



REHOBOTH SCHOOL 1954-55

Subject Files, Elementary Schools  
Rehoboth

SUBJECT FILE:

SCHOOLS

Rehoboth Elementary

& Northwoods Elementary

AUGUST

31, 1987

# Parents To Take Plight To State Board

By WENDY PARKER  
Staff Writer

Parents of children who were to attend the closed Rehoboth and Northwoods Elementary Schools will take their request to reopen the schools to the State Board of Education, according to an attorney representing the group.

James Mackay said the parents decided to appeal a ruling handed down by DeKalb Superior Court Judge Daniel M. Coursey last week to keep the schools closed for the semester currently underway. Coursey agreed

with the county school board's recommendations that "reopening the schools... would be expensive and disruptive" to the school system as a whole.

Mackay filed the appeal Monday afternoon and a hearing on the matter has been scheduled for Oct. 4 at the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education will not hear any new elements in the case, however. Joe Thompson, president of the Rehoboth parents group, said he and his group believe the DeKalb County Board of Education broke the law by denying the parents groups from Northwoods and Rehoboth due pro-

cess by not allowing another hearing before the board in regard to the closings. Thompson said, "We're just caught up in the system, a bunch of little pawns in a big chess game."

The school board moved to close Rehoboth, Northwoods and two other elementary schools earlier this year in an effort to cut costs because of declining enrollment. Public hearings conducted at the schools earlier this summer moved the board of education to close the schools and sell the property despite the continued protests of parents.

# Rehoboth To Seek Action In Talks To School Boards

DEKALB NEWS-TRIBUNE

JUN. 30 1983

The Rehoboth community, encouraged at the response of its neighbors over the sudden closing of Rehoboth Elementary School, will meet with an attorney Wednesday evening, and has made plans to present its case within the next week to the DeKalb County Board of Education.

Joe Thompson, president of the newly-created Rehoboth Community Association, the successor to the disbanded Rehoboth School PTA, said members of his organization planned a 5 p.m. Wednesday meeting with Decatur attorney James Mackay.

Then, Thompson said, the Association has until July 5 to appeal the Rehoboth School case to the DeKalb board.

"If the DeKalb School Board does not approve of what we present to them, then we will go a step further, to the State Board of Education.

"It is fairly definite that we'll go ahead with the appeals," Thompson said.

Thompson said that any appeals over the Rehoboth School closing beyond the education panels would be dependent upon the community's financial response.

*Sub. File Sch. Rehoboth Elementary indexed*

6/15/83 News/Lead

# See You In Court

## Rehoboth Parents Take Steps To Halt Closing Of School

By ED LABORWIT

Parents of Rehoboth Elementary School students, angered over the DeKalb School System's sudden closing of their school, have employed Decatur attorney James Mackay in an effort to halt the door-shutting on the county's oldest school.

Mackay, a former Fourth District Congressman, said he has been employed "to research the law, to determine if there was any basis for obtaining a restraining order to prevent the immediate closing of Rehoboth Elementary School."

Rehoboth Elementary, established in 1823, a year after DeKalb County was created, was one of three county elementary schools targeted for closing by the DeKalb Board of Education last week. The other schools are

Warren, Northwoods and Tucker, none of whom have apparently entered the Rehoboth-Mackay discussions.

MACKAY, WHO said he was approached by the "Committee of Parents of Rehoboth Elementary," and the group's chairman, Joe Thompson, said he is "researching what laws could be invoked to protect the rights of the parents and children" of Rehoboth.

"We are looking into the situation, and to what court the action may be appealed, the DeKalb Superior Court or the Federal courts," Mackay said.

"Short of a law suit, we are looking at ways the school board might be persuaded to delay the decision for one year," he said. Admitting that the case is

an "uphill fight," Mackay said he was approached by Thompson, who said that "the parents and children of Rehoboth were sentenced to death by the DeKalb School Board on May 22, and that the execution was carried out on June 8," the day of the board's decision to close the schools.

Said Mackay, "In my view, and in the view of Rehoboth's parents, two weeks is not sufficient notice to anyone, and I would think that a denial of due process would be a key issue in this situation."

MEANWHILE, Tucker Elementary School PTA president Ron Fowle said parents from his school had been in contact with an attorney over the school's closing, but said that any legal action had been

scrapped, "because we can't get enough parent support."

In plain terms, Fowle said, that means funds to pay an attorney. "Even though the attorney was a friend, he still wants to get paid. The money just wasn't there," Fowle said.

Said the Tucker PTA chief, "We agree that some schools need to be closed, but we are angry over the way the school board did this...there is something wrong, something unfair."

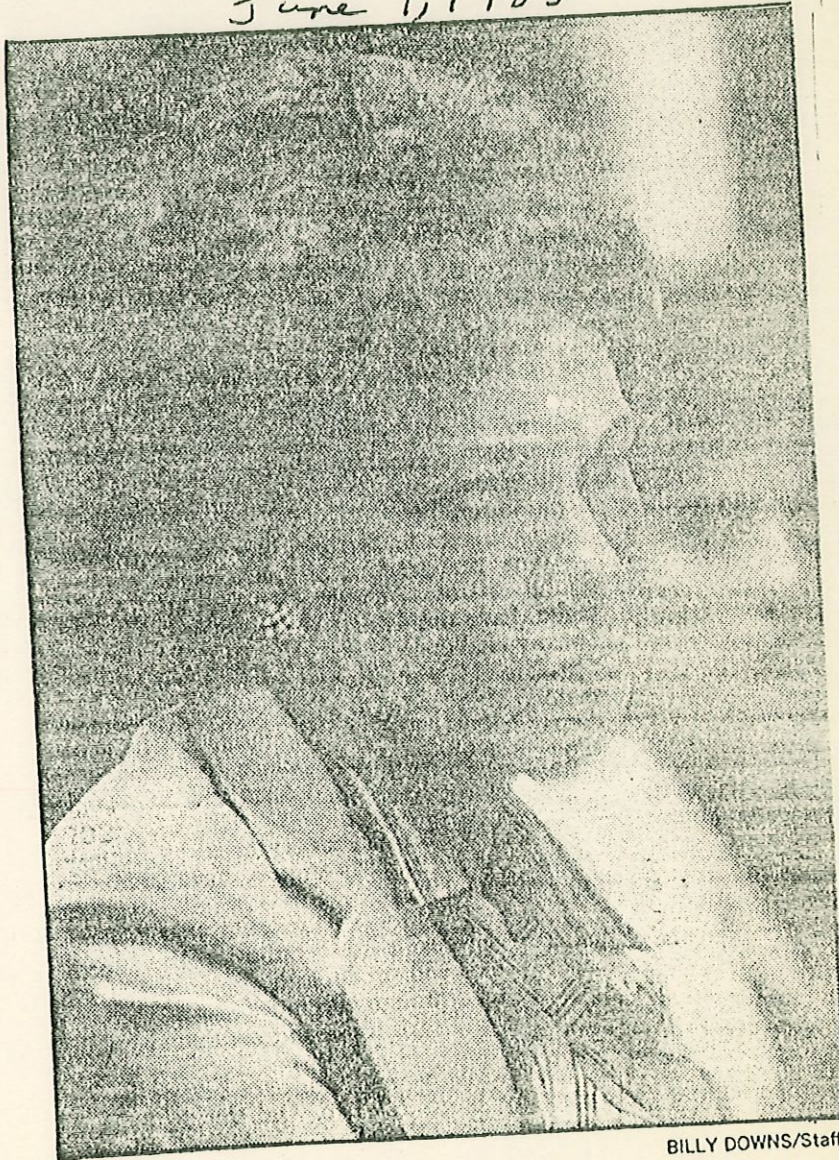
He added, "As far as we're concerned, the school board is very unresponsive to the people who pay the bills, and the ruling to close the four schools is typical of the way this DeKalb Board of Education reacts to any situation."

"We were told by (DeKalb Board of Education chairman) Paul Womack that the board had a 'master plan,'" Fowle said. "But, at the hearing to close our school, we questioned him about the plan, and we were told the board didn't have one. What we would like to know is why did they lie to us?"

Said Fowle, "This DeKalb Board of Education seems to think they don't have to answer to us, or any of the people in this county. That's a misguided belief...there are a lot of people who will remember this board when election time arrives. "There are many people who believe they could do a better job than the members of the present board."

**SUBJECT FILE SCHOOLS -**  
Rehoboth Elementary

Atlanta Journal  
June 9, 1983



BILLY DOWNS/Staff

**REHOBOTH OUT:** Pam Shippey angry about decision.

*indexed*

## Dr. Alexander Is Speaker At Rehoboth

The regular meeting of the Rehoboth Elementary School PTA on Monday, Nov. 20, will continue with the year's theme "Let's Turn PTA Around and Accentuate The Positive." The titles of the monthly programs will be lines from the song by the same name.

The November program will feature "Don't Mess with Mister In-Between!" with Dr. Michael Alexander, medical Epidemiologist, Center for Disease Control, speaking on what parents can do about the drug problems. The meeting will be held at 8 p.m. in the school cafeteria.

The Executive Committee will meet in the school library at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 20.

The paper sale will be held from noon, Tuesday, Nov. 21, through noon, Wednesday, Nov. 22.

Donator DeHollis News 11-15-79

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Rehoboth School came into being in 1823. At that time it was known as the J. B. Johns School, named for the man that had given the property for the school to be ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ built on. In 1854 the school was renamed Rehoboth. It was located behind Rehoboth Baptist Church on Lawrenceville Hwy. As was the custom in those days, the materials and labor to build a school or church were donated by the people of the community. It was constructed of logs cut in half. They ran verticle instead of being stacked horizational. The roof was made of hand hewed oak shingles.

The school shared a well with the church. # On Mondays, each child brought a quarter for the teachers' salary for that week. Money was raised for extra school supplies or coal for the pot belly stove by raffles. Each of the girls would fix a box lunch and decorate the box with crete paper. The young men could eat lunch with the young lady that prepared the box lunch he purchased. Miss Dorothy Forrester and Miss Kate Hannah were the teachers during the years of 1903 and 1905. The older children had formed a basketball team and under the expert coaching of Mr. J.F. Bugg became the champions of Dekalb County.

By 1912 there were about 50 children in the school. # During the years of 1907 thru 1909 Mr. Henry Jordan and Miss Eva McGuffie served as principals.

BY In the coming years the school grew and it became necessary for the community to build a new school. Mr. and Mrs. Luther Wilborn and his parents remodeled the old school house for their new home. The children were taught in front rooms of homes along Lawrenceville Hwy. while the new school was planned. Mr. J.A. Frazier had donated 1/4 acres of land <sup>on Lawrenceville Hwy. Rd.</sup> for the school and by winter quarter of 1916 a two room clapboard school was ready for occupancy. This land is part of the land Rehoboth School is presently located on. The east side bordered th acre Mr. Frazier donated to the Baptist Church to raise cotton on. The money ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ earned on the crop was used to help maintain the church. The west ~~side~~ and north bordered the old Teasley plantation. The old home is still standing and is presently owned by Waymon Yon, whose parents lived there until their deaths. The

remains of a pre-civil war church was torn down and the land cleared.

John and Lizza Johnson lived on a small farm to the rear of the land. In later years, when farming became too much for them, they became the caretakers of the school. They were good people that worked hard to raise their five children. The community loved John and Lizza and was greatly saddened by their passing.

By the winter quarter of the 1916 school year, a two room clapboard school was built. There were two small cloakrooms on either side of the front door. All the materials and labor were donated by the people of Rehoboth or "Peak Ridge" as the old timers called the community. The school even had its own well. There were about 60 students in grades one through seven. Miss Minnie Baker was the school principal for the first year and Miss Ida Norman for the next two years. The Rev. Lester Buice attended this school and it is said that he was so bashful that the teacher had to listen to him read out loud in one of the cloakrooms because he would not stand and read in front of the class. Who would have thought that he would go on to be the paster of one of the largest Baptist Churches in the country, Rehoboth Baptist on Larenceville Hwy.

By 1929, a new addition had been added and there were three rooms for classes. During the prior years several principals had been at Rehoboth. They were; Mr. Euins, Miss Emma Lewis, Mr. Glenn Roberts, Miss Grace Brooks, Mrs. J.A. Bryant and Miss Florence Farmer. Teachers were usually the ~~xx~~ people of the community. Most people admit the boys were a little hard to handle and when someone put bullets in the pot belly stove, Mr. Denby came to teach at Rehoboth. He soon had things well in hand.

These were growing years and it was hard to get teachers for the school with limited funds available and once again, the community was there to raise the needed money. Mrs. Gladys Brown, the former Gladys Barber, remembers going to oryster stew suppers every Friday night as a way to <sup>raise funds to</sup> supplement the teachers salary. She said they had such good times at these evidents that people were sorry when it was no longer necessary.



As the community continued to grow, so did the demand for a larger and more modern school. The people felt that with plans for a larger school, a formal Board of Trustees would be in order. These men were to be chosen from the community and would be of the highest esteem. They should be willing to spend many hours of their time on school business, from repairing to record keeping. They would be in charge of the voter registration for the Rehoboth District because by now, the school had been designated as the place to vote in this district. All of this would be done without benefit of pay. The following men were chosen as the first Trustees of Rehoboth School; Mr. O. S. Barber, Mr. W. J. Smith and Mr. J. F. Bugg.

On blind faith in their community, these men put together \$100.00 for a down payment on 8 acres, more or less, of property adjoining the school property. They decided to call a vote for bonds to pay the ~~xx~~ remaining \$1,250.00 owed on the property. After all 48 registered voters had voted, it was determined that the bond issue had passed. The property was purchased from H. F. Talton on 7/5/35/

Now they had the land and all that was needed was a way to finance the building. The country was recovering from the depression and this community was no different. A meeting was held and the decision was made. The Trustees would apply for a WPA loan. The loan was granted. Mr. H.A. Rawlins was selected as the architect for the project. The new building was constructed from granite and had six classrooms and an auditorium. When it was completed in 1937 it was valued at approximately \$27,000.00.

The laying of the granite corner stone was quite an event. People from all over this section of the county came for the ceremony. The activities started before lunch and were over late in the afternoon. Chicken was fried in huge iron wash pots and the ladies supplied all the trimmings. Lemonade was iced down in big tubs. The stone was put in place by Mr. J.A. Bryant, the head stone mason on the job and long time community member. Abit Nix, Masonic Grand Master

W.J. Smith, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mrs. W. H. Haynie, Principal, O.S. Barber, Board Treasurer and W.M. Rainey, County School Superintendent.

The formal dedication was held in the new school on June 5, 1937. The invocation was given by Rev. J. B. Spivey, welcome address by Mr. J.F. Bugg, Miss Edith Nash, a pupil of the seventh grade gave the history of Rehoboth School, followed by words of appreciation from Miss Katherine Chesnut, another pupil of the seventh grade. Rehoboths' first PTA president, Mrs. Charlie Johns gave a short talk and then the Hon. C.A. Matthews, Commissioner of Roads and Revenues delivered the address. The keys were presented by the Honorable Herbert Rawlins, Public Works Administration. The dedication address was given by the Hon. Hugh Howell.

The new school, under the guidance of Mrs. W.H. Haynie, principal 1934-1940, met the educational needs of the community for some years to come. Although during growth spurts it was necessary for Mrs. Anne Garner to teach a combination class consisting of three grades. The lunch room was operated by Miss Nettie Cash, Mrs. Maude Cheek and Mrs. Bolton. Mr. Russell Richardson, who has a passion for good southern food and was a student at Rehoboth at that time, remembers the wonderful lunches these dear ladies prepared.

Mrs. Evelyn Bagwell became the principal in 1940 and was followed by Mrs. B.H. Dillard who was principal from 1943-48.

In 1948 when Miss Alice Bullock became the principal, there were 181 students. Per pupil cost for instruction was \$57.46. Five teachers including the principal taught the children.

The "rodk" school was adequate until the 1951-52 school year when signs of real growth began. By 1955 the number of students had grown to 328 with nine teachers plus the principal teaching art and reading. The 1956-57 school year found four teachers housed in the auditorium. The lunchroom could only serve one class at a time, therefore, several hours were involved in serving lunch. The total faculty rose to eleven during the school year.

During the 1957-58 school year, Laural Ridge School and Briarlake School was opened to relieve Rehoboth of some of the 472 students enrolled. There were 15

teachers at Rehoboth at the beginning of the school year. Three classes were housed at Rehoboth Presbyterian Church located nearby. With the opening of the two new schools, the faculty was reduced to 8. Miss Bulloch was assigned to Briarlake School as principal. Mr. Arthur Justice became the new principal of Rehoboth. Mrs. Opal Kenopke became Rehoboth's first secretary. She is now Mrs. Opal Blackwell and is in her 23rd. year of faithful service to Rehoboth School.

In 1960, Mr. Gilbreth D. Aldridge became the principal. He was to serve as Rehoboth's principal until 1980. During his stay at Rehoboth, a new and modern school was built, just behind the old rock school where he had started teaching in 1957. The new school was dedicated on September 22, 1963 with the motto, "The School Cannot Live Apart From The Community". Mr. Jim Cherry, who believed this motto with all his heart and who made the Dekalb School System the best in the nation during his term as superintendent, was present. The Rev. Lester Buice, a student so long ago, gave the invocation. There were solos by Mrs. E. J. Wilborn and Mrs. W. G. Bennett. ~~XXXX~~ Dionne Alford, School patrol captain, led the pledge to the flag and Mr. Aldridge extended a welcome to everyone. Mr. Wm. Bennett, co-president of the PTA, introduced the guest. Mr. Conrad Sechler, Member of the Dekalb Board of Education, brought greetings from the board. The actual dedication was made by Mrs. Anne Garner, dedicated and beloved teacher that had served her community for so many years. She gave so much. The Rev. Samuel Christopher, pastor of the Rehoboth Presbyterian Church which had housed the overflow from the school, gave the benediction.

The 1980-81 school year welcomed Mr. Robert Floyd to Rehoboth as their new principal. Although the buildings and staff have changed over the 153 years of its history, the <sup>feeling of the</sup> Rehoboth community has not. There are second, third and fourth generations of the original families that built the first schools ~~are~~ attending Rehoboth today. The enrollment has leveled off for now but with new subdivisions taking the place of the large farms that once was Rehoboth, we will brace ourselves for the pains of growth that is on the way.

Growth is as much a part of this wonderful school as the love that built it.