Before Brown, After Brown: What Has Changed for African-American Children?

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Journal of Law and Public Policy

BEFORE *BROWN*, AFTER *BROWN*: WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN?

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I. INTRODUCTION

As we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the 1954 *Brown* decision, it is important to take a look at the changes African-American children have

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endured in the field of education. This Article focuses on several relevant questions that provide a background for all stakeholders concerned about education as we consider the changes that must be made by school personnel and policymakers in order to make the promise of *Brown* a reality. What did education look like before and after *Brown* from the perspectives of African-American students, parents, teachers, principals, and community activists? What are the gains and what are the losses for African-American children and their families in the desegregated school setting? What are the lessons learned about the education of African-American children in the twentieth century that show the correct way to provide a quality education for all of our children in the twenty-first century?

II. BEFORE *BROWN*: VALUED SEGREGATED AFRICAN-AMERICAN SCHOOLS

In a review of studies concerning valued segregated schools for African-American children in the south from 1935 to 1969, Walker (2000) reported that four major themes emerged: 1) exemplary teachers; 2) school curriculum and extracurricular activities; 3) parental support; and 4) leadership of the school. African-American communities held these schools in high esteem because they provided a good education for their children despite the inequities in funding that resulted in inadequate physical plants, equipment, and instructional resources. Trenholm High School was one of those valued segregated African-American schools. Trenholm High School (grades 1-12) was a small school (maximum of 500 students) located in the small Northwest Alabama town of Tuscumbia. The school was established in 1877 by the African-American community. It was closed by court order in 1969 and all the buildings were demolished. This case study is described in detail in our earlier work, *Creating Caring and Nurturing Educational Environments for African-American Children* (Morris & Morris, 2000).

The Trenholm High School community believed that seven Cs contributed to their school being a good school. They were: competence, caring, character, commitment, curriculum, community, and cooperation. First, the community described their teachers as being competent, smart professionals who knew their subject matter well. Second, the teachers cared about their students. Students and parents indicated that teachers demonstrated this caring by having high expectations of their students and creating a family atmosphere in the school and classroom. Third, students reported that selected favorite teachers at Trenholm had distinctive and memorable character. Some of the attributes of these teachers identified

by former students included fairness, making learning fun, "putting the fear of the Lord" in you, no-nonsense, and exhibiting "tough love." Students also described teachers as inspiring them to think about careers that some perceived to be out of reach of young African-American children, welcoming students in their homes, and respecting all children regardless of their family backgrounds (Morris & Morris, 2000).

Fourth, the Trenholm school community described the teachers as dedicated and committed to their chosen profession. Teachers were willing to come early and stay late at the school building to meet the needs of students and their families. Teachers continued their commitment to students and their families outside the classroom by taking leadership positions in social and civic club efforts that benefitted the entire African-American community. Fifth, Trenholm graduates reported that the school offered a wide range of courses and extra-curricular activities.

Sixth, Trenholm graduates indicated that strong parental and community support and involvement contributed to their school's success. In addition to the traditional PTA type activities, parents and community residents supported the school and school age children through a variety of school related organizations. Finally, as a seventh factor, African-American citizens worked cooperatively for more than ninety years to raise money to purchase land, equipment, books, classroom supplies, band and athletic uniforms, and renovate buildings (Morris & Morris, 2000).

Many of the factors that characterized this successful segregated school for African-American children appear as recommendations in current educational literature for improving the educational outcomes for African-American children and other children of color. For example, recruiting, preparing, and retaining caring, competent, and quality teachers for every child was noted as the most important ingredient for improving urban schools — schools in which African-American children are increasingly concentrated (Report, 1996). The Trenholm community reported that caring, competent, and dedicated (committed) teachers were the most important factor that contributed to their school's success. Graduates of Trenholm indicated that their favorite teachers: a) maintained orderly classrooms (Dempsey & Noblit, 1996; Henderson, Greenberg, Schneider, Uribe, & Verdugo, 1996; Sowell, 1976; Walker, 1996); b) cared about the students (Dempsey & Noblit, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Walker, 1996); c) were fair (Henderson, et al., 1996); d) were competent in their subject areas (Foster, 1997; Sowell, 1976; Walker, 1996); e) made practical applications of subject matter (Dempsey & Noblit; Hauser & Thompson, 1996); f) had high expectations of students (Dempsey & Noblit, 1996; Walker, 1996); and g) made learning fun.

In addition to the kinds of teachers noted above, the current educational literature communicates that we need the following to improve the educational outcomes for our children: a) small school environments (maximum of 350 for elementary and 500 for high schools) (Fine, 1999; Gladden, 1999); b) strong leadership (Carter, 2000); c) a rigorous curriculum (Wolk, 2000), d) a wide range of extracurricular activities (Bergstrom & O'Brien, 2001; McLaughlin, 2001; Miller, 2001); e) strong parental and community support and involvement (Chavkin, 1993; Moles, 1993; Hoerr, 2000); and f) ample instructional supplies, equipment, and physical plants to support the curriculum (Wolk, 2000). Findings from the case study indicated that Trenholm High School was characterized by the first five items noted above, but had inadequate instructional supplies, equipment, and a poor physical plant throughout its more than ninety years of operation. All of this took place under the watchful eye and control of a white school board that provided differently for its segregated white schools in the same town (Morris & Morris, 2000).

III. AFTER *BROWN:* GAINS AND LOSSES

In many southern states and school districts, school officials made no attempt to desegregate public schools following the *Brown I* or *Brown II* decision until the NAACP filed suits. Rather, state and local districts moved with "all deliberate speed" to continue the legacy of segregated public schools by moving quickly to build better facilities for African-American students, and closing public schools, and using state grants to pay for the private education of white students. This was the pattern in many Alabama communities. For example, in 1955, Senator Engelhardt from Macon County (home of Tuskegee University and county with the largest African-American population in the state) declared: "We will have segregation in the public schools of Macon County or there will be no public schools" (Yarbrough, 1981, p. 91). For some time, public schools in Macon County were closed and white students went to free private schools financed with state grants (Alternate Segregation, 1955). In Tuscumbia, Alabama, the focus of this case study, the school board decided to acquire additional land to build a permanent twelve grade center for African-American children on their side of town, instead of moving with "all deliberate speed" to desegregate the public schools in the community. Construction projects included a new gymnasium in 1960 and separate new elementary schools for African-American and white students by 1966 (Morris & Morris, 2000).

The desegregation of schools in Alabama was a much dramatized affair, primarily because of the antics of Governor George Wallace. Just

five months before his infamous "stand in the schoolhouse door" at the University of Alabama on June 11, 1963, he communicated in his inaugural address: "In the name of the greatest people that have ever trod this earth, I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny. And I say, Segregation now! Segregation tomorrow! Segregation forever!" While his stand appeared to be an impromptu one, a reaction to the events of the day to stop the enrollment of Vivian Malone and James Hood at the university, documentation shows that this plan to make the stand and then step aside had been agreed to by the governor, university officials, President John F. Kennedy, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and the two students. So the governor made his statement, stepped aside, and the two students registered for classes. There was no violence as had been at Ole Miss when James Meredith enrolled as the first African-American student one year earlier in 1962 (Bauer, 1977; Dr. Rose's Stand, 1979; Yarbrough, 1981). Bauer (1977) reported that Ole Miss suffered a serious loss of faculty and an estimated fifty percent decline in the number of out-of-state students paying tuition. The officials at the University of Alabama planned carefully to avoid this state of affairs. African-American students were admitted to the University of Alabama at Huntsville and Florence State College in summer and fall semesters of 1963. The first African-American students who enrolled at each of the state colleges were required to file suit before being allowed to enroll (Morris & Morris, 2000).

The highly publicized "stand in the school house door" by Governor George C. Wallace precipitated some rapid changes in the desegregation of public schools in Alabama:

> By Fall of 1963, the walls of segregated public schools in Alabama were beginning to crumble. Attorney Fred D. Gray filed a suit, *Lee v. Macon*, on behalf of 126 students to desegregate Tuskegee, Alabama, high schools. This suit eventually led to the desegregation of all public schools, colleges and educational institutions. . . . On August 13, 1963, Judge Frank Johnson ordered the desegregation of schools in Macon County, Birmingham, and Mobile. Huntsville had already adopted a voluntary school desegregation plan. In 1964, the Alabama Supreme Court banned further financing of private segregated schools (Morris & Morris, 2000, p. 122).

Governor Wallace's public actions were likely the major factor in desegregating public schools in Alabama earlier than any other state in the

Deep South. Alabama Congressman William Dickinson affirmed this belief:

> George [Wallace] did more to bring about what he professed to oppose than any other three people I can name. Standing in the schoolhouse door — well, that gave him nationwide attention. But it sure did integrate our schools faster than any other state in the South. And this adamant, defiant attitude on the Selma March thing — whatever point they were trying to make, George just made it for 'em (Yarbrough, 1981, p. 124).

Tuscumbia City Schools did not implement a school desegregation plan (Freedom of Choice) until 1965, eleven years after the Supreme Court issued the *Brown* decision. The school board adopted a desegregation plan only a few days after the federal government threatened to pull federal funds from districts that failed to desegregate their schools. While there were no outward signs of problems associated with the desegregation of schools in Tuscumbia in September 1965, African-American parents and students experienced a number of problems that interfered with students' abilities to focus on educational tasks. No one stood in the schoolhouse door to prevent the African-American students from enrolling at the previously all-white schools or stood in front of the building to call them names. Nor were National Guard troops needed to ensure their safety. However, parents and students believed that racial discrimination was practiced by white students in their refusal to sit next to African-American students in class, through "accidental/intentional" bumping and hitting in the hallways and in physical education classes, and in the use of derogatory names by both teachers and students (Morris & Morris, 2002a).

Parents could no longer exercise their strong leadership in support of school activities through the PTA as they had at Trenholm. A previous principal, because of conflicts among the membership, had disbanded the PTA at Deshler High School. And because of the "new rules" for participating in school clubs and other extra curricular activities, African-American students became primarily followers, rather than leaders, while some chose not to participate at all (Morris & Morris, 2000).

The lack of positive teacher-student and student-student relationships, limited involvement in extracurricular activities, and decreased involvement of African-American families and community in the life of the school were some of the "invisible" factors that affected the ability of both African-American and white students to focus on educational tasks. Thus, these factors also affected the quality of education each student received in the desegregated setting. This environment inhibited students

and kept them from reaching their maximum potential. This is certainly not what African-American parents and children expected when schools were desegregated (Morris & Morris, 2000).

African-American parents felt that their children were punished unfairly, were discouraged in using their talents, and that parents and their children were treated with hostility. African-American students felt that some teachers were insensitive in the manner in which they handled classroom topics related to the history and experiences of African-Americans. They also felt that African-American students had to prove their worth and their abilities while other students did not. When they did prove their worth, they were considered to be "unusual" or, as one student said, a "novelty" among their race. While these students survived the experience, they never felt that they "fit in" or felt safe and secure as they had at Trenholm High School (Morris & Morris, 2000).

The social and emotional losses of desegregation have not often been weighed as critical factors in the ultimate goal of academic achievement. However, many adults and children were emotionally affected by desegregation (Peebles, 2000). In the desegregated school, African-American students believed to a great degree they no longer had the caring teachers who were present at Trenholm. Members of the Trenholm High School community indicated that they felt angry, bad, cheated, defeated, depressed, devastated, disregarded, hurt, remorseful, robbed, speechless, surprised, confused, shocked, and unhappy when they learned that the school building had been torn down. Many African-American citizens showed characteristics commonly associated with grief and mourning for a lost person upon learning that the Trenholm buildings had been demolished (Morris, 1993). Their reactions were not unlike the feelings of loss expressed by urban dwellers displaced from their homes to make way for urban renewal. In addition, the African-American community lost their school colors, symbols, and mascot. They had rallied around these symbols for nearly ninety years. With desegregation, there was no longer the maroon and gold of the Trenholm Wildcats, but the red and white of the Deshler Tigers (Morris & Morris, 2000). While African-American children were able to attend classes in a spacious, well-equipped building, with adequate books and materials and an expanded curriculum, there were many losses affecting their ability to achieve a quality education. Willie (as cited in Hendrie, 2000) communicated what many African-Americans felt in the Trenholm High School community: "Whites took the concept of integration and hijacked it. Furthermore, they dropped the educational components that Blacks had assumed would go hand in hand with integration. It was like turning to the fox that had been stealing the

chickens and then saying, 'Fox, develop a plan to secure the chicken house'" (p. 72).

IV. THE DREAM DENIED

The achievement gap between African-American and white students still persists nearly fifty years after the 1954 *Brown* court held that separate schools for African-Americans were "inherently unequal" (Hendrie, 2000). A study by Orfield and Gordon (2001) confirmed that while schools in the South are more desegregated than they were the years immediately following *Brown*, resegregation of schools in both north and South is accelerating. Orfield warned in an earlier report "there is no evidence that separate but equal works any more than it did a century ago" (Hendrie, 2000, p. 73). At the beginning of a new century, race and class still matter in this country (Fine, 2000; McNeil, 2000; Ingersoll, 2000; Wolk, 2000).

The resegregation of schools in this country was no accident. Kluger (2004) in his book *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Brown Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality* summarizes some of the major political, social, and legal forces that accelerated the resegregation of schools since the early 1970s and undermined the promise of *Brown*. Just as politicians and state and local school districts (with the help of the courts) moved to maintain segregated schools following the *Brown Decisions*, they also seized opportunities with "all deliberate speed" to resegregate public schools when the social and political climate was ripe to do so.

In the twenty-first century, many urban public schools, especially in high poverty communities with a majority of African-American students enrolled, are characterized as having: a) large numbers of teachers uncertified or teaching out of their field of training; b) disengaged teachers waiting for an assignment at a "better school"; c) overcrowded, dilapidated, and unsafe buildings; d) limited curriculum and extracurricular activities; and e) inadequate instructional resources and equipment (Ascher, 1991; Crosby, 1999; Horn, 1999; Jackson, 1999; Morris, 1999). A more recent report (Carroll, Fulton, Abercrombie, & Yoon, 2004) also finds that fifty years after *Brown*, we still have a two-tiered education system, one for children who live in more affluent communities and a second for those schools serving large numbers of low income students and students of color. The findings from surveys of teachers in California, Wisconsin, and New York reveal that schools serving low-income students of color have:

1.   Higher numbers of uncredentialed teachers;
2.   An insufficient number of teachers qualified to prepare students for high stakes tests;
3.   Serious teacher turnover problems;
4.   Unfilled teacher vacancies and large numbers of substitute teachers;
5.   Low levels of parental involvement;
6.   Inadequate physical facilities;
7.   Evidence of vermin (cockroaches, mice, and rats) in school buildings;
8.   Dirty, closed, or inoperative student bathrooms;
9.   Inadequate textbooks and materials for students to use in class or to take home;
10.   Inadequate computers and limited science equipment and materials; and
11.   Higher personal expenditures to compensate for insufficient classroom materials and supplies (p. 5).

While we have much to do in this country to improve the conditions of schools serving children from families of low-income, African-American, and other children of color, many changes are evident in this country fifty years after the *Brown* decision, including changes in education. Kluger (2004) states:

Fifty years after *Brown*, overt displays of bigotry were no longer socially, politically, or legally excusable. And a black presence beyond tokenism had been established and was thriving almost everywhere in American society to an extent unimaginable half a century earlier — on every college campus, in corporate towers, on job sites at all skill levels, in public service up to and including the highest reaches of government, throughout the U.S. military, and, most visibly, in the arts, entertainment, and sports worlds, where stellar black performers abounded. Yet, it was equally true that in their private lives and social contacts, white and black Americans still lived mostly apart, and many blacks felt that whites, in their hearts and minds, still viewed them by and large as their moral and intellectual inferiors and largely to blame for the nation's turbulent inner-city culture of drugs, violence, and physical and spiritual decay (pp. 752-753).

V. LESSONS LEARNED: MAKING THE PROMISE OF *BROWN* A REALITY

It is very clear that for many African-American children in this country, the promise of *Brown* is not a reality. What characteristics of the valued segregated African-American schools may be helpful as we attempt to change our school system to meet the promise of *Brown*? Lessons learned from our earlier work, *The Price They Paid* (Morris & Morris, 2002) will be used as a framework for this discussion.

A. *Lesson 1*

African-American communities provided a good education for their children long before the 1954 *Brown* decision and school desegregation. African-American citizens in Tuscumbia established the Osborne Academy in 1877. It was renamed Trenholm High School in 1921 and closed in 1969. Trenholm High was one of the valued segregated schools that provided a good education for African-American children both before and after *Brown*. This school for African-American children possessed many of the characteristics outlined in current educational literature (Morris & Morris, 2002b): a) caring, competent, and committed teachers; b) small school environments; c) rigorous curriculum; d) extra curricular activities; e) strong family and community involvement; f) strong leadership; and g) orderly classrooms. However, Trenholm and other valued segregated African-American schools often lacked two important factors: an adequate physical plant and adequate supplies and equipment. Fifty years following the *Brown* decision, this state of affairs continues to exist in many schools where the majority of the students are African-American.

B. *Lesson 2*

The promises of equality of educational opportunities for African-American children are not ensured merely by closing poorly equipped, segregated school buildings and allowing African-American children to sit next to white children in well-equipped, desegregated, formerly all-white school buildings. This case study of Trenholm High School and the recent report cards issued by states, using the No Child Left Behind guidelines, communicate very clearly that even in "blue ribbon schools," where the average achievement of students is high, African-American and other students of color, special needs students, and children from low-income families are not achieving at the same levels of their white peers on standardized tests. African-American citizens in the Trenholm High community indicated that the desegregated school had an adequate physical plant and supplies and equipment, but lacked: a) caring,

competent, and committed teachers; and b) strong family and community involvement in the life of the school.

C. *Lesson 3*

Relationships can mean everything in improving the academic achievement of African-American children. Small school environments offer great promise for promoting positive relationships between teachers and their students. Students and teachers in the Trenholm High School community were neighbors. They attended the same churches, grocery stores, and social events in the community. The student were playmates and classmates of their teachers' and principals' children. Their teachers and parents were friends and belonged to some of the same social and civic clubs in the community. This is rare in most communities today.

Ifill-Lynch (1998) noted that "the principles of small schools, in which teachers and children know each other well is good for all children" (p. 48). A commonality in the small high school is powerful relationships (Ark & Wagner, 2000). They found that the small schools they visited "were designed around relationships between the students and the teachers, and the relationships among the adults in the school" (p. 50). These schools boast nearly one hundred percent completion and college acceptance rates. Every student is connected to an adult in the building. Gladden (1998) found that students in small schools are more involved in extra curricular activities, are suspended less often, feel safer at school, use drugs less often, and are truant less often than students in larger schools. Trenholm High School and many valued segregated African-American schools met the enrollment criteria of a small school, i.e., not more than 350 at the elementary level and 500 at the high school level (Fine, 1999).

D. *Lesson 4*

What we need most to improve academic achievement in America is a caring, competent, and qualified teacher in every classroom. How do we prepare and retain these kinds of teachers in schools that enroll African-American students? Where do we begin? First we must make certain that preservice teachers are enrolled in high quality preparation programs that ensure that they:

1.   Possess a deep understanding of the subjects they teach;
2.   Evidence a firm understanding of how students learn;
3.   Demonstrate the teaching skills necessary to help *all* (emphasis added) students achieve high standards;
4.   Create a positive learning environment;

5.   Use a variety of assessment strategies to diagnose and respond to individual learning needs;
6.   Demonstrate and integrate modern technology into the school curriculum to support student learning;
7.   Collaborate with colleagues, parents and community members, and other educators to improve student learning;
8.   Reflect on their practice to improve future teaching and student achievement;
9.   Pursue professional growth in both content and pedagogy; and
10. Instill a passion for learning in their students (Report, 2003, p. 7).

One of the characteristics of highly effective teachers identified as very critical in our case study and in the study of valued segregated African-American schools was the attribute of *caring*. This characteristic of quality teachers began to appear often in mainstream teacher education literature in the 1990s and has become a mainstay in descriptions of highly qualified teachers in the twenty-first century. Gay (2000) described the characteristics of both caring and uncaring teachers. She stated:

> Caring teachers are distinguished by their high performance expectations, advocacy, and empowerment of students as well as by their use of pedagogical practices that facilitate success. The reverse is true for those who are noncaring. Their attitudes and behaviors take the form of low expectations, personal distance and disaffiliation from students, and instructional behaviors that limit student achievement. Just as caring is a foundational pillar of effective teaching and learning, the lack of it produces inequities in educational opportunities and achievement outcomes for ethnically different students (p. 62).

Completing a high quality teacher preparation program is only the first step in enabling novice teachers to become highly qualified teachers of African-American children and other children of color. Second, during the recruitment process, new teachers should be interviewed by the principal, existing teachers, and parents. The new teachers should have an opportunity to tour the premises in order to make certain that a particular school is the right match. Such a match cannot be made if a teacher is interviewed and hired by the district's human resources office and assigned to a school. This also means that prospective employees should be interviewed in more than one school setting in order to find the most appropriate match (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

Once new teachers are hired, they must be engaged in a high quality induction and mentoring program that ensures that they will be retained and able to move toward being a highly effective master teacher. One of the most successful induction and mentoring programs is the model implemented by the New Teacher Center (NTC) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where they have maintained a teacher retention rate of 94% as compared to the national average of 50% (Villar & Bloom, 2004). This induction model is not a "buddy system" where a veteran teacher merely checks on a novice teacher occasionally and asks: "How are you doing?" This often means providing only emotional support (which is very important) with little attention given to classroom instruction. But in the NTC model, veteran exemplary teachers are released full-time to provide intensive support to 12-15 beginning teachers over a two-year period. These mentors meet with each beginning teacher from 1.5 to 2 hours weekly to provide assistance with teaching strategies, lesson planning, and identification of curriculum resources. They also help new teachers to establish professional learning goals, conduct classroom observations, offer teaching demonstrations, coach teachers in methods and student and parent interactions, *and* provide emotional support.

Villar and Bloom assessed the impact of the NTC mentoring and induction program student achievement gains in classrooms of new teachers participating in the NTC program compared to gains in classrooms of non-participating new teachers, mid-career teachers, and veteran teachers. Students in NTC classrooms demonstrated achievement gains approaching those of the mid-career teachers' classrooms, surpassed those of students assigned to veteran teachers, and far-surpassed those in classrooms of new teachers who did not participate in the NTC program. This is the kind of induction and mentoring program that is needed in schools that enroll African-American children.

Principals and veteran teachers at the school site are critically important in ensuring that new teachers stay in the profession, especially at schools with high enrollments of African-American children, other children of color, and children from low-income families. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) note that in order to retain new teachers in the profession, school leaders must: "ensure that new teachers have an appropriate assignment and a manageable workload, that they have sufficient resources with which to teach, that their principals and fellow teachers maintain a stable school and orderly work environment, and that they can count on colleagues for advice and support" (p. 606). Lastly, top level school district officials, college administrators, state department education personnel and local, state, and federal policymakers must be willing to allocate the resources that are required to support the initiatives

necessary to ensure that the promise of *Brown* is a reality in schools for all children.

In *Fifty Years After Brown v. Board of Education*, Carroll, Fulton, Abercrombie, and Yoon (2004) made some similar recommendations as reported in our lessons learned. They listed the things that we must do as a nation to make the promise of *Brown* a reality for all children in all our communities:

1. Acknowledge unequal school conditions and marshall the political will to seek solutions;
2. Listen to what teachers and students tell us about conditions in their schools;
3. Establish school standards that sustain quality teaching and learning for every child;
4. Establish funding adequacy formulas based on per-pupil needs in lieu of per-pupil averages;
5. Use better data to report on the relationship between school conditions and student performance;
6. Hire well-qualified teachers and principals, support them, and reward them for their performance; and
7. Hold officials publicly accountable for keeping the promise of educational equity (p. 6).

In a recent study, Jerome Morris (2004) reports on his investigation of two predominately African-American elementary schools in low-income urban communities that are very successful in educating their students. What is very interesting about his findings is that the two successful schools that he studied (in 1994-1997 and 1999-2002) have some of the same characteristics as the valued segregated African-American schools that existed before *Brown*, e.g., school personnel reaching out to families, intergenerational and cultural bonding, significant presence of black teachers in the schools, African-American principals serving as cultural and academic leaders in the community, and successful African-American schools as pillars in black communities.

We had many successful schools for African-American children before *Brown*, and we have some in the twenty-first century, but not nearly enough. We know enough to ensure an equitable education for all children in this country, and we have the financial resources to support the needs of our schools. The question is: Do we have the will to make the promise of *Brown* a reality in this country? Will it take fifty more years to attain that goal? We cannot afford to wait!

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