program Instructor (1947-1949)	Childhood	1943-1950
Childhood	Student, Fort Valley State College (1943-1947)		
	Student, Murden School, (1939-1943)		

Participants' Career Paths Continued

John Culbreath	Evans Harris	Beauty Baldwin	Year(s)
	Birth (6/1/25)	Birth (3/9/42)	1925-1942
	Childhood		

APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES DURING DESEGREGATION

Year(s)	John Culbreath	Evans Harris	Beauty Baldwin	Highlights
1954-1965	High school and college student in segregated settings at George Washington Carver High School (1960-1964) and Albany State College (1964-1968).	Teacher in a segregated school in Hancock County until (1949-1963). Hired as principal of the Murden School in 1963. Fired from principalship in 1965 because of desegregation efforts in Taliaferro County. Began doctoral studies at the University of Oklahoma (1965).	High school and college student in segregated settings at T.J. Elder High School (1955-1959) and Savannah State College (1959-1963). Teacher at two segregated schools, John Lewis High School (1963-1965) and Marshall Junior High School (1965-1967).	<p><i>Brown v. Board of Education I</i> (1954)</p> <p><i>Brown v. Board of Education II</i> (1955)</p> <p><i>Cooper v. Aaron</i> (1958)</p> <p>Beginning of litigation in <i>Calhoun v. Latimer</i> (1964)</p> <p>Civil Rights Act of 1964</p> <p>Voting Rights Act of 1965</p>
1966-1970	Graduation from Albany State College in summer of 1968. First teaching job in Randolph County Georgia. Desegregation of Randolph County Schools (1970)	Doctoral studies at the University of Oklahoma. Work on major desegregation and multiethnic curriculum programs in Oklahoma. First job as professor at Tuskegee University (1968)	Work in segregated schools in Columbus, Georgia until 1969. In 1969 helped desegregate schools in Columbus through appointment at Hardaway High School.	<p><i>Green v. County Board</i> case (1968)</p> <p>Initial litigation in <i>Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education</i> court case</p>

Participants' Experiences During Desegregation Continued

Year(s)	John Culbreath	Evans Harris	Beauty Baldwin	Highlights
1971-1975	Assistant Principal at desegregated Randolph County Elementary School.	Professor of Educational Administration at Tuskegee University.	Moved to Atlanta, Georgia in 1973. Appointed as the only African American teacher at Central Gwinnett High School.	<i>Bradley v. Miliken</i> (1974) <i>Calhoun v. Latimer</i> (1973) <i>Swann v. Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education</i> (1971)
1976-1980	Worked as a research assistant at the University of Georgia (1976-1978). Assistant principal at Monroe Area High School (1978). Faced struggles with civil rights activists in Monroe, Georgia. Principal of Randolph-Clay High School (1979-1983).	Professor of Educational Administration at Tuskegee University. Helped many students obtain advanced degrees in Educational Administration.	Promoted to assistant principal at Central Gwinnett High School (1978). Worked as assistant principal at Central Gwinnett High School until 1980 when recruited to work as principal of Buford City Middle School.	<i>Bradley v. Miliken II</i> (1978) Jimmy Carter elected president (1976). <i>Roots</i> premiered on television (1977).