

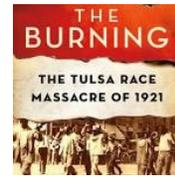


**CLARA LUPER**

National Activist & Oklahoma Educator  
 May 3, 1923 – June 8, 2011

ONE OF THE FIRST MAJOR SIT-INS IN THE UNITED STATES HAPPENED IN OKLAHOMA CITY, LED BY CLARA LUPER AND CHILDREN FROM THE NAACP YOUTH COUNCIL IN 1958 TO DESEGREGATE THE KATZ DRUG STORE  
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/Y2SC9O4L](https://tinyurl.com/y2sc9o4l)

LANGSTON UNIVERSITY IS THE ONLY HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY (HBCU) IN THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA  
[HTTPS://WWW.LANGSTON.EDU](https://www.langston.edu)



LEARN MORE ABOUT "BLACK WALL STREET" AND THE GREENWOOD DISTRICT OF TULSA



## Dr. Jefferson Davis (J. D.) Randolph, the first African American teacher in Oklahoma territory

In 1891, prior to Oklahoma statehood, the Oklahoma school board appointed Dr. Jefferson Davis (J. D.) Randolph as the first African American teacher in Oklahoma Territory. Following the Oklahoma Land Run of 1889 and the establishment of the territorial government in 1890, George Washington Steele, who was the first territorial governor, signed legislation that launched and funded higher education and public schools in Oklahoma Territory. In August 1890, the first Oklahoma Legislature met and wrote the laws for the public common and high schools in the territory. In the beginning, the Legislature gave the citizens of each county the freedom to decide if they would vote to implement segregation ordinances for black and white public schools, even though the first legislature wrote provisions for the founding of a “separate school” for the African American children. In the *Statutes of Oklahoma* (1893), Article 8 states:

1. Separate schools for the education of white and colored children may be established in the Territory as follows and in no other way:
2. In each county where the election is held for the election of district school officers, there shall be held an election [...] If a majority of the votes cast at said election be against the establishment of separate schools in said county, then the white and colored children shall attend the same school in such county; but if a majority of the votes cast be in favor of the establishment of separate schools for white and colored children, then there shall be established such separate schools for white and colored children as hereinafter provided. (Schools, 1104)

Before statehood, under the direction of Governor Steele and the Southern Democratic Party, all the public schools in Oklahoma operated as separate schools, and the segregation practices were held up in 1896 with the “Separate, but Equal” doctrine. On January 5, 1891, the Oklahoma school board met, and the Oklahoma City Public Schools was established.

In March 1891, the school board selected Dr. Jefferson Davis (J. D.) Randolph as the principal of the first “separate school” in Oklahoma City. Randolph opened “The Colored School” with 18 students, in a two-room house, which was located on W. California street, between Harvey and Robinson streets. In May 11, 1895, Randolph received permission to start a high school program, which resulted in the first all-grade African American segregated school in Oklahoma. In 1898, the African American students voted to change the name from “The Colored School” to “The Douglass School,” which was commemorated in honor of Frederick Douglass, the nineteenth-century former slave, orator, leader, and abolitionist. As the student enrollment increased, The Douglass School moved in 1903, to 200 E. California. But an arsonist, who was never identified, burned that building to the ground. The replacement school building in Bricktown was constructed out of stone, to dissuade future arson attempts.

By 1916, The Douglass School, in Oklahoma City, was one of five public high schools for African American students in the state of Oklahoma. In 1934, the school became Frederick A. Douglass High School, and moved to N. High Street. In 1952, the school moved to Martin Luther King Ave., where it stands today. As the first African American public schoolteacher, Randolph served as the principal of Oklahoma City separate schools for nine years. Dr. Jefferson Davis (J. D.) Randolph began the legacy of black educational excellence in the state of Oklahoma. He was also the first president of the Ida B. Wells Teachers’ Association in 1893, which was the forerunner of the Oklahoma Association of Negro Teachers, which formed when the Black Teachers of the Oklahoma and Indian Territory’s merged in 1907. *Today, a historical marker in Bricktown celebrates the accomplishments of Dr. J. D. Randolph, as an education, business, and civic leader.* Work cited: <https://tinyurl.com/EquityPCS>

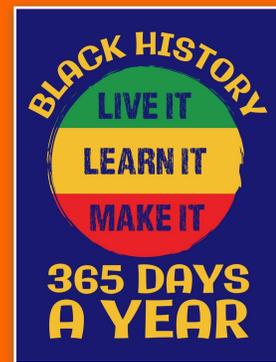
## EQUITY, DIVERSITY, & INCLUSION

**February Challenge:** Listen to a podcast on Systematic Racism. Buy a product from a Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) merchant owner. Read an article that addresses Institutionalized Racism.



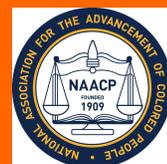
Help us rewrite history, eliminate preconceived barriers for our students of color, and equalize the achievement gap for our most vulnerable populations. Contact the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Department, and be the change that every Putnam City student deserves. <https://tinyurl.com/EquityPCS> ~ 405-495-5200 ext. 1264 [tcraig@putnamcityschools.org](mailto:tcraig@putnamcityschools.org)

**7.4% of Oklahoma residents are Black/African Americans; 30% of Putnam City students self-identify as Black and 7% of the all certified staff are Black**



Putnam City Schools Curriculum & Instruction Department has highlighted projects, articles, resources, and lesson plans that celebrate Black History Month 365.

- Raneë Staats, Secondary ELA: [here](#)
- Amy Tankersly: Science [here](#)
- Tammy Todd, Secondary Math: [here](#)
- Amy Walls, Social Studies: [here](#)
- Brandy Sitts, Fine Arts/GT: [here](#)



NAACP reached Oklahoma in 1913

<https://www.okhistory.org/blackhistory>