

# Curiosity Corner

## Treasures from the FCS Archives

Welcome to **Treasures from the FCS Archives**, a repository of resources for teachers and history enthusiasts! Every month, we are sharing photos, artifacts, documents and other treasures for you to review, discuss and discover. We encourage you to click the links, scan the photos and dig deeper into these treasures, all of which can be found in the **Fulton County Schools Archives**. Enjoy!

### ALPHARETTA COLORED SCHOOL



Photograph, **Alpharetta Colored School, 1952**  
8"x10" Silver Gelatin Print, By Kathleen Moon; FCS Archives,  
1952.H22.1.20 High Resolution Image Courtesy of Atlanta History Center

Inside the rich history of education in Georgia is a complex story of inequality and segregation that reflected life in the South after the Civil War. It is a story that spans the decades between the ratification of the **13th Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution in 1865 to the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**. In fact, in a day and age when we are still constantly measuring our progress in terms of civil liberties, it is worth taking a look back at this important story to see just how far we have come.

This month's *Curiosity Corner* focuses on a photograph of the **Alpharetta Colored School**, taken in 1952. As part of the Fulton County School System (after its merger with Milton County in 1932), this school demonstrates how segregation was deeply woven into secondary education right up to the **Brown v. Board Supreme Court ruling (1954)**, which determined that such practices were unconstitutional. But this photo also provides evidence of how black communities overcame racial bias and inequality through efforts in **prioritizing education**. One way in which this was accomplished was through partnerships created in the early part of the 20th century - the most notable examples being the **Julius Rosenwald Fund** and the **Anna T. Jeanes Fund**.

The very term, "colored school," as an official designation seems strange in our day and age. Yet, this label was used throughout records located within the Fulton County Schools Archives—as well as in public records all over the country. While it tends to make us think of all that was unequal in history, it does allow us the opportunity to measure African-American history in the South in more detail, by defining what it meant to live in that context, face certain challenges and accomplish so much in spite of these odds.

As we examine the history of the Alpharetta Colored School, we catch a glimpse of the struggles and triumphs of educators and citizens in Fulton County and the rest of the South from the 1870s—when the school system was created—to the 1970s, when **integration** finally took place.

#### Curiosity in the Classroom: A Closer Look

Click on the image above for a higher resolution jpeg. Ask students to carefully look at the image and answer the following questions:

- Describe what you see.
- Is there anything that is surprising or unusual?
- What does this photo tell you about life in the United States during the 1950s?

Next, click on this yellow thumbnail for an enlarged version of a 1966 Choice of School Form. In 1966, the desegregation plan for Fulton County Schools gave students entering high school and their parents the choice of which school they would attend the following year. Ask students to study the form and consider the following questions:

- What challenges might a student face in making this selection?
- What kinds of things would a student have to consider?
- What does this form tell you about life in Fulton County in the 1960s?

#### Lesson Ideas & Links: Connecting to Standards

<a href="#">Elementary School Connections</a>	<a href="#">Related Primary Sources</a>
<a href="#">Middle School Connections</a>	<a href="#">Ask the Teaching Museum</a>
<a href="#">High School Connections</a>	<a href="#">Additional Online Resources</a>

TEACHING  
MUSEUM  
Fulton County Schools

NEW GEORGIA  
Encyclopedia

For more information and resources or to connect with staff at the **Teaching Museum**, contact [archives@fultonschools.org](mailto:archives@fultonschools.org)