

ANNUAL REPORT OF RURAL SUPERVISOR OF DURHAM COUNTY  
NEGRO SCHOOLS  
1923-1924

Because of their size and superior equipment, the Rosenwald schools were made the centers of supervision for the twenty-three Negro Schools.

Realizing that one of the most serious handicaps of rural schools is irregular attendance, a campaign was put on at the beginning of the year, with the slogan "Every child in school every day in the year." Letters were sent to all teachers enlisting their cooperation, and talks were made in all the schools on the subject of regular attendance. In some communities great interest was manifested, resulting in improved attendance in a large number of schools.

We found many of the school houses in such poor condition that they were really unfit for use, and efforts were made to replace some of the worst ones with new buildings. By explaining to the patrons in these communities the splendid offer of Mr. Rosenwald to assist them in obtaining new buildings, much interest was aroused and people willing pledged as they were able, funds for the work. Of course it has meant hard work, many community meetings on weekends and evenings, with quite a few educational rallies held on Sundays. At one such rally the people laid on the table \$163.00. As a result of these efforts, at least four new Rosenwald Schools with home economics departments will be built for use next year, two such schools having been put in operations this year. The meetings held in this connection served a dual purpose, securing new buildings and giving opportunity to stress important matters pertaining to education and home making. The large attendance on these occasions manifested the ever increasing interest of parents in the education of their children.

Through the organization and reorganization of Betterment Leagues, Parent-Teacher Associations, and other Community Meetings many improvements have been made, such as painting of buildings, placing of new window shades, purchasing of organs and other special equipment for classroom use.

The subjects selected for special study and improvement in methods this year were Spelling, Geography, and Nature Study in Grammar Grades. The emphasis placed on Arithmetic, Language, and Reading last year was continued, and made correlation of this year's work with them quite easy. The work in Spelling in both the Primary and Grammar Grades was based upon suggestions for teaching Spelling as found in the State course of Study. Instead of memorizing lists of meaningless words the child was given for study words of everyday use, which he not only learned to spell and write, but to use in composition, thus making the word his own. An effort was made to develop in each child a "spelling conscience"—the ability to know when a word is spelled correctly or incorrectly; to teach the use of the dictionary and need of looking up words when uncertain of the spelling or meaning of a word. Games and spelling devices were used to motivate the drill and put life and interest into the spelling class. By correlating Language with Spelling much oral and written composition was done. Special attention was paid to the quality of the writing, with a desire to arouse in the pupils pride and in decent penmanship.

Ridgley's "Home Geography", text studied by the Primary teachers was made the basis of instruction in Geography in the Primary Grades. The teachers worked out many interesting projects for their own class work representing big topics relating to the needs

of mankind, and how these are supplied. These projects were reproduced in the school room by the students as the topics were studied during the year. This work led to considerable outside reading and research on the part of both teachers and pupils. The State Course of Study and The Teachers' Manual used with the Essentials of Geography were the basis of work in Geography. Since Geography is not a popular subject with teachers or pupils, and is for the most part poorly taught, an effort was made to vitalize it and show that it is one of the most interesting subjects in our school curriculum. Interest the child in the conditions which influence his own life and community, its habits and customs, and he can be led to take the same interest in the people of other countries. Our schools were not as well equipped for the successful teaching of Geography as was desired, but maps were placed in nearly all the schools, and some were provided with globes. Teachers and children contributed some money for "Current Events" and geographical magazines. Teachers were permitted to take books from the Durham Colored Library and use them for one month. The teachers worked out in class a very interesting project on "Durham and Durham County", which led to a higher appreciation of the worth and achievements of the people of our own community.

Linked up with our work in Language, Drawing, and Geography was Nature Study, based upon the State Course of Study and "Common Trees of North Carolina". While the projects in Drawing were many and well done, and stimulated interest in the above named subjects, something finer and more lasting was our reward: children were led to a greater interest in, and appreciation of, the beauty of living things about them, in plant and animal life and our relation to them and to our Creator. It gave an incentive for doing school tasks which they had not had heretofore.

An important improvement relating to our schools this year was the inauguration of a new system of grading and promoting the pupils upon a basis of an eight months session divided into two terms of four months each. The work was definitely outlined for each term, thus enabling the teacher to note the work of the pupils and determine whether or not they are coming up to the requirements. Making effective this promotion scheme will show parents the necessity for keeping children in school, and thus place the responsibility for non-promotion where, in a large measure, it belongs.

One of the pressing needs of Negro Schools is suitable books for general reading. To secure these books is one of the tasks set for next year. Twenty-five dollars awarded the Durham County unit for one hundred per cent registration at the Teachers' Association will serve as the nucleus of the fund which we hope to raise for this purpose.

Pictures of Mr. Rosenwald were made available by the Rosenwald Fund at the nominal cost of \$1.50 each, and one of these now hangs in every Rosenwald School in the county, a token of the esteem in which he is held by both patrons and pupils. Money raised for all purposes during the year amounts to more than \$1,500.00

Group Center Rallies which served as preliminaries for the County Commencement were held in the schools which were selected for demonstration work during the year. The large crowds which filled buildings to overflowing attested the growing interest in education. The programs presented by the schools represented were unusually good. The exhibits, which were numerous and varied, were done during the year, and represented every subject taught.

In order to create a wider community interest in education, as a climax to Group Center Rallies a county-wide Commencement was undertaken instead of the usual

Durham Township Commencement. The Commencement was held at the Durham State Normal School, Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, and in spite of the downpour of rain, the auditorium of the school was filled to its capacity. The program rendered was very satisfactory and encouraging to patrons. Very helpful addresses were delivered by Mrs. Annie W. Holland, State Supervisor of elementary Schools, Superintendent J. W. Carr, Jr., and Dr. James E. Shepard, Principal of the Durham State Normal.

Such in brief is the record of what has been accomplished in our attempt to improve the Durham County Negro Schools during the year ending June 30, 1924.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie T. Jordan (signed)  
Jeanes Supervisor Durham County

Carrie T. Jordan, "Annual Report of Rural Supervisor of Durham County Negro Schools, 1923-1924," 30 June 1924, Special Subject File, Folder Jeanes Fund, Miscellaneous, Box 2, Division of Negro Education, Department of Public Instruction. Located in the North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC