

1612 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION AMENDMENTS

A school district in Paducah, which still had sixty percent of its Negro students in segregated schools last year, will have no schools identifiable by race this fall.

All students in rural Trigg County will attend desegregated schools this fall. Last year more than sixty percent of the county's Negro students were in segregated schools. One fourth of the Trigg County population is Negro.

Some faculty desegregation has taken place in all Kentucky districts, although more remains to be done in this area. The State has undertaken a number of projects at least partially financed by Federal funds to prepare its schools, teachers, and pupils for an effective desegregated education program.

Tennessee

A year-at-a-time desegregation plan in Kingsport, Tennessee, 11 years in the planning stage, was discarded before it was initiated this year. Instead, the school system built and desegregated a new high school. In addition, two junior high schools and an elementary school were desegregated. Seventeen of the 19 Negro teachers are assigned to biracial schools.

The staff found that although the Weakley schools had adopted a freedom of choice plan for student attendance, only one Negro child out of 400 had selected a white school. Investigation indicated that Negro parents had been discouraged by the superintendent of the Negro schools, who believed his job to be in jeopardy.

The Office of Education recommended closing of the Negro elementary schools, all of which were small and inadequate. The suggestion was accepted by school administrators and Weakley schools will be fully desegregated in September.

The elementary schools in Weakley County, Tennessee, in the vicinity of KKK activity, will be totally desegregated this fall, partly as a result of a compliance review by the Office of Education staff members.

THE SOUTH

Noticeable gains have also been achieved in desegregation efforts in the Deep South.

Arkansas

The Plum Bayou school district (160 white and 230 Negro students) adopted a free choice enrollment plan that will place half of the Negro students in formerly white schools this fall.

The Beedeville school district, preparing to close its Negro school next year, will enroll three-fourths of its Negro students in formerly white schools this fall. The district has 600 students, with almost a 50-50 ratio of white and Negro students.

In the Lewisville school district, a free choice enrollment plan this year resulted in only four of 424 Negro students choosing to attend white schools. Checking into complaints that Negro parents were afraid of reprisals if they placed their children in white schools, Office of Education staff members assisted the school administration in working out a plan which will result in approximately 15 percent of the Negro students being desegregated. At least one Negro teacher will be assigned to each white school. Lewisville is only 20 miles from the Louisiana border where school districts show little progress.

Florida

A number of Florida counties are progressing satisfactorily in efforts to comply with the Guidelines. In Dade County, 15,000 Negro students will attend classes with white students. Monroe County is desegregating all its schools. Gilchrist and Hardee Counties will enroll almost half of their Negro students in formerly white schools this year. Sixteen percent of the Negro students in Marion and Martin Counties will attend desegregated schools.

Florida is the only state in the Deep South to our knowledge in which the State superintendent has stated in public that the dual school systems must be eliminated.