

A Guide to the Fredericksburg (Va.) School Records, 1853-1907

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History

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Descriptive Summary

Barcode numbers

1095945, 1095947, 1110625

Language

English

Collector

Fredericksburg (Va.) Circuit Court

Physical Characteristics

3 v.

Repository

The Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

These items came to the Library of Virginia in a transfer of records from the Fredericksburg (City) Circuit Court.

The collection is located at the State Records Center. Contact Archives Research Services staff for access information, directions, and hours.

Preferred Citation

Fredericksburg (Va.) School Records, 1853-1907. Local government records collection, Fredericksburg (Va.) Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Va. 23219.

Historical Information

On February 21, 1818, the Virginia legislature passed a school bill which appropriated \$45,000 annually from the Literary Fund for the education of poor children. (The Literary Fund was established in 1810 with passage of a bill to appropriate "certain escheats, confiscated, and forfeited lands" for the "encouragement of learning.") Under the provisions of the 1818 School Act, each county court was required to appoint five to fifteen commissioners to establish and/or administer schools for children of the poor. A more comprehensive public school system was established by the legislature in 1870. It was racially segregated until the mid-twentieth century.

Fredericksburg, in Spotsylvania County, was named for Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, eldest son of George II. Fredericksburg was established in 1728, was incorporated as a town in 1782, and became a city in 1879.

Scope and Content

Fredericksburg (Va.) School Records, 1853-1907, are comprised of a ledger of the School Fund of the Corporation of Fredericksburg, 1853-1860; minutes of the School Trustees, 1878-1884, and a ledger of the School Board, 1895-1907.

The School Fund ledger, 1853-1860, is a record of salaries paid to individual teachers, interest earned for the school fund, and interest paid to individual bond holders. The ledger also contains financial records not pertaining directly to schools, such as money spent on officers patrolling, upkeep of streets, cleaning the courthouse and market square, and other miscellaneous tasks, including killing dogs. There are also figures for the amount of tax revenues collected and expenses paid in 1857.

Minutes of the School Trustees, 1878-1884, document the Board's administration of public schools. They contain monthly reports from Principal E.M. Crutchfield, resolutions, petitions, and correspondence. The monthly reports contain the total number of students, white and African American, attending schools; average daily attendance, average age of students, names of students receiving books, and names of students from other localities attending the Fredericksburg schools. They also contain narrative reports on student suspensions, including the rationale for their suspension and interaction with family members; comments on students' progress or lack of progress, and comments on student attitudes and behavior. The minutes also document other business of the board, primarily financial, such as payment of salaries to staff and efforts to get additional money from the Peabody Fund, but also petitions from the community. The minutes include a petition, 1878 Apr 18, on behalf of the African American community to place African American teachers in the African American schools.

The School Board ledger, 1895-1907, documents money spent on teacher salaries and other expenses, as well as money received from the state Literary Fund and the City of Fredericksburg.

Index Terms

Corporate Names:

Fredericksburg (Va.). Circuit Court.
Fredericksburg (Va.). Board of School Commissioners.
Fredericksburg (Va.). Board of School Trustees.
Fredericksburg (Va.). School Board.
Peabody Education Fund.
Virginia. Literary Fund -- Appropriations and expenditures -- 19th century.

Subjects:

African Americans -- Education -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
African Americans -- Segregation -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Government aid to education -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Public schools -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
School reports -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Schools -- records and correspondence -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg
Students -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Teachers -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.

Geographical Names:

Fredericksburg (Va.) -- History -- 19th century.

Genre and Form Terms:

Contracts -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Financial records -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Ledgers (account books) -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Local government records -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Minute books -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Monthly reports -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Petitions -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
School records -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.
Tax and fiscal records -- Virginia -- Fredericksburg.