




BEAUREGARD PARISH  
TRAINING SCHOOL  
HAS BEEN PLACED ON THE  
NATIONAL REGISTER  
OF HISTORIC PLACES

BY THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

MARCH 1, 1996



BPT School Song

*Oh, We love the Halls of Ivy,  
That Surround us Here Today  
And we will not Forget  
Tho, We be Far Away*

*To the Hallow Halls of Ivy  
Every Voice will Bid Farewell  
And Shimmer off in Twilight  
Like the Old Vesper Bell  
One Day a Hush will Fall,  
The Footsteps of Us All  
Will Echo down the Hall and Disappear  
But as we sadly start, our Journeys far Apart  
A Part of Every Heart will Linger Here*

*In the Sacred Halls of Ivy  
Where we've Lived and Learned to Know  
That thro the Years,  
We'll see you in the Sweet After Glow*

## History of Beauregard Parish Training School

Prior to 1911 there were very little educational opportunities for blacks in the south. The concept of the parish training school created in 1911 was made possible through the efforts of four philanthropic foundations interested in the education of African-American youth. These foundations, The General Education Board, the John F. Slater Fund, the Anna T. Jeans Fund, and the Rosendale Fund, convinced state education officials throughout the South to work with them to improve educational opportunities for blacks. The training school movement had several goals. The first was to provide each parish with a central public school for blacks. With its good physical facilities and carefully chosen curriculum, this school would serve as a model for other black schools in the area. Another goal was to provide a more thorough education by offering more courses. Thus, students could attend a training school for two or three years longer than they could one of their smaller rural cousins. Early in the movement training schools offered at least eight grades; later they offered ten or eleven. A third goal was to provide industrial and manual training for African-American children, "...laying particular emphasis upon subjects pertaining to home and farm." The final goal of the parish training school movement was to prepare teachers who would then serve in the region's rural black elementary schools. The first training school in the nation opened in Louisiana's Tangipahoa Parish in 1911.

In order to obtain a training school, parishes had to own the property where the building would be erected, recognize the school as part of the public school system, and commit at least \$750.00 from public funds toward its maintenance each year. Beauregard Parish met the first requirement when the Longbell Lumber Company conveyed a tract of land to the School Board on February 6, 1917. The Beauregard Parish Training School would be considered a Rosenwald School because the Rosenwald Fund gave the parish \$500.00 to assist in building the school.

Schools for African-American students had existed in the Beauregard Parish towns of Merryville, Ludington, Bon Ami, Carson, Longville, Center Hill, Bancroft and DeRidder as early as the 1917-1918 term. Although attendance figures for each year are not available, those for the 1923-1924 nine month period indicate that an average of 420 students attended the school with as many as 450 having attended at one time. Average daily attendance was around 318 children. State Board of Education records indicate that 19 of the Training School's students boarded within the DeRidder community during that school year. During the historic period (1929-1945), and into the postwar era, the school was the only opportunity in the parish for blacks to receive a high school education. Beauregard Parish had a population of 14,847 in 1940, one-fifth of which was black. A 1948 government document notes that there were in that year eight high schools and eight elementary schools for whites and one high school and two elementary schools for blacks.

The Beauregard Parish Training School opened in 1920 with a physical plant consisting of two buildings. A large two-story structure served as a high school while a smaller one-story building held the elementary level classes. The original elementary and high school buildings were destroyed by a fire of unknown origin in 1929. Bids for replacement buildings were opened on July 23, 1929, with the contract awarded to P. Oliver & Son for \$20,300.00. This amount underwrote the construction of twin, one-story, hollow tile buildings with stucco exterior surfaces. One of the twin classroom buildings constructed in 1929 was destroyed by another fire during the mid-1930s. Instead of replacing it with a similar building, the school board elected to construct a combination classroom building /gymnasium on the site. It was completed in 1938. The State Board of Education's annual report for 1930-31 shows that each of these buildings contained five classrooms. Part of the curriculum at that time: reading, writing, and math (grades 2-3); history and geography (grade 4); English, history and literature (grade 7) and algebra and geometry (the high school grades).

Students at the training school were being prepared to teach in other elementary schools. Their last two years were spent in preparation to teach, and they did practice teaching in the school under the supervision of the education teacher. To be certified they were required to pass a test administered by the State Department of Education. By the mid-1930s this practice was discontinued. Students graduating from the Training School were required to attend a one or two year session of Normal Institute to obtain a teaching certificate.

Prior to 1920, records show that Y.A. Lenior was the principal of Beauregard Parish Training School. Mr. Barrie was principal from 1920-1923. In 1923 A.L. Leatherman took over the leadership of the school and was principal until he died in 1935. Ruffin H. Paul was the next principal and he continued in the office until 1940. During his administration he brought many innovations in education to the school. The first band was organized and trained by him. Sports and calisthenics were made a part of the school activities. Basketball teams for boys and girls were organized and became outstanding in the state competition. Paul stressed academics above all else, and promptness. Later principals include G. Hall, Bertha Stagg, Shepherd Knighton and Mr. Williams.

In the fall of 1950 Cornelius King, a dynamic educator from Baton Rouge became principal. At that time classes were being taught on the platoon system for grades one through six. Two teachers shared the same room, but taught a different group of children. The morning teacher reported for school at 7:00 a.m. with classes beginning at 7:30 a.m. and ending at 11:30 a.m. Then the teacher and the students in the DeRidder area went home. The afternoon teacher reported at noon, with classes beginning at 12:30 and ending at 4:40 p.m. with the teacher remaining until 5:00 p.m.

The children who were bussed from Ragley, Longville, Singer and Merryville will always remember the platoon system experience. These children had to remain in school from

7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Those students not in session had to sit along the wall in the classroom while the other classes were taught.

Lorraine Duncan bused the children from Ragley, Fred Cooley from Singer and Longville, and Ellis Gill from Merryville. During this time classes were also taught in churches and in the Masonic Hall.

To relieve the overcrowded condition, the R.H. Crosby Family donated a beautiful school building to Beauregard Parish for the Black community. The School was named George Washington Carver School. Under the leadership and dedication of Cornelius King as principal and his faculty, Carver became one of the top black schools in Louisiana. Scholastic held top priority, but athletics was also important. The school teams won many games, honors and trophies for Carver. The band, under the leadership of Dewey Lewis, was an inspiration. They played for all the games, parades and other activities of the community. All the students joined other students in the parish in projects for the Beauregard Parish Fair, all of which were outstanding.

Graduation exercises were especially memorable: the banquet, class night, baccalaureate Sunday and graduation night. The teachers and students marched in caps and gowns. The program consisted of excellent speeches as well as special music. The school population increased so much that there was a need for an elementary school. A building was erected in 1962 and L.V. Blount, Jr. was appointed principal. Carver High, under the leadership of Mr. King, continued to be a great school producing top students. Mr. King retired in 1966, and died that same year.

In the fall of 1966 B.D. Crain became principal of George Washington Carver High School. During this period integration came peacefully to Beauregard Parish schools. The school was left with just sixth and seventh grades and was named Eastside Upper Elementary School. In 1985 Eastside Upper Elementary School was closed and all teachers and the principal were transferred to DeRidder Junior High School. Carver became the Title I School. In later years Carver High School housed the Adult Education program, Student Appraisal Office and it now serves as the Beauregard Parish Alternative School.

The Beauregard Parish Training School was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 1, 1996. Unveiling of a plaque designating the Beauregard Parish Training School as a Historical Landmark occurred November 16, 2001.

In 2002, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Rosenwald Schools near the top of the country's most endangered places and created a campaign to raise awareness and money for preservation. The Beauregard Parish Training School stood empty, abandoned and in disrepair for many years. In 2006 BeauCARE received a grant and renovation began on both buildings and continued until 2008. At the present time, the BeauCARE Head Start Program is

## 2013 BPTS/Carver Reunion

### Beauregard Parish Training School Past Principals

Y. A. Lenoir	1917 - 1920
Mr. Barrie	1920 - 1922
A. L. Leatherman	1923 - 1935
Ruffin Paul	1935 - 1940
G. Hall	Data Not Available
Bertha Staggs	Data Not Available
Shepherd Knighton	Data Not Available
Mr. Williams	Data Not Available



**Beauregard Parish Training School**





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**BEAUREGARD PARISH TRAINING SCHOOL, DE RIDDER, LA.**  
 Left to right: Mrs. Bertha Stagg, Principal; Bernice A. Ervino, Mr. Obio M. B. Harrison, Jimmie B. Samstrong, Lillian Alice Robert, Mose A. Robinson, Mrs. Sadio Howard, Class Sponsor; Ruth A. Essex, Jossie Lee Hicks, Allen J. Maye, Daniel Johnson, Lizzie M. P. Nelson, A. G. Edwards, John U. Silas, Rubbie Lee Demanuel, Annie Mae Johnson, Verdell M. Silas, Eris Engrum, and Vera Freeman.



## George Washington Carver High School



1953 - 1970



George Washington Carver High School was housed in the Building currently serving as the Beauregard Parish Alternative School at 506 Martin Luther King Dr. Most of the school's original structure remains the same today.