Rosenwald Schools of North Carolina
An Interpretive Plan

Robert Conrad
North Carolina State University
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By

Robert Conrad

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Approved by advisory committee:

Gary Blank, Co-Chair
Myron Floyd, Co-Chair
Kofi Boone
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INTRODUCTION

The history of public education in the US can be divided into two eras: what happened before and what happened after the Brown v. Board of Topeka, KS Supreme Court decision. In the "pre-Brown" era public education was provided along a color line. Blacks and whites were schooled separately, under a system of sanctioned segregation. The Plessy v. Ferguson decision authorized a legal system of segregation of public facilities (e.g., schools, libraries, entertainment venues, etc.) and limited opportunities of Blacks in the United States (B. Thomas (Ed.), 1997, p. vii). The decision in this case is also said to be "responsible for states gaining the courage to pass Jim Crow laws" (B. Thomas (Ed.), 1997, p. 169). As a result of segregation, Blacks were forced to develop businesses that would serve their particular needs (Frazier, 1957 p 53-59); places of entertainment for their leisure (Woodard, 1988), churches for their worship (Frazier, 1957, p. 87-90), as well as schools for their own education (Frazier, 1957, p. 60). Around the country, artifacts of this era exist in the form of architecture (e.g., historic buildings), towns, cities, and communities (e.g., Brooklyn, IL), and oral histories (Cha-Jua, 2000, p. 1-5).

To many, these segregated places are harsh reminders of the racist history of our country. Yet to others, they are valuable cultural resources that must be saved. By preserving these places, we are able to look back at the struggles and triumphs of past generations and gain an understanding of a time and place in which we have never lived. Culturally significant historic sites are of particular importance in preservation efforts, since these are physical symbols of culture.

Significant cultural resources are protected as a matter of federal and state policy. The American Antiquities Act of 1906, the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 are all examples of the American governments’ efforts to protect culturally significant sites. The American Antiquities Act of 1906 was enacted in efforts to protect "historic or prehistoric ruin or monument, or any object of antiquity, situated on lands owned or controlled by the Government of the United States". This act authorizes the President "to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest" ("The american antiquities," 1906). Similar to the Antiquities Act, The Historic Sites Act of 1935 gives the Secretary of Interior, through the National Parks Service, the authority "to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings and objects."
of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States" ("Historic sites act," 1935). The Historic Sites Act also “authorized cooperation with state and local governments in identifying, preserving, and interpreting historic sites” (Sellars, 1997, p. 137).

When creating the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), Congress also took cultural resources into consideration. In Section 101 [42 USC § 4331] (b) of the NEPA Statute, it states "In order to carry out the policy set forth in this Act, it is the continuing responsibility of the Federal Government to use all practicable means, consistent with other essential considerations of national policy, to improve and coordinate Federal plans, functions, programs, and resources to the end that the Nation may (2.) assure for all Americans safe, healthful, productive, and aesthetically and culturally pleasing surroundings; (4.) preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and maintain, wherever possible, an environment which supports diversity, and variety of individual choice" ("The nepa statute," 1969).

An example of a federal governmental agency assisting in cultural preservation is the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since 1988, the Trust publishes its list of "America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places" ("About the 11," n.d.) The list is published in hopes of highlighting places across the country that are threatened in some way, whether that be lack of funding, inappropriate development or insensitive public policy. By publishing this list, the Trust hopes to "save the places that tell America's story." Sites on the list can range from churches, homes, neighborhoods, schools, hospitals, and land formations ("America's 11 most," n.d.). In 2002 the Trust listed Rosenwald Schools as one of these places (Brown, 2003). To be recognized on the list, places must be nominated. Being identified on this list brought much needed attention to these historic and culturally significant schools that can be found across the southern United States. However the public is largely unaware of the historic, cultural, and social significance of Rosenwald Schools. This is unfortunate because Rosenwald School sites are in danger of being lost if people remain unaware of the schools and their significance.

Therefore, the purpose of my project was to develop an interpretive plan for Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina. The plan will provide themes, examples of interpretive media, and basic guidelines for interpreting the schools for public audiences. It will also serve as a template to be used by national or state agencies, such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation or the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (HPO), other schools or even other states, to create similar products. Ultimately, the goal of this project would be to raise awareness of Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina and eventually aide in the formation of an overall management plan for the schools.
Rosenwald Schools are the brainchild of Booker T. Washington, founder and first president of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, now known as the Tuskegee University. Washington was born into slavery in 1856; he later went on to become an educator and renowned African American leader. He urged his fellow African Americans to set aside their efforts to gain civil rights and learn skills that would help them become economically stable (Karwatka, 2010, p. 10-11). Washington also placed great importance on industrial education and training (Willink, 2009, p. 121). His ideas were especially welcomed by Whites because Washington’s philosophy advocated accommodating white oppression, but his ideas would be later challenged by W.E.B DuBois who advocating challenging society and demanding civil rights. Washington became a sort of mediator between African American and White communities and was often trusted with identifying individuals or groups worth receiving governmental or philanthropic funds (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 1-2).

Along with Washington's self-help ideas, he also had other goals for African Americans in the South. One of the goals was...
that safe school buildings be accessible to Black children, particularly those living in rural areas. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most counties did not have designated school buildings for African Americans. Many children were being taught in churches, lodge halls and other dilapidated buildings within their communities. Washington was committed to working with white philanthropists and others to improve education facilities for Blacks. His efforts and ideas attracted the attention of one prominent philanthropist. Their partnership would leave a lasting mark on the Southern landscape (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 2-3).

Julius Rosenwald was one of the great philanthropists of his time (Belton). The president of Sears, Roebuck and Company and a very wealthy man, Rosenwald wanted to use his wealth for good (Deutsch, 2011, p. 1). He especially wanted to help the European Jewish and African American communities (Ascoli, 2006, p 92-104). Rosenwald was very interested in Washington's self-help ideas for Black Southerners (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 1). Before the two had even met, Rosenwald had read several of Washington's books, which helped spark his interest in charitable works for Blacks. Rosenwald was particularly interested in African American education in the South, because he realized early on, that the need for well built educational facilities was not being met (Embree & Waxman, 1949, p. 38). After having helped fund YMCA projects in African American a few communities, Rosenwald and Washington met in May of 1911 and soon after, Rosenwald became a trustee of the Tuskegee Institute (Belton, n.d.).

In 1912, on his 50th birthday, Rosenwald celebrated by donating monetary gifts to several philanthropic causes. Among the recipients was Tuskegee Institute. Rosenwald donated $25,000 to help fund a matching grant program for African American teacher-training facilities, which provided industrial curriculum, which was often referred to as the Tuskegee Model since the idea to provide this type of training for students stemmed from Washington and his Tuskegee Institute. After distributing the funds to the various facilities, Washington found a $2,800 surplus from Rosenwald's donation. In September of the same year, Washington asked Rosenwald's permission to
construction of the six original Rosenwald Schools (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 2; Hoffschwelle, 2006, p. 1).

![Photograph of the one of the original Rosenwald Schools, Big Zion School, located in Montgomery County, Alabama (Fisk, 2001).](image)

The Rosenwald rural school building program began in 1912 and after seeing the success of the first six schools, in 1914, Rosenwald donated $30,000 towards the construction of 100 additional schools, followed by funding for an additional 200 school buildings in 1916 (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 1-3). By the time of Washington's death in 1915, funds had been provided to build over 80 rural Black schools in three states (Belton, n. d.). In the beginning, each school could receive a maximum of $300 towards construction (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 2-3), but later in the program, this amount would increase significantly (Fisk, 2001). Local communities were also responsible for providing funds to cover the construction costs, often up to 25% (Stacks, n. d.). These schools were also the first of their kind, among White or Black schools, to have such features as sanitary privies and strategically placed windows to harness the sun to ensure proper lighting of classrooms, an amazing fact, considering these schools were constructed before the Brown v. Board of Education era (Hoffschwelle, 2003).

In 1917, the school building project was placed under the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Rosenwald believed that philanthropists should use their grants as seed money, which would encourage individuals and local governments to take responsibility for the services needed within their communities. The Julius Rosenwald Fund's staff could be found in two places. A small Chicago based staff oversaw the Rosenwald Fund's early operation, while a committee of Tuskegee executive officers oversaw the construction program (Hoffschwelle, 2003, p. 2-3).

At its end in 1932, the fund had helped finance the construction of over five thousand Rosenwald school buildings across fifteen southern states. After only twenty years of giving, one in every five Black school in the South was a Rosenwald School. Rosenwald Schools easily outnumbered all of the African American schools that had been built prior to the inception of building program (Hoffschwelle, 2006, p. 1). Despite the overall number of African American schools that the Rosenwald Fund had helped create, in North Carolina many believed it had failed to have the long-term effect on education for African American students. Those working for the fund were discouraged by studies that showed the education provided for black students was falling even further behind what was provided for their white counterparts. "While the state’s
investment in black education increased from $1.28 million in 1919 to $4.53 million in 1927, the investment in white education jumped from $10.69 million to $50.05 million in the same time period” (Staino, 2003, p. 15). Although the numbers were discouraging, today Rosenwald Schools are believed to have helped jump-start changes within state’s education system that came later that century. The program showed the importance that African American communities placed on public education, but also demonstrated the need for federal intervention for it to be successful (Staino, 2003, p. 16).

Today many Rosenwald Schools are gone. The school buildings that do remain, stand in the landscape as reminders of the South's sordid past, but also the African American’s quest for social mobility and self-improvement during the segregation era. Some schools that are still standing are used as community centers, agricultural buildings, storage and even homes. Yet, an even greater number are being slowly destroyed due to lack of maintenance and exposure to the elements (Hoffschwelle, 2006, p. 280).

**North Carolina Efforts**

According to the Fisk University Rosenwald Card Fund Database (2001), 831 Rosenwald buildings have been identified in the state of North Carolina. Not all are schools, some buildings were teacher housing, gymna-

Map showing the location of all Rosenwald Schools. Areas of high concentration are easy to identify from the map ("School buildings", n. d.).
siums or industrial buildings, but all used funding from the Rosenwald Fund to help with construction. With close to 800 Rosenwald Schools within its boundaries, North Carolina boasts the most Rosenwald Schools of any other state. It is also likely that there are more schools waiting to be rediscovered and identified (Brown, 2003).

The push for identification of Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina really started in 2000, when the HPO teamed up with the North Carolina Rosenwald Schools Community Project (Brown, 2003). According to their website, the HPO is responsible for carrying out state and federal preservation programs. It also “assists private citizens, private institutions, local governments, and agencies of state and federal government in the identification, evaluation, protection, and enhancement of properties significant in North Carolina history and archaeology” (“Overview of services,” n. d.). The North Carolina Rosenwald School Community Project is conducted by the Sankofa Center. The mission of the project is to “promote awareness of the public schools built in rural African American communities in the 1920s and 1930s using money from the Julius Rosenwald fund” (“North Carolina book,” n. d.). The groups focused their efforts on both the preservation of the physical structures as well as the cultural and historical significance of the buildings, to the state and nation. Some ways both entities attempted to carry out this effort through collecting oral and written histories, which allow them to uncover the stories of the students, teachers, administrators and communities who were involved with the creation and day to day activities of the schools. The HPO also organized a volunteer initiative, whose aim was to identify the location of Rosenwald Schools and assess the structure of the schools in locations where schools were still standing (Brown, 2003).

The HPO has assisted in getting schools placed on the National Register of Historic Places as well as identifying schools which may be eligible. The schools thought to be eligible are placed on the National Register Study List. Currently, there are 26 Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina that have been placed on the National Register, while 41 are thought to be potentially eligible and a score of other schools that have not yet been accessed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>Homes</th>
<th>Shops</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>153</td>
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<td>Mississippi</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>500</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>373</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,977</strong></td>
<td><strong>217</strong></td>
<td><strong>163</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,357</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table showing the distribution of Rosenwald Schools by state. Adapted from Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *Preserving Rosenwald Schools*, p. 7.
("North carolina rosenwald," 2011; “North carolina rosenwald,” 2011b). As shown in the table on the previous page, North Carolina has over 200 more schools than any other state.

The HPO's efforts are still ongoing, but lack of funding has slowed down the progress on identification of schools (Brown, 2003). Luckily, today Rosenwald schools are coming back into the spotlight. Organizations such as the Conservation Trust for North Carolina have taken on Rosenwald Schools as a project because they see the value in conserving places of such historic significance. They have been able to provide several internships to students interested in working to identify and ultimately preserve the schools, and in turn, are opening the eyes of a new generation to the Rosenwald school legacy (M. Allen, personal communication, Summer 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North Carolina Rosenwald Schools on the National Register of Historic Places</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ware Creek School (Beaufort County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atkins High School (Forsyth County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow Hill Colored High School (Greene County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. S. Brown School Auditorium (HertfordCounty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee County Training School (Lee County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billingsville School (Mecklenburg County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Park School (Moore County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model Practice School (Pasquotank County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty Hill School (Richmond County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walnut Cove Colored School (Stokes County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panther Branch School (Wake County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Matthews School (Wake County)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren County Training School (Warren County)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

("North carolina rosenwald," 2011)

The Princeton Graded School was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2005 (Fisk, 2001).

The Panther Branch School was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2001 (Fisk, 2001).
Rosenwald schools and their historical significance make up a vital part of our heritage. The schools stand as a symbol of African American struggle against and triumph over many obstacles and social barriers. Many challenges exist when it comes to the preservation of Rosenwald schools and their legacy. Before solutions can be found, we must first identify all of the challenges that the schools are currently facing.

Identifying Challenges

Perhaps the most obvious, and as mentioned earlier, is the lack of awareness among the American public that these schools even exist. A large community of individuals has been working for several decades to preserve the structures and stories surrounding them. Rosenwald schools are better known among the older generation of African Americans, but as for individuals of different races or ages, there is virtually no knowledge of their existence. In addition to lack of knowledge amongst the general public, there has also been virtually no interpretation of the schools in the state. By providing interpretation of the schools, individual stories of struggle and triumph can be shared, in hopes of strengthening the connection between the schools and the general public. Increasing awareness through interpretation could also promote tourism within the state, which would economically benefit local communities.

With so many Rosenwald schools scattered across the South, and since North Carolina has the most schools within its boundaries, simply identifying schools is yet another challenge. Rosenwald school buildings typically have a recognizable architectural style. However, a major that safe school buildings be accessible to Black children, particularly those living in problem with using this as an identification technique is that plans drawn up for the schools were also used widely to build White schools. Another challenge related to identification is that many of the old school buildings have been sold and moved from their original location. Alumni may have memories of a school that once stood in their community that has since disappeared, perhaps sold to a farmer for agricultural storage or repurposed as a home. Many people drive by old, dilapidated structures on a daily basis, not knowing that these could potentially be Rosenwald schools. Although the HPO has done its best to organize efforts to identify, document and photograph the schools, some still wait to be rediscovered.

Other challenges include lack of fund-
ing to undertake preservation and renovation, limited time to conduct oral histories due to increasing age of students who attended the schools and lack of idea sharing among preservationists. increasing age of students who attended the schools and lack of idea sharing among preservationists.

Finding Solutions

Several individual efforts have been completed or are underway, seeking to remedy these problems. One of the largest identification efforts to date has been conducted by Fisk University. The university currently houses the largest Rosenwald Schools repository in the nation and maintains a database of the schools.

The HPO has also conducted several statewide identification efforts with the aid of historians and volunteers. The office houses files on the majority of the Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina. The HPO is also instrumental in getting schools recognized on the National Register of Historic places, as well as many other positive activities involving the schools (Brown, 2003). The HPO provides much of the leadership statewide on issues pertaining to identification and preservation of Rosenwald sites.

Another organization, recently involved with Rosenwald Schools in NC is the Conservation Trust for North Carolina (CTNC). It is aiding the HPO in its identification efforts (“Saving nc’s rosenwald.” n. d.). They have also been able to hire several summer interns over the past few years, who have worked on various projects ranging from individual school sites to state-wide efforts. The Trust has worked closely with the HPO to help protect the schools. They are also hoping to form a state-wide network of individuals and groups with interest in or experience with Rosenwald Schools (M. Allen, personal communication, Summer 2011).

There are ongoing efforts statewide to protect and preserve Rosenwald Schools, yet there is still work to be done. Therefore, the purpose of my project is to develop an interpretive plan for Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina. The plan will serve as a template to be used individuals and organizations who are striving to further protect the schools. The ultimate goal of this project is to raise awareness of Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina and eventually aide in the formation of an overall management plan for the schools. To reach this goal, the following objectives were created:

1. Develop themes to interpret the significance of N.C. Newbold in relation to Rosenwald Schools, the Russell School and the Canetuck School.

   a.) Use National Park Service guide lines for "interpretive themes" as guidance (http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/eastern/meaningful_interpretation/mi2a.htm)
   b.) Conduct interviews to uncover
themes among many schools as well as school specific themes.
c.) Use historical research to uncover historical themes.
2. Design interpretive media to highlight specific stories regarding Rosenwald Schools.
a.) Compile historical images, which can later be used for media, and knowledge of existing artifacts, which could possibly be used in a museum exhibit in the future.
b.) Demonstrate how interpretive media could be used or duplicated by other schools.
c.) Create evaluation guidelines to help ensure the media meet their intended purpose.
3. Make recommendations for planning for visitor experiences to the sites.
a.) Focus on what visitors should take away.
b.) Ways to share the story with individuals with disabilities.
c.) Harnessing technology to tell the Rosenwald story.

METHODS

Several methods were employed to complete this project. These included short interviews, archival research and the design and creation of interpretive media.

Interviews were conducted with Claudia Stacks and Melanie Allen and were used to gain history and knowledgeable guidance for interpreting the schools. Claudia is an educator, filmmaker and historian who has worked with Rosenwald Schools in Pender County, NC. She also maintains a website which serves as an archive for oral histories, papers and photographs related to school history in Pender County. The interview with Claudia was conducted via telephone and focused on the history of the Canetuck School and the current and possible future uses of the Canetuck Community Center (formerly Canetuck School).

Melanie Allen is the Coordinator of the Conservation and Diversity Project for CTNC. Her experience with Rosenwald Schools has focused mainly on the Anderson School, located near Mars Hill, NC. The interview
with Melanie was conducted in person and focused mainly on the roll that CTNC has played in preserving the Rosenwald legacy, as well as identifying problems facing the schools. She also provided me with some information about N.C. Newbold and his importance to the schools.

Archival research was conducted through three sources. The Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database provided information about the funding of schools, as well as historic photographs of the schools. The Rosenwald School Files at the North Carolina State Archives provided specific information about the Russell School that was used in the second interpretive media example. Claudia Stacks’ Under the Kudzu archives were also used to obtain information and photographs specifically focused on the Canetuck School, which was used in the third interpretive media example.

Once the information was gathered, interpretive theme development began, which guided the creation of the interpretive media. Photographs and information were loaded into Photoshop and then strategically placed to create the media examples. The media took various forms and each is focused on reaching a particular audience.

Portrait of Mr. N.C. Newbold (“The educator biographies,” n. d.).

Top: Historic photograph of the Russell School in Durham County (Fisk, 2001).
Bottom: Historic photograph of the Canetuck School in Pender County (Fisk, 2001).
Interpretative themes are a crucial part of telling Rosenwald Schools' story. They provide the framework for creating visitor understanding and appreciation of each school and the Rosenwald legacy as a whole. Primary themes do not include everything that could possibly be interpreted. They simply provide a foundation, which can inspire targeted sub-themes and objectives. When these themes are used correctly, viewers should begin to understand the value and significance of the schools.

When developing themes and subthemes, consideration was given to different audiences. In his book, Interpreting Our Heritage, Freeman Tilden identifies six principles for interpretation, one of which applies directly to children. This principle states "Interpretation addressed to children (say, up to the age of twelve) should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program." (2007). Children and Adults are both important audiences to consider and special consideration was given to each. Another factor that is of major importance is where the viewer is coming from. The themes should be used to pique the interest of visitors and locals alike, since locals may see the interpretive media on a daily basis, while visitors may only see it once in their lifetime. Specific focus will be given to these different audiences in the examples that are provided later in this section.

The Interpretive Plan for Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina was developed around four primary interpretive themes. These four primary themes are meant to encompass a set of sub-themes that can be developed based on varying factors of each school. They can also be used broadly by an array of individuals and governmental agencies. Possible sub-themes are provided, along with specific examples. Sub-themes will be divided into interpretation of Rosenwald Schools nationally, as well as in North Carolina, but all examples will focus on the state of North Carolina or specific sites.

**History Behind the Themes**

When creating the interpretive themes, there are many different schools, programs and people that inspire the primary themes. In this section, background information will be provided on a few of these areas to provide context for when they are mentioned later in the text.
Canetuck School

The Canetuck School is located in Pender County, NC. The school officially opened its doors in 1921 and was built according to the two-teacher school plan on the "Nashville Plan East or West Facing". The total cost to build the school was $2700 (Stacks, n. d.). Of this amount, the local African American community contributed $1,226.00, public funds used provided $674, and the Rosenwald Fund contributed $800 (Fisk, 2001).

Today, the school still stands, but is now known as the Canetuck Community Center. The center provides classes and activities targeted at the local elderly community and many of the students who attended Canetuck when it was a school, still come to classes at the Community Center. The community center is also rented out for private functions (Stacks, personal communication, March 6, 2012). Exterior renovations have recently been completed and the addition of a wheelchair ramp and restrooms has made the space much more functional. The Canetuck School is said to be “one of the best one of the best preserved Rosenwald Schools in Pender County” (Stacks, n. d.).

Community School Plans

Cover of the Community School Plans, which were published in 1920 ("Rosenwald school plans," n. d.).

In 1920, some Rosenwald Fund staff members began to question the current management of the building program. They decided to hire Fletcher B. Dresslar, a professor of school hygiene and architecture at Nashville's George Peabody College for Teachers. They wanted Mr. Dresslar to assess how the current plans for the schools were functioning and the state of the structures. At the conclusion of his assessment, Dresslar found that the Tuskegee plans were adequate, but were not up to his standards in several areas including lighting, ventilation and sanitation.

Once Dresslar presented his findings to the staff at the Rosenwald Fund, He and
Samuel L. Smith, the new building program director, were put in charge of preparing new plans for the schools. These new plans came to be known as the Community School Plans. Some of the plans incorporated and built upon the Tuskegee designs and others mimicked plans that Dresslar and Smith had created for the Tennessee Department of Education (“Community school plans,” n. d.).

Jeanes Fund

Ms. Anna T. Jeanes survived all of the members of her family and inherited a large fortune. She was approached by both the principal of Hampton institute and Booker T. Washington about possible donations to their individual causes, but Anna felt that it was the small rural schools that needed the funds, so in 1907, she set aside 1 million dollars to foster rudimentary education in African-American rural schools. In her will she stated the goal of the program as being to "encourage moral influence and social refinement which shall promote peace in the land, and goodwill among men." The Negro Rural School Fund, Anna T. Jeanes Foundation was the formal name of the fund and it provided salaries for supervisors of Negro education until 1968. Those funded by the program came to be known as “Jeanes Supervisors” (“The jeanes fund,” n. d.). Many of these “Jeanes Supervisors” worked for Rosenwald Schools (“The first jeanes,” n. d.).

North Carolina Division of Negro Education

The Division of Negro Education was created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1921. The Division fell under the State Department of Public Instruction and had eight staff members (Belton, n. d.). Nathan Carter (N.C.) Newbold was very instrumental in the creation of the Division and served as the Director until 1948 (“Archives information circular,” 2002). There were also five administrators, three of which were black and two were white. They also had a full time secretary and two stenographers (Belton, n. d.). The staff worked closely with philanthropies such as the Jeanes and Rosenwald funds to secure funding for African American education in the state (“The educators biographies.” n. d.). The division also played a very important role in North Carolina being home to far more Rosenwald Schools than any other state (Belton, n. d.).

Russell School

The Russell School is a Rosenwald School located in Hillsborough, NC. The school was built in 1927 according to the two-
teacher plan. It was built on 2.25 acres of land that was donated by a member of the local community (“Russell school,” n. d.). The total cost to build the school was $3,695. Of this amount, the Rosenwald Fund provided $700, the Durham County school board gave $2,725 and the local African American community raised $270 (Fisk, 2001).

Today, the Russell School is the last Rosenwald School standing in Durham County (“Russell school,” n. d.). The school is owned by the Cain’s Chapel Baptist Church and community members have, once again, rallied around the school and are hoping to return it to its former glory. The group, who call themselves the “Friends of Russell,” hope to turn the school into a community center (North Carolina State Archives, Rosenwald Files).

“one of the best one of the best preserved Rosenwald Schools in Pender County” (Stacks, n. d.).

![Recent photography of the Russell School (Courtesy of Preservation Durham).](image1)

## Training Schools

The Rosenwald Training Schools were similar to the vocational schools of today. Types of training varied from school to school, but typical areas of training included carpentry, masonry, agriculture, animal husbandry, and landscaping for the boys, while girls were trained to become teachers or homemakers. Often, these schools were the only high schools available to African Americans and students would travel from many miles via crowded buses or wake up before dawn to walk to the schools (Stacks, n. d.).

One great example of the importance of these training schools to African American education is the Pender County Training School. The school opened in 1917 and by 1956, 25% of its graduates were college-bound. Not only is this an amazing accomplishment given the lack of college opportunities for African American students at this time, but Pender County is also a low-income area. Alumni from the school confirm that although the school did provide vocational training opportunities, the curriculum that had to be for graduation was geared towards college preparation (Stacks, n. d.).

![Photograph of the Pender County Training School while under construction (Stacks, n. d.).](image2)
**Tuskegee Plans**

The Tuskegee Institute prepared the first plans for Rosenwald buildings, which would later be known as the Tuskegee Plans. The plans were published in 1915 in a pamphlet entitled “The Negro Rural School and its Relation to the Community.” Two Tuskegee Professors, R.R. Taylor and W.A. Hazel created the plans. They included designs for a 1 teacher school and two designs for 5 teacher schools. They also created plans for an industrial building, privy, and two residences for teachers (“Rosenwald school plan,” n. d.).

![Diagram of Tuskegee Plans](image)

One of the original Tuskegee plans for an Industrial Building (“Rosenwald school plan,” n. d.).

**Theme 1**

Although the schools are names after Julius Rosenwald, many other individuals were also responsible for the creation of the schools and their success in the South. Countless men and women have had a major impact on the schools over the years, so when telling the story of Rosenwald Schools, it is important to recognize and commemorate these important people and their contribution to the Rosenwald legacy.

**Primary Theme:** Julius Rosenwald is not the only person who helped create and develop the Rosenwald Schools legacy.

Interpretation of this theme can help visitors better understand and appreciate:

- How the idea of Rosenwald Schools came to be.
- Who the key individuals were who played a part in the selection and distribution of funding to schools.
- The connection between the Jeanees Fund and Rosenwald Schools.
- The role that the North Carolina Division of Negro Education played in regards to Rosenwald Schools.
- The role that individual teachers or administrators played in the development of specific schools.
- And many other sub-themes specific to an area or school.

**Sub-theme** (National): Booker T. Washington and Julius Rosenwald team up to bring ideas to life.

**Sub-theme** (North Carolina): Nathan Carter (N.C.) Newbold, the Director of the Division of Negro Education, fought for equal educational opportunities in North Carolina.
This interpretive media example is based off of the subtheme “Nathan Carter (N.C.) Newbold fought for equal educational opportunities in North Carolina.” This interpretation is in the form of a mural, which is designed to commemorate the influence that N.C. Newbold had within the state of North Carolina. It could serve as a public art piece that would be a point of interest for out-of-town visitors, as well as a source of pride for locals. The significance of the elements within the mural are identified and elaborated on below:

N.C. Newbold: Transforming North Carolina one school at a time.

- **Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington** displayed on the left side of the mural. They are shown smaller than Newbold, since he is the focus of the mural.

- **The state of North Carolina** is in the center of the mural. The state is divided into small squares, which represent the small communities that make up the state, and that benefited from Newbold’s hard work.

- **Rosenwald Schools** painted at the bottom of the mural depict the schools that Newbold helped “transform”.

- **N.C. Newbold** appears very large in the bottom right corner of the mural. Size and prominence conveys his importance to the art.
Theme 2

It is important for viewers to understand that the money provided by the Rosenwald Fund only paid for a small portion of the overall cost of building and maintaining the schools. Some of the funds were given by county governments, but a large portion of the money was raised by members of the community. Often, local African American communities raised more than several families would make in a year, which highlights the importance that was placed on education. When telling the story of Rosenwald schools, the importance of the communities and the roles that they played in the Rosenwald legacy must be featured.

**Primary Theme:** Rosenwald Schools stand as tributes to the hard work and dedication of African American communities at that time.

Interpretation of this theme can help visitors better understand and appreciate:

- How the remainder of the money was raised to build each school.
- Where the building materials came from.
- Who physically built the school.
- How were children fed (lunchtime).
- Where teachers were housed.
- And many other sub-themes specific to an area or school.

**Sub-theme** (North Carolina): Local community members unite to raise funds and build the Russell School.
Theme 3

Before Rosenwald schools and the Rosenwald Fund came to exist, many schools that served African American communities were poorly constructed and unsanitary. Although schools at this time were supposed to be "separate but equal", this was far from the truth. Once Rosenwald Schools began to be constructed across the South, they revolutionized education for Blacks and Whites alike. When telling the story of Rosenwald Schools, it is crucial to highlight the innovations and important features that made the schools so revolutionary.

Primary Theme: Rosenwald Schools came to be known as the "model schools" of their time. Interpretation of this theme can help visitors better understand and appreciate:

- The importance of the Community School Plans.
- How the design of Rosenwald Schools influenced the design of other schools.
- The use of sunlight to ensure classrooms were functional.
- The reason for the orientation (in regards to the cardinal directions) of each Rosenwald School.
- The importance of "Training Schools".
- Why schools had mechanical rooms.
- The importance of the sanitary privy.
- And many other sub-themes specific to an area or school.

Sub-theme (National): The role that the sun played in the design of Rosenwald Schools.
Theme 4

The National Trust for Historic Preservation naming Rosenwald Schools on their 2002 list of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places, helped fuel many preservation efforts across the country. There are many schools that have been preserved, while some schools still are undiscovered. When telling the story of Rosenwald Schools, it is important to focus on the importance of identifying these schools, as well as highlighting the outstanding preservation efforts of the many individuals and communities.

Primary Theme: There is a resurgence of interest in returning forgotten Rosenwald School buildings to their former glory.

Interpretation of this theme can help visitors better understand and appreciate:

• The process of identification and recognition of a true Rosenwald School.
• National and local identification efforts.
• Barriers in the identification process.
• The process of restoring or preserving a Rosenwald School.
• What schools have been restored or preserved.
• The importance of recognition on the National Register of Historic Places.
• How schools that have been restored or preserved are currently being used.
• Ways to help with identification or preservation efforts.
• And many other sub-themes specific to an area or school.

Sub-theme (National): Identification of all Rosenwald Schools is a massive undertaking that has been underway for over a decade.

Sub-theme (North Carolina): The Canetuck School has served its local community for nearly 90 years.

Viewer Experience Goals

When viewing the interpretive media, viewers should have a range of experiences, including knowledge, attitudes, behavior and sensory. These viewer experience goals identify opportunities for viewers to derive meanings and identify the inherent value of the Rosenwald legacy from viewing and interacting with the interpretive media.

The interpretive media demonstrated within this plan could potentially be viewed in a variety of settings, including on-site, via the internet, in a museum, etc. Due to this fact, the viewer experience goals have been broken down for both on-site and off-site viewing.

Goals when viewing information off-site include:

• receive accurate and up-to-date information
• learn about how and when they can visit the site
• learn about the Rosenwald legacy
• gain historical information about the school or individual of focus
• gain knowledge and respect for the African American community and what
EXAMPLE 3

This interpretive media example is based off of the sub-theme “The Canetuck School has served its local community for over 90 years”. This interpretation is in the form of a timeline which is designed to document the various ways that the school has been an asset to the community throughout the years. It could serve as a educational piece in the school or in a museum, as well as used by any organization promoting the importance of preserving the schools. The significance of the elements within the timeline are identified and elaborated on below. For a larger view of this timeline, see page...

- **Primary facts are easily identified by their blue background.** These facts highlight the major events within the timeline.
- **Secondary facts are easily identified by their gray background.** These facts provide supporting details about the primary facts, which they are connected to.
- **Pictures have been inserted into the timeline when available.** These pictures are used as visual aides to support the text.
- **The timeline fades to white at the end and has a graphic of a hand drawing,** which represents the fact that this timeline is not finished and more history is always being added.
a good education meant for their children's future
- gain a sense of what it would have been like to live during the segregation era

Goals when viewing information on-site include:
- receive accurate and up-to-date information
- receive information orienting them to the site
- learn about upcoming events or resources
- easily and safely access and tour the site
- know when they have arrived at the site
- gain knowledge through interpretive signage
- view any artifacts from the school
- learn about the Rosenwald legacy
- learn about the schools current use
- get a feel for what everyday life would have been like as a student or teacher
- gain knowledge and respect for the African American community and what a good education meant for their children's future
- gain a sense of what it would have been like to live during the segregation era
- have an enjoyable experience without impairing the cultural value of the site

These evaluation guidelines are designed to be summative, which means they are to be performed after the installation of the interpretive media. This is the most common evaluation among government agencies. It allows for the performance of the media to be measured and evaluated based on the viewer experience goals after a designated period of time. These guidelines were created to assist in the evaluation process.
- A standard evaluation form should be developed based on the interpretive signage in place.
- Evaluations should be in paper and electronic form.
- Evaluations should ask visitors questions regarding the most important take-away information.
- Evaluation forms should be brief and questions should be written as clear and concise as possible.
- Once completed evaluation forms are received, they should be examined to identify the sites strong points and possible areas of improvement.

The following examples are provided to assist in creating evaluation forms for similar media.
- a good education meant for their children's future
- gain a sense of what it would have been like to live during the segregation era
Based on the mural and plaque that accompany it, please answer the following questions.

1. Who is the man on the right side of the mural?

2. Who are the two men on the left side of the mural?

3. Name any of the schools shown at the bottom of the mural.

4. How many Rosenwald Schools were built in North Carolina?
SIGN EVALUATION

Based on sign that you saw, please answer the following questions:

1. What is the name of the school that you visited?

2. When was the school built?
   A. 2010
   B. 1927
   C. 1865

3. Name one of the groups that gave money to build the school.

**BONUS**

**If the value of $1.00 in 2010 is equal to $12.20 in 1927, and the local African Americans raised $270.00 to build the school in 1927, how much would this be equal to today?**
TIMELINE EVALUATION

Based on the timeline, please answer the following questions the best of your ability.

1. What is the name of the school that is the focus of this timeline?

2. What year did the school officially open?
   A. 1920
   B. 1992
   C. 1922
   D. 1942

3. Who was the driving force behind converting the school to the Canetuck Community Center?

4. Name one of the current uses of the Canetuck Community Center:

5. Name one of the future plans for the Canetuck Community Center:
The purpose of this project was to develop an interpretive plan for Rosenwald Schools in North Carolina. Interpretive themes have been provided, along with example sub-themes. Specific media examples are also provided. They were designed to help guide individuals or organizations attempting to create interpretive media for Rosenwald schools in their communities or for Rosenwald schools throughout North Carolina and other states. Evaluation guidelines are also provided, along with specific examples of the evaluation forms that would be created for the media examples in this document.

Since the schools will potentially attract children and elders, special consideration should be given to these groups when developing future themes and creating signage.

Some recommendations could be implemented with little money and a short time frame, while others will require substantial funds and more time. These factors should be considered before implementation.

These general recommendations should be implemented on a national, state or county level.

- Develop interpretation curriculum focusing on Rosenwald Schools for the Booker T. Washington National Monument.
- Develop a standard plaque design for schools that are recognized on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Develop a standard signage design, with specific guidelines (fonts, colors, etc.) that can be used for any media produced by the state.
- Develop maps identifying the location (with address when available) of all of the Rosenwald Schools across North Carolina.
- Counties with multiple Rosenwald
Schools should develop maps identifying the location of all of the schools within its boundaries.

- A network of volunteers should be formed to assist in the various tasks needed to preserve and promote the schools.
- Engage more non-profit organizations (specifically those in counties with a large number of schools) to help spread awareness of the schools.
- Maps and brochures should be placed at visitor centers across the state.

These general recommendations should be implemented by individual schools.

- Develop a standard signage theme that is carried out throughout the site.
  - Large entry signage should allow visitors to know when they have arrived at the site.
  - Smaller interpretive signage should be in the school or on the grounds as necessary.
  - Days and hours that the school is open to the public should be clearly posted.
- Develop a network of volunteers who would be willing to open the school up to the public (the goal here would not be for the school to be open every day, but for there to be at least one day a month that the public could enter the school and tour the grounds).

**Technology**

In today's society, technology is increasingly present in all aspects of life. Recommendations regarding technology are specifically targeted at children and teens, in hopes that providing easier and more fun ways to access the information will encourage them to learn about the schools.

- All websites should be up-to-date and provide accurate information.
- Provide bi-annual updates about the activities or progress of the school.
- Investigate apps, such as Mobile barcodes (http://www.wireless.att.com/businesscenter/msites/mobile-marketing/mobile-barcodes.jsp?WT_SRCH=1&GUID=0D961AF8-A4EA-44A0-958C-B56872D94A89) or WolfWalk (http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/dli/projects/wolfwalk/) which could help reach a broader range of audiences.
- Develop something similar to the National Park Service Passport Program(http://www.nps.gov/olsp/planyourvisit/passport-program.htm), which could serve as an incentive for visiting the schools.

Anything available online, should also be made available in paper copy on site.
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