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# HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOL DESEGREGATION BUSING AND BLACK HIGH SCHOOLS IN TAMPA, FLORIDA

## April 1971- September 1971

By ELINOR KIMMEL

### INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1971, Hillsborough County implemented a county-wide school desegregation plan which called for "massive" busing of thousands of children. The planning process had begun in the spring, following a United States Supreme Court decision authorizing court ordered busing to achieve desegregation. During the summer, as county officials and community leaders developed a busing plan, opposition to "forced" busing gradually mounted. White parents protested vocally, and in relatively large numbers. As the busing plan emerged, however, it became apparent that blacks, not whites, would bear the brunt of busing. Some black opposition also surfaced, not in response to the concept of "forced" busing, but rather to the plan Hillsborough County chose to adopt. This plan, designed in appearance to placate whites, placed the "burden" of busing almost entirely on black students. The dilemma for the black community, then, concerned the price it was willing to pay for "equal education."

Busing became a national issue in April of 1971 when the United States Supreme Court upheld a court-ordered "busing for integration" plan in Charlotte, North Carolina (Swann).<sup>1</sup> Communities all over the South shuddered as they realized their vulnerability to a similar ruling. Soon thereafter, the Tampa branch of the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People<sup>2</sup> Legal Defense Fund petitioned in local federal court for a re-interpretation of Hillsborough County's existing plan, which had been in effect for only one year (*Mannings*).<sup>3</sup> Tampa's plan, based on a suit originally filed in 1958 and last decided in 1970, had failed to eliminate all-white and all-black schools.<sup>4</sup>

*Mannings* was quickly revised to comply with *Swann*, and the Hillsborough County School Board immediately began planning for full integration in August by forming committees to develop proposals. Black and white community members, selected by school officials, joined in the planning process. The final proposal, accepted by both the school board and the federal court, contained features specifically designed to minimize "white flight", and thus lessened the burdens placed on the white community. As a result, the black community shouldered the "cost" of busing. Black students attended "local" schools in only two grades (sixth and seventh); for the remaining ten school years, they were bused into white neighborhoods. The heaviest price, however, involved the two, inner-city "black" high schools: Blake and Middleton Senior High Schools. Under the Hillsborough County plan, both of these schools converted to junior high schools; students and faculty, some of whom had been with the same school for decades, were reassigned to white suburban schools.

The Middleton-Blake closing became something of a flash point in the black community; NAACP officials for instance were divided on the issue. Andrew Mannings, plaintiff in the original Hillsborough County integration lawsuit, publicly opposed busing and the closing of black schools.<sup>5</sup> The white community displayed little interest in the situation as it concerned blacks: white anti-busing activists focused rather on the standard anti-busing rhetoric and tried to avoid the appearance of racism. The black high schools were of great importance only to the black community; black protest therefore coalesced on that point.<sup>6</sup>

### **HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY SCHOOL DESEGREGATION**

The Florida school desegregation story begins, not with the 1954 *Brown vs The Board of Education* decision striking down "separate but equal,"<sup>7</sup> but rather in 1949. In April of that year, five black students attempted without success to apply for admission to the University of Florida Law School. The students took recourse to Florida state courts, and from 1949 to 1957 the case (*Hawkins*)<sup>8</sup> revolved through the Florida State and United States Supreme Courts. Finally, in an opinion issued in October 1957, the United States Supreme Court instructed the plaintiff to utilize the federal court system by filing a class action suit, thus avoiding the obstructionist Florida Supreme Court. Hawkins (by 1957, the only remaining plaintiff) eventually "won" the right to admission on June 18, 1958, but then failed to qualify academically. Based on the *Hawkins* decision, a black student entered the University of Florida Law School in September of 1958 and thus integrated the Florida public university system.<sup>9</sup>

The Florida response to the 1954 *Brown* decision was decidedly sedate. Local papers expressed regret at the decision:

The decision is deplorable to the extent that it is disruptive and destructive of law, custom, and social order in those states which have maintained segregation since the slaves were freed by Lincoln's proclamation.<sup>10</sup>

but also, in the case of the *Tampa Tribune*, conceded that the ruling was inescapable based on the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Florida's acting governor, Charley Johns, announced his intention to avoid desegregation if possible, and most political and community leaders held a similar position. Because the Supreme Court decision did not impose a deadline for implementation, Florida's leaders hoped to delay desegregation indefinitely.

Integration activities in Hillsborough County began in 1955 following the *Brown II* decision of May 31, 1955. The parents of seventeen black students petitioned the school board requesting:

immediate steps to reorganize the public schools under your jurisdiction on a non-discriminatory basis.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly after this petition was filed, the Tinker Elementary School, affiliated with MacDill Air Force Base, announced that black students were free to enroll;<sup>12</sup> within a few months, the first black pupil, daughter of Sergeant Joseph T. Elliot, USAF, was admitted. Tinker's willingness to enroll black students was compelled by federal regulations which Air Force operated facilities were required to obey.<sup>13</sup>

Although other Florida counties were involved in integration activities from 1955 to 1958, (most notably Dade County<sup>14</sup>), Hillsborough County remained relatively quiet. In December of 1958, however, suit filed on behalf of elementary school student Andrew Mannings began a twelve year journey through state and federal courts.<sup>15</sup> While *Mannings* languished in litigation, Hillsborough County quietly integrated in 1961 by admitting 8-year-old Benjamin Lowry into formerly all-white Bayside School for Handicapped Children.<sup>16</sup> Little reaction occurred at this time, or in December, 1961, when Robert W. Saunders, Jr. transferred to all-white MacFarlane Park Elementary School.<sup>17</sup>

The first *Mannings* order, implemented in 1963, mandated integration at a pace of one grade a year, starting in the first grade.<sup>18</sup> This ineffective arrangement permitted "freedom of choice," which consequently allowed white students to avoid attending black-majority schools. Hillsborough County continued to operate various "choice" and zoning plans which failed to eliminate fully segregated black schools from 1963 through the 1970-1971 school year.<sup>19</sup> A reduction in segregation did occur in 1970 in response to a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision in *Mannings*.<sup>20</sup> This order, based on existing desegregation case law, resulted in decreased segregation to some degree, however, by October 1970, fifteen all-black schools remained in operation, and a majority of white students (sixty-nine percent) attended all-white or nearly all-white schools.<sup>21</sup> In the opinion of the NAACP, Hillsborough County continued to maintain a "dual system."<sup>22</sup>

As the school year 1970-1971 neared its end, the United States Supreme Court in the *Swann* ruling) opened way for further

integration efforts by the black Tampa community.<sup>23</sup> The *Swann* decision, applicable in Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, in essence, approved race-balancing ratios in attendance plans, and sanctioned inter-zone busing to achieve this end.<sup>24</sup> The "specter" of "massive forced busing was quickly becoming a reality for Hillsborough County.

The Tampa Branch NAACP Legal Defense Fund, in response to *Swann*, immediately filed a motion in Florida Middle District Court.<sup>25</sup> Federal Judge Ben Krentzman heard the petition, and on May 11, 1971, issued a 45-page statement mandating a complete makeover of the August 1970 plan within the expanded guidelines of *Swann*. Krentzman specifically ordered the use of race balanced ratios in pupil assignment, stating:

A desegregation plan will be unsuccessful and entail resegregation where a few whites are added to formerly blacks schools which otherwise remain intact.... There is an old, equitable maxim that equity delights to do justice, and not by halves. It never had greater application than here.<sup>26</sup>

The Hillsborough County School Board, having anticipated the *Swann* and *Mannings* decisions, swung into action.<sup>27</sup>

Raymond O. Shelton, Hillsborough County Superintendent of Schools, appointed E.L. Bing to form a committee responsible for planning in response to judge Krentzman's ruling.<sup>28</sup> Bing, a County School Board official, came to his appointment with experience, having participated in the development of integration plans in prior years.<sup>29</sup> He also had personal experience, of

a sort, with busing for the purpose of "race balancing:"

And busing, I know about that too. When I graduated from Florida A&M, the legislature paid my tuition to Columbia University to keep me out of the University of Florida -and they bought me a bus ticket, to make sure I got there. Yeah, I know about busing. I was bused all the way to New York City.<sup>30</sup>

Bing's initial task, to form a committee representative of the community, progressed rapidly; by May 17, 1971, the committee numbered eighty-two members, twenty-five percent of which were black.<sup>31</sup> In its final form, the School Desegregation Committee (SDC) consisted of one hundred-fifty members including business and community leaders, as well as students.<sup>32</sup> Upon formation, the Committee assumed responsibility for reviewing and approving desegregation options developed by an appointive School Board staff committee.

Planning discussions proceeded as scheduled, and input was requested from both the Charlotte-Mecklenburg County School Board (defendant in the *Swann* case) and the Desegregation Consulting Center of the University of Miami.<sup>33</sup> Subcommittee's formed to focus on specific grade groupings in order to insure that the needs of students (especially at the elementary school level) were met. "White flight" (to private schools) was a concern of the SDC and county officials from the beginning; closing black schools therefore quickly became an option. The Biracial Committee of the Tampa school system was the first organization to express concern over desegregation plans which proposed closings. As discussions progressed, however, it became apparent that favored proposals would involve school

closings.<sup>34</sup> Finally, on June 8, 1971, the School Desegregation Committee announced its recommendations.

The elementary school proposal involved "clustering" which created sixth-grade centers out of previously majority-black schools, and grade-schools for first through fifth grades in predominantly white schools. For junior high schools, the plan remained in flux, with suggestions for zoning adjustments or grade grouping in the seventh or eighth grades. (The plan, as eventually approved, created seventh grade centers out of inner-city schools.) The senior high school proposal recommended pupil swapping and conversion of Blake Senior High School to a junior high school. The alternative plan called for the conversion of both Middleton Senior High School and Blake, to junior level facilities. All proposals, primary and alternative, clearly impacted black students much more than white.<sup>35</sup>

The Hillsborough County School Board approved the SDC desegregation plan on June 11, 1971, accepting the primary recommendations for elementary schools, and the alternative plans for Junior and senior high schools. In the case of senior high schools, Middleton joined Blake as facilities to be converted to other uses.<sup>36</sup> Judge Krentzman, on July 2, 1971, approved the plan, and the School Board turned its attention to logistical planning and to soliciting cooperation from the community.<sup>37</sup> Already, it was obvious that "selling" the plan, especially to white parents, would involve serious efforts, and some amount of luck.

Meanwhile, as the SDC proposals were made public, community opposition to busing plans mounted, especially among white parents. Blacks, on the other hand, in

general, supported the plan and regretted the school closings. The coverage by the *Tampa Tribune* fully discussed the various proposals and, furthermore, made quite clear the fact that black children faced busing for ten of twelve years, while white students would ride for only two years. Nevertheless, the white community, reacting in many more numbers, and with much more emotion than black parents, rallied around the "neighborhood schools" banner. White Tampa parents focused their arguments on safety issues, and the convenience of living in proximity to their children's schools, while more sophisticated protesters stressed the expenses associated with increased busing.<sup>38</sup>

In response to SDC proposals suggesting conversion of Blake and/or Middleton, the initial "save" Middleton-Blake demonstration occurred on June 14, 1971 at the Hillsborough County Courthouse. Approximately one hundred-fifty blacks, students and adults, marched in downtown Tampa, and met with school system representative G.V. Stewart. During the ensuing discussion, Stewart disclosed that plans had existed "for years" to convert Middleton to a junior high school. Following this confrontation, the Biracial Advisory Committee petitioned Judge Krentzman to delay approval of the plan. Stating that the proposed plan, by closing Middleton and Blake, delivered "a punitive blow" to the black community, the Committee requested revision of the plan. Three days later, the Tampa Tribune published a lengthy interview with Andrew Mannings (plaintiff in Tampa's 1958 case) in which Mannings expressed his opposition to "forced busing."<sup>39</sup>

The chief justifications offered in favor of closing black, inner-city schools generally mention "white flight". Desegregation

discussions in Hillsborough County followed this trend. White, moderate parents accepted "one-way" busing only: in other words they were not prepared to allow their children to be bused into black neighborhoods, although they were willing to accept black children in white schools.<sup>40</sup> The issue of white flight also influenced black parents, who were often forced to subordinate concerns about neighborhood schools and busing to the desire for access to white (and higher quality) schools.<sup>41</sup> In the case of Middleton and Blake, a second consideration determined the conversion decision. Both schools failed to meet state facility standards for senior high schools. (Middleton, in fact, following a fire in 1968, had been rebuilt to junior high school specifications.)<sup>42</sup> In light of the renovation costs, and given that the schools did meet requirements for junior high schools, the decision to convert the facilities appealed strongly to both the SDC and the School Board.<sup>43</sup>

Throughout the South, communities provided all-black schools for one reason only: to maintain a segregated system. In Tampa, Blake and Middleton were relatively small facilities, reflecting in capacity the proportion of black students in Tampa. Hillsborough County was hardly the only community to face the end of high schools which had served the black community for years. Nashville, for instance, in similar circumstances, experienced intense opposition to proposals to close its only black high school:

The focal point of black frustrations was the proposed closing of Pearl High School. Pearl was the last high school in the black community and had tremendous symbolic value. It had been designed by a black architect and built by black

contractors during the "separate but equal" period. Black leaders argued that closing Pearl would rip the heart out of the North Nashville community.<sup>44</sup>

Pearl High School, after a struggle, survived in Nashville. In Tampa, Middleton Senior High School became a "Pearl-like" symbol.

Middleton High School had served the East Tampa black community for 35 years. Constructed by the WPA with donated materials, it opened in 1935 as the first senior high school for black students in Hillsborough County. Prior to 1935, students attended all-black Booker T. Washington, which housed grades six through twelve. The force behind the founding of Middleton was black insurance executive and mail carrier George Middleton.<sup>45</sup> Blake High School, named in honor of Booker T. Washington principal Howard W. Blake, opened in 1956. Both schools had strong athletic programs, and provided a wide range of educational programs. Blake, in addition to academic studies, offered vocational training in a number of areas including carpentry, masonry, and auto repair.<sup>46</sup>

Blake and Middleton both played a vital role for black students and the black community. The all-black schools provided pupils with the opportunity to excel and achieve, to become class president or prom queen. Virtually every graduating senior in the Blake class of 1960, for instance, was a member of at least one social, academic, or vocational club. Both schools were "neighborhood schools" with deep ties to the community. Teachers tended to live in the same neighborhood, and therefore were able to interact with parents often. Middleton students especially, were often second generation students, and in some cases, entire families had attended the same school.

School pride was an important factor for all associated with Blake and Middleton.<sup>47</sup> Students, teachers, and alumni, especially recent graduates, would not accept the closings easily.

Expenses associated with busing were undoubtedly a factor which influenced the actions of the SDC and the School Board. While not publicly acknowledged at the time, county officials clearly preferred to limit resources allocated for busing efforts. For this reason, busing fewer students on a yearly basis was obviously preferable, and the black students, twenty percent of the student population, and concentrated in the inner-city, became logical targets. Well after implementation, the financial motivation became clear:

The plain truth is that it is cheaper to bus most of the blacks to outlying schools than it is to bus most of the whites to the inner-city, simply because there are so many more whites.<sup>48</sup>

The school board did take into account need of the students impacted by the plan. As a means to minimize resentment and conflict, pupils retained school positions such as class officer or cheerleader when they transferred to newly assigned schools (becoming, for example, "co-Presidents")<sup>49</sup> Students participated in biracial advisory boards at each school, and the county placed two specially trained community relations specialists in each junior and senior high school<sup>50</sup> To encourage participation in extra-curricular activities, the school board agreed to provide alternative transportation for students involved in after-school activities.<sup>51</sup> Black protests continued throughout the summer and into the beginning of the 1971-1972 school year. The majority of those opposed to black school closings were

persons associated with Blake or Middleton, and most of the protesters were in their teens or early twenties. The leader of the youthful activists was Otha Favors, a former Middleton student, and University of South Florida activist.<sup>52</sup> The protesters' strategy consisted of picketing, marching, and forcing confrontations with various county officials and Federal Judge Krentzman. Their numbers were small, and due to lack of support in the black community, (as well as their youth), they received little attention. The demonstrations were generally peaceful, however, a march on August 17 resulted in a small riot when participants, led by Favors, were denied admission to a school board meeting. The two hundred to three hundred teenaged marchers threw rocks, slashed tires, and broke windows before Tampa police officers were able to disperse them. While the disturbance raged in the streets, inside the courthouse, blacks spoke in opposition to the school closings and whites protested "forced busing".<sup>53</sup>

Andrew Mannings, eighteen years old in 1971, expressed the feeling of many of the young protesters when he said:

There is ethnic consciousness. The revolutionary movement is coming in ... Most of the older black leaders in Tampa have copped out. The NAACP certainly doesn't speak for young people. It's the revolutionary voices that are coming out clear.<sup>54</sup>

Youthful activists threatened various radical actions which never materialized, including school boycotts and "race riots."<sup>55</sup> Otha Favors, leader of the protesters, referred to the plan in the following terms:

It's a disintegration plan when it attempts to break up the black community just when we're finally

getting to the point where blacks are becoming proud of black identity.<sup>56</sup>

For many younger blacks, then, identification with a historically black high school was more important than the opportunity to attend a formerly white school.

Among traditional black-advocacy organizations, both the Biracial Committee and the NAACP opposed the integration plan because of the burden it placed on black students. The NAACP advised Judge Krentzman of its opposition to the plan, specifically school closings, but did not submit an alternative proposal.<sup>57</sup> Key NAACP members, at the outset, felt strongly that the plan was "not acceptable," and discussions ensued as members attempted to arrive at a consensus.<sup>58</sup> After weeks of internal debate, one week prior to the start of classes, the NAACP finally endorsed the plan, stating:

A non-racially segregated education is looked upon by the NAACP as an investment in the future of the community.<sup>59</sup>

In the end, the NAACP had focused on its primary goal of equalizing educational opportunity, and accepted school closings as well as extensive busing of black children.<sup>60</sup> Most of the black community agreed with this position.<sup>61</sup> NAACP approval notwithstanding, grassroots groups, including Favors' Black Caucus continued to oppose the plan.

Adult opposition in the black community, like the youthful opposition, involved mainly Middleton-Blake parents, teachers, and alumni. Former students lobbied in Tallahassee and Washington without success for relief.<sup>62</sup> Teachers, especially, anticipated



major upheavals in their lives with the passing of Blake and Middleton High Schools. These fears were not unfounded: teachers experienced significant effects when most faculty members transferred to formerly all-white schools. Teachers often expressed a feeling of being "out-numbered," and faculty with decades of experience sensed the need to "prove" themselves to students and new associates. Long-term professional, and personal relationships were severely altered as colleagues no longer interacted on a daily basis.<sup>63</sup>

Hillsborough County schools opened on August 31, 1971 with few problems. County officials anticipated a reduced attendance, and in fact, enrollment was eleven thousand short of projections. "White flight" to private schools, however, did not occur to any substantive degree. Five new private schools opened in Tampa (three offering grades six and seven only), and nine existing private schools added grades. Public school attendance on opening day was 92,939, with Middleton Junior High reporting the lowest attendance rate (sixty-four percent). Fifty-seven thousand students rode buses, an increase over the previous year of twenty-five thousand.<sup>64</sup> Enrollment continued to climb throughout the first week of school, reaching 98,921 by September 4.<sup>65</sup> Students returned to the public school system throughout the fall, and the following years; by 1976 less than four thousand students were enrolled in private schools.<sup>66</sup>

Although opening day problems were few, the first week of school did see minor disturbances, especially at Middleton Junior High School. Black youths heckled white students and teachers in the halls of Middleton throughout the first week of classes. Officials placed police officers on

duty in a number of schools, including Middleton.<sup>67</sup> Harassment died down eventually as students settled into the school year. Well after the opening of school, a racially motivated incident provoked by white students resulted in a rampage at a formerly all-white high school which involved around fifty students; this and other such episodes were isolated and involved little more than fist-fighting.<sup>68</sup>

Reported incidents also included a school bus burning, student extortion attempts, and a small riot in the inner-city College Hill area of Tampa. The College Hill riot, which occurred the day before school opened, was not connected with school integration, but rather involved a black driver stopped by Tampa police officers. Bus scheduling problems also occurred; groups of students on a number of occasions missed school entirely when school buses failed to arrive. Most seriously, the Jackson Heights Elementary School suffered a firebombing during the night of August 31-September 1. White parents continued to picket various schools; however, as the school year went on, the picketers faded away. Overall, Hillsborough County's busing plan went into effect with less trouble than expected.<sup>69</sup>

In the aftermath of August and September 1971, the Tampa community pondered what had been lost, as well as what had been won. For blacks, the price for racially balanced integration was clear: neighborhood schools in the black community at the Junior and senior high school levels ceased to exist. Two high schools, with a combined history and tradition of fifty years, had been sacrificed, and the benefits, if any, would not be known for years.<sup>70</sup> Unlike the black community, white Hillsborough County school officials were fully satisfied with their efforts. But, in endorsing the closing of Blake and Middleton, Hillsborough County

officials didn't adequately acknowledge the importance of these schools to the black community. Local black citizens had deep and long-standing ties to both Middleton (1935) and Blake (1956). Although the facilities were not up to standards, each school provided the expected extra-curricular activities and opportunities for student and parent participation. As is the case at any high school, a support system of parents, teachers, and students had formed through the years each of these schools operated. Closing the schools shattered that network, and left both students and teachers bereft.

## AFTERWARD

The Hillsborough County desegregation plan was generally considered successful. Implementation occurred with a minimum of violence, and opposition rapidly faded away. Community objections notwithstanding, within a few short months, school officials and community leaders had successfully transformed a substantially segregated system into a fully integrated, unitary structure.

Those who objected in the years immediately following 1971 were mainly concerned black citizens. Segregation continued in the class room, and black students were substantially over-represented in special classes for the mentally retarded. The primary concern however, involved discipline. From less than five thousand suspensions in 1970-1971, the total grew to over ten thousand by 1973-1974. Half these suspensions went to blacks, who constituted only about twenty percent of the student population. Following the filing of a complaint with the HEW Office for Civil Rights, school officials were informed that discipline policies had created a

"discriminatory impact on minority Students." The school board responded aggressively, and suspensions began to drop by 1974-1975.<sup>71</sup>

Both Middleton and Blake Senior High Schools continue to boast active alumni associations. Middleton alumni formed a new association in February, 1991, and, in August, held a reunion of all classes (1935 through 1971). This Middleton group is currently engaged in a number of projects, including a lobbying effort to re-open a new Middleton High School in East Tampa. The association is also committed to involvement with Middleton Junior High School as well as other community-based projects. Blake's alumni association, formed in 1989 has been actively involved for two years in efforts to re-establish Blake.<sup>72</sup> Hillsborough County is currently considering a proposal to construct a new high school in downtown Tampa; Blake activists have already petitioned to name the facility Blake Senior High School.<sup>73</sup>

In October of 1991, Hillsborough County officials completely re-wrote the Tampa desegregation plan in an effort to reduce busing. The revised plan proposes the replacement of single grade centers with four-year high schools and three-year middle schools. Because this plan calls for some busing of white, suburban students, white parents have filed a suit which is currently pending.<sup>74</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, 402 U.S. 1 (1971). Hereinafter referred to as Swann.

<sup>2</sup> Hereinafter referred to as NAACP.

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<sup>3</sup> *Mannings v. Board of Public Instruction of Hillsborough County*, 427 F. 2nd 874 (5th Cir. 1970). Hereinafter referred to as *Mannings*.

<sup>4</sup> There are any number of studies on the primary Supreme and Circuit Court decisions regarding segregation, the most useful being J. Harvie Wilkinson's *From Brown to Bakke: The Supreme Court and School Integration: 1954-1978*. Wilkinson covers the main cases (*Brown*, *Brown II*, and *Swann*) in detail, and also addresses social issues to some degree. His approach is national, ranging from North Carolina to California to Denver to Boston. Wilkinson is less useful as far as black communities are concerned; as is the case in the majority of books on court-ordered busing, his central focus is on white response. The *Swann* decision is covered extensively by Bernard Schwartz in *Swann's Way: The School Busing Case and the Supreme Court*. Although Schwartz focuses entirely on the Supreme Court deliberations and negotiations, he, ironically, reports that the *Swann* suit was originally filed in an effort to prevent Charlotte Mecklenburg County from closing black schools to avoid the appearance of segregation. The final source for general historical information is Robert Howard Akerman's *The Triumph of Moderation in Florida Thought and Politics: A Study of the Race Issue from 1954 to 1960*. This thesis is of interest due to the Florida focus, and the general historical information Akerman provides on the early Florida school desegregation cases.

<sup>5</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 20 June 1971.

<sup>6</sup> Secondary sources focusing on the black community and busing are sparse. By far the best treatment of the black community is presented by Richard A. Pride and J. David Woodard in *The Burden of Busing: The Politics of Desegregation in Nashville, Tennessee*. Pride and Woodard specifically address the concerns of the black community, and provide a very effective analysis of the struggle to "save" a local black high school. All of the major issues (white flight, neighborhood schools, black opposition and separatism, etc.) are covered in detail. *Burden's* discussion extends into the eighties, and therefore presents significant issues regarding the success (or failure) of busing.

<sup>7</sup> *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). Hereinafter referred to as *Brown*.

<sup>8</sup> *Hawkins v. Board of Control of Florida*. Hereinafter referred to as *Hawkins*.

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<sup>9</sup> Robert H. Akerman, "The Triumph of Moderation in Florida Thought and Politics" (Ph.D. diss., American University, 1967), 404, 125-127. See also *Southern School News*, November 1955 through October 1958 for progress reports on both the *Hawkins* case and the black students who eventually entered the University of Florida Law School.

<sup>10</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 19 May 1954.

<sup>11</sup> *Southern School News*, August 1955.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, October 1955.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, March 1956.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 1955- 1958.

<sup>15</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, 11 December 1958.

<sup>16</sup> *Southern School News*, November 1961. Benjamin Lowry is the son of Rev. Leon Lowry, 1961 President of the Florida NAACP.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, January 1962. Robert Saunders, Jr. is the son of Robert W. Saunders, Sr., 1962 Field Secretary for the Florida NAACP.

<sup>18</sup> Parental Notification, 1963, Robert Saunders Special Collection, University of South Florida, Tampa.

<sup>19</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 9.

<sup>20</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1970.

<sup>21</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 9.

<sup>22</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972), 11.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, ii. See also *Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1971, regarding the "new mix plan."

<sup>24</sup> J. Harvie Wilkinson, *From Brown to Bakke* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 147. For a complete discussion of *Swann*, see Bernard

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Schwartz, *Swann's Way* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

<sup>25</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972), ii.

<sup>26</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 12 May 1971.

<sup>27</sup> Robert O. Shelton, *Making Desegregation Work. Tampa, Florida*, by the American Association of School Administrators (Atlantic City, NJ: February 20 1976), 2.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>29</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 33.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 37.

<sup>31</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 18 May 1971.

<sup>32</sup> Robert O. Shelton, *Making Desegregation Work. Tampa, Florida*, by the American Association of School Administrators (Atlantic City, NJ: February 20 1976), 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 27 May 1971.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*, 3 June 1971.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 5 - 10 June 1971.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, 12 June 1971.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 3 July 1971.

<sup>38</sup> For an opinionated rebuttal to white concerns regarding busing, see National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972).

<sup>39</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 15, 18, 29 June 1971.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 3 June 1971.

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<sup>41</sup> Rev. Leon Lowry interview by author, Notes, Tampa, Florida, 26 November 1991. Rev. Lowry has been active in the Florida NAACP for decades.

<sup>42</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 18 August 1971. The fact that neither black high school met state standards is certainly interesting in light of the oft repeated "separate but equal" argument.

<sup>43</sup> Fred Hearn's interview by author, Notes, Tampa, Florida, 5 December 1991. Mr. Hearn is a 1966 graduate of Middleton High School, and an active member of the Middleton Alumni Association.

<sup>44</sup> Richard A. Pride and J. David Woodard, *The Burden of Busing: The Politics of Desegregation in Nashville, Tennessee* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985), 173-174.

<sup>45</sup> Hearn's interview by author, 5 December 1991.

<sup>46</sup> Johnnye Mai Williams interview by author, Notes, Tampa, Florida, 9 December 1991. Mrs. Williams attended Middleton High School, and was on the Blake faculty from 1956 to 1971.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>48</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 34.

<sup>49</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 21 August 1971.

<sup>50</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972), 12.

<sup>51</sup> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Legal Defense Fund, *It Ain't the Distance. It's the Niggers* (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1972), vii.

<sup>52</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, 7 September 1975. Favors continued to work actively in the area of equal education for blacks for years after 1971.

<sup>53</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 18 August 1971.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 20 June 1971.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 15 June 1971.

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid, 25 June 1971.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 3 July 1971.

<sup>58</sup> Lowry interview by author, 26 November 1991.

<sup>59</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 23 August 1971.

<sup>60</sup> Lowry interview by author, 26 November 1991.

<sup>61</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972),15.

<sup>62</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 8 July 1971.

<sup>63</sup> Williams interview by author, 9 December 1991.

<sup>64</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 30-31 August 1971.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 4 September 1971.

<sup>66</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 34.

<sup>67</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 31 August - 4 September 1971.

<sup>68</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Five Communities: Their Search for Equal Education* (Washington, D.C.: 1972),14.

<sup>69</sup> *Tampa Tribune*, 31 August - 4,September 1971.

<sup>70</sup> Rev. Lowry supported the Hillsborough County busing plan in 1971, and today believes that desegregation was worth the loss of Blake and Middleton. Mr. Hearn, Mrs. Williams, and Mrs. Reddick, all of whom are associated with one of the closed high schools, have never supported the plan.

<sup>71</sup> John Egerton, *School Desegregation: A Report Card From the South*, by the Southern Regional Council (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, April 1976), 36 See also Southern Regional Council, *The South and Her Children: School Desegregation 1970-1971* (Atlanta: Southern Regional Council, March 1971), 41.

<sup>72</sup> Hearn interview by author, 5 December 1991.

<sup>73</sup> *St. Petersburg Times*, 1 December 1991.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 10 December 1991

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Author's Note: This paper was completed in December 1991. Since that time, plans for a new high school in downtown Tampa have been put on hold. In addition, a U.S. Supreme Court decision the Spring

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Of 1992 throws into question Hillsborough County's legal obligation to continued court-ordered busing in any form.

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