

The Untold Story of Moor High Legacy

1. Your knowledge as administrator of the details of establishing Moor High with regards to its architectural design, curriculum, planning phases, final construction, moving in, etc.

Response – At the time B.L. Moor was planned, I was an 8th grade student attending a community church school.

2. What was the cost of the new school?

Response – I have no idea due to my student status. 4200,000.

3. What legislative act eliminated the church schools, its location selected, and community involvement for the new school sites?

Response – I have no idea due to my student status. However, if I were to speculate about the location selected, it was the fact that the school district owned the land and its proximity to Pleasant Grove High School.

4. Qualifications for employment from the community church schools.

Response – I have no idea due to my student status.

5. Listing of first employees, transportation system, nutrition, funding sources.

Response - Some of the first employees were Mr. Herbert King (Principal), Mr. Ezell Wicks(Principal), Mrs. Elsie Mosley, Mrs. Willie Dickinson, Mrs. Annie Gregory, Mrs. Idella Minor, Ms. Dorothy Armstead, Mrs. Laura Hilliard, Ms. Emma Conley, Mrs. Hattie G. Spencer, Mrs. Bobbie R. Hudson, Mr. Floyd Wade, Ms. JoAnn Vicks, Mrs. Clarice Larry, Mrs. Luthisia Neal, Mr. H.L. Gillespie, Mrs. Hattie Cooperwood, Mrs. Beatrice Ingram, Mr. Ben Gaines, Mr. John Campbell, Mr. Bobby McDowell, Mrs. Beatrice King, Mrs. Thelma Robinson, Mrs. Rosie McDowell, Mr. R.L. Stevenson (Cafeteria Manager), Mrs. Eva Bell Thomas, Mr. Matthew Rice (Custodian), and bus drivers Mr. Joe Ree Malone, Mr. Johnny Longstreet, Mr. Bus Hill and Mr. James Beckum. The funding

sources probably came from the local (Oktibbeha County) and the state of Mississippi.

6. What do you remember about attending the new school?

Response

(A) We rode the bus to school instead of walking.

(B) We arrived at a warm building instead of having to build a fire to get warm in the winter months.

(C) We were able to eat a hot lunch from the cafeteria instead of a cold packed lunch.

(D) We had individual rooms to have classes instead of everybody being in one large room where you could hear what was going on in every class at that time.

(E) We could play basketball in a gym instead of outdoors on the dirt and also had a baseball team.

(F) We had a library equipped with books and other necessities.

(G) We had a shop where we could learn skills to support life.

(H) We had multiple teachers instead of just one.

7. What was your motivation to become Superintendent?

Response

A. My number one motivation for becoming Superintendent of Education was when I was a teacher at B.L. Moor High, we needed some math books. When we finally got the books, they came from Starkville Academy and had been used for several years based on the number of names of students in the book. That was totally unfair, and I decided then that in order for all students to be treated fairly it needed someone in that office who understood what it meant to be fair through their actions.

B. My second motivation was I desired to be in a leadership role. I have always been in some leadership role no matter what the endeavor was.

8. Do you recall the staff and teachers during your attendance in the 60's?

See question 5

9. During your administration and as overseer, were you given support for improvement in the community?

Response

I was given tremendous support by the community during my administration. One example was when the district needed to replace some buses that were outdated, I recommended to the board that we use a 3 mill levy that would increase taxes, and the board approved the recommendation. There was no outcry from the community about the tax increase.

10. What were your greatest achievement periods during your tenure? See Attachment

11. Was the OCSD budget equivalent to that of other districts? How did you manage to provide a quality education?

Response

- A. The OCSD budget was not equivalent to other districts, because the district had a very small local tax base. That meant the OCSD did not receive as much revenue from local sources as the more affluent districts with the larger tax base.
- B. The district was able to provide a quality education for the students by planning well and utilizing to the maximum the limited financial and human resources that were available.

12. What were the most difficult tasks being Superintendent? What were the reactions of staff and students following the fire?

Response

- A. The most difficult tasks being Superintendent were managing the limited financial resources in order to meet minimum state

accountability standards, recruiting and retaining quality personnel, and eliminating the negative perceptions of the OCSD.

- B. The reaction of the staff and students following the fire was one of disappointment and uncertainty about the future of the school.

13. Attendance figures after integration and at consolidation.

Response

I don't have any accurate information on attendance.

14. What is your understanding of being under state conservatorship?

Response

My understanding of being under state conservatorship meant that there was an academic failure in the district. A conservator was appointed to take control of the district's day-to-day operation in order to correct the problem. The first time the district was taken over under my administration, there were at least three different conservators in a five-year period. I don't know why the state Department of Education changed conservator so many times. The first conservator, after a time in the district, came to me and inquired as to "What were we going to do about the situation?" My response was "We aren't going to do anything. The question is what are you going to do since they didn't bother to consult with me to solve the problem in the first place." It is my understanding that there are problems with the conservatorship to this day, so you can imagine what it was like in 1996 when the state took over the Oktibbeha County School District.

SPECIAL NOTE: These are the teachers in the church/community schools prior to consolidation into Moor High School. These are not all of the teachers and church/community schools. You might want to check with Herman Bush about Mt. Olivet and more about Turnpike.

- I. Austin
 - A. Ms. Emma Conley
 - B. Mrs. Hattie G. Spencer
- II. Truevine
 - A. Mr. Glenn Elliott
 - B. Mrs. Elsie Mosley
- III. St. Matthew
 - A. Mrs. Beatrice Jerry
 - B. Mrs. Idella Minor
- IV. Blackjack
 - A. Mrs. Lurline Minor
- V. Chapel Hill
 - A. Mr. Bus Hill
 - B. Mrs. Cora Hill
- VI. Turnpike
 - A. Mrs. Thelma Robinson