

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lana Gordon at 3:30 p.m. on February 8, 2010, in Room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Owen Donohoe- excused

Representative Pat George- excused

Committee staff present:

Doug Taylor, Office of the Revisor of Statutes

Reed Holwegner, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Brandon Riffel, Kansas Legislative Research Department

Ann Deitcher, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Senator Anthony Hensley,

Senator David Haley,

Representative Melvin Neufeld,

Charles Jean-Baptiste, Johnson County NAACP Unit

Cheryl Brown Henderson, President, Brown Foundation for Educational Equity,  
Excellence & Research

Jeffrey M. Russell, Director, Legislative Administrative Services

**SB 54 - concerning the state capitol and grounds.**

The Chair called on Reed Holwegner who explained Chapter 75, Article 36, 105 and 106 of the State Departments; Public Officers and Employees regarding the construction and placement of memorials as well as restrictions. ([Attachment 1](#)).

Doug Taylor then addressed the Committee in regard to a statehouse art and history committee and what the committee should consist of. ([Attachment 2](#)).

Next on the agenda was Cheryl Brown Henderson who spoke in support of **SB 54** saying that the bill represented the recognition of the unique history of Kansas. ([Attachment 3](#)).

Ms Henderson said she supported **SB 54** because it proposed placing a mural on the walls of the capitol that would depict the historic continuum as a state and Kansas' pivotal role in civil rights history. She told the Committee that Topeka was the site of two earlier school desegregation cases, one in 1903, *Reynolds vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, and then again in 1941, *Graham vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, prior to *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, which was filed in 1951.

Quoting the words of Justice John Marshall Harlan, Ms Henderson closed by saying "Our Constitution is color blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among our citizens. In respect to civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law."

Senator Hensley spoke next in support of **SB 54** telling the Committee that *Brown vs. Board of Education* was not simply a story about courage and hope. It initiated educational and social reform throughout the United States, paved the way for the modern Civil Rights Movement and laid the foundation for international policies concerning human rights throughout the world. ([Attachment 4](#)).

Questions and answers followed.

Appearing next was Senator Haley who in his support of **SB 54** said that regarding this simple legislative directive would compel the planning and the placing of a mural on one of our newly renovated Capitol walls, the theme of which would be the landmark legal case of *Brown vs. Board of Education*. ([Attachment 5](#)).

## CONTINUATION SHEET

Minutes of the House Economic Development and Tourism Committee at 3:30 p.m. on February 8, 2010, in Room 152-S of the Capitol.

Charles Jean-Baptiste thanked the Committee for providing him the opportunity to come before them in support of **SB 54**. (Attachment 6.6).

Mr. Jean-Baptiste pointed out that the mural would not be funded utilizing taxpayers resources but would be funded through private donations and contributions. Guidelines and procedures would be established for receiving and accepting contributions and donations.

Saying that he was very much in support of **SB 54**, Mr. Jean-Baptiste said it was because he felt that every visitor to the State Capitol would leave with a greater appreciation of the Capitol and with a visual imprint that would last forever.

Representative Neufeld spoke briefly in support of **SB 54**, and offered an amendment that would change the procedure for appointing members to the Statehouse Art and History Committee. It would also eliminate all of subsection (d) of the bill, replacing it with language that gave the Committee the responsibility for overseeing reconfiguration of committee rooms and office space. (No written testimony was provided by Representative Neufeld.)

Questions and answers followed.

Jeff Russell was in attendance and spoke briefly to the Committee regarding the possible formation of a committee that would encompass all the areas of the statehouse restoration instead of the various committees that are now involved.

Questions and answers followed.

The Chair spoke to the Committee regarding the formation of a sub-committee to study **SB 54**.

The hearing on **SB 54** was closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2010.

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**75-36,105****Chapter 75.--STATE DEPARTMENTS; PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES****Article 36.--STATE OFFICE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

**75-36,105. Same; construction and placement of memorials; restrictions.** (a) No memorial shall be constructed or placed on the grounds of the capitol except in accordance with the procedures and subject to the conditions and limitations prescribed by this act. Each proposal for a memorial to be constructed or placed on the grounds of the capitol shall be consistent with the statement of purpose and use adopted for the grounds of the capitol and shall be subject to the guidelines and standards for memorials on the grounds of the capitol adopted by the capitol area plaza authority.

(b) In addition to other requirements or provisions of law applicable thereto, each proposal for a memorial to be constructed or placed on the grounds of the capitol shall be submitted to the secretary of administration for consideration in accordance with this act. Prior to being adopted or rejected by the secretary of administration, each such proposal shall be submitted to and reviewed and considered by the following officials:

- (1) The state historic preservation officer of the state historical society;
- (2) the director of facilities management of the department of administration; and
- (3) the director of legislative administrative services.

(c) The secretary of administration shall receive and consider the recommendations from the state historic preservation officer of the state historical society, director of facilities management of the department of administration and director of legislative administrative services regarding any such proposal prior to adopting any recommendation regarding such proposal. After review and consideration of the recommendations from each such official, the secretary of administration may approve or reject the proposal. If the secretary of administration recommends approval of any such proposal, the secretary shall submit the proposal to the capitol area plaza authority for consideration by the authority.

(d) Each memorial proposed to be constructed or placed on the grounds of the capitol that is recommended by the secretary of administration shall be presented to the capitol area plaza authority. If any such proposal is approved by the capitol area plaza authority, such proposal shall be submitted to the governor and the legislative coordinating council for appropriate action.

**History:** L. 2001, ch. 12, § 5; March 22.

**Economic Development & Tourism**

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**75-36,106****Chapter 75.--STATE DEPARTMENTS; PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES****Article 36.--STATE OFFICE BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS**

**75-36,106. Same; legislative authorization required.** (a) The primary considerations as to whether a proposed memorial is approved for the capitol grounds shall be the significance and relevance of any memorial proposed to be constructed or placed on the grounds of the capitol and the extent to which the proposed memorial complies with the requirements of, is consistent with and furthers the purposes and implementation of the preservation plan for the grounds of the capitol and the guidelines and standards for memorials on the grounds of the capitol.

(b) No memorial shall be constructed or placed on the grounds of the capitol without specific authorization for such memorial by act of the legislature.

**History:** L. 2001, ch. 12, § 6; March 22.

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**75-2266****Chapter 75.--STATE DEPARTMENTS; PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES****Article 22.--STATE CAPITOL**

**75-2266. Statehouse art and history committee.** (a) There is hereby established the statehouse art and history committee. The committee shall consist of three members, as follows:

- (1) The secretary of administration or the secretary's designee;
  - (2) the director of legislative administrative services; and
  - (3) the executive director of the state historical society.
- (b) The secretary of administration or the secretary's designee shall serve as chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet on call of the chairperson or at the request of a majority of the members of the committee.
- (c) The committee shall:
- (1) Develop a long-range plan for displays in the capitol to represent the art, history and culture of all Kansas citizens;
  - (2) adopt procedures and criteria for evaluating and approving art work for display in the capitol, based on the excellence and aesthetics of the work and its representation of the multicultural art and history of the state;
  - (3) adopt procedures and criteria for evaluating and approving removal of art work displayed in the capitol, based on the criteria specified in subsection (c)(2), and disposition and preservation of such art work;
  - (4) adopt procedures and criteria for evaluating and approving special events and displays to be held in the capitol, based on the quality of the event or display and its relevance to the history and culture of Kansas citizens; and
  - (5) adopt and implement procedures and criteria for the display, maintenance and preservation of art works in the capitol.
- (d) Requests for display of art works in the capitol shall be submitted to the secretary of administration or the secretary's designee. The secretary of administration or the secretary's designee, the director of legislative administrative services and the executive director of the state historical society shall evaluate and approve or disapprove those requests in accordance with the procedures and criteria adopted by the committee.
- (e) Requests for displays or special events in the capitol shall be submitted to the following for approval or disapproval in accordance with the procedures and criteria adopted by the committee:
- (1) The director of legislative administrative services, for displays or special events to be held in areas assigned to the legislature or to a legislative staff office, department or agency; and
  - (2) the secretary of administration or the secretary's designee, for displays or special events to be held in other areas.

**History:** L. 1995, ch. 144, § 1; Apr. 20.

**Economic Development & Tourism**

**Date:** 2-8-10

**Attachment #** 2

STATEMENT OF CHERYL BROWN HENDERSON, PRESIDENT OF THE BROWN FOUNDATION FOR  
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY, EXCELLENCE AND RESEARCH

BEFORE THE HOUSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE,  
IN SUPPORT OF SB 54, THE BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION MURAL BILL

February 8, 2010

Madame Chair, thank you for the opportunity to present a statement in support of  
Senate Bill 54, the Brown v. Board of Education Mural bill.

I am Cheryl Brown Henderson, Founding President of the Brown Foundation for  
Educational Equity, Excellence and Research. The Brown Foundation was established in 1988 as  
a living tribute to those involved in the landmark United States Supreme Court *Brown* decision.  
In 1991, we collaborated with the Kansas Congressional Delegation to establish the Brown v.  
Board of Education National Historic Site. In addition, our mission is to develop and implement  
programs that foster multicultural understanding, provide scholarships to increase diversity  
among classroom teachers, foster early childhood literacy and engage in activities to make  
history a part of daily life.

In the context of this hearing, I am representing the Brown Foundation as well as the  
men and women who were the strategists, attorneys, community organizers and plaintiffs in  
the cases known as *Oliver L. Brown et. al. vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, (KS) et. al.* Those  
men and women include the late McKinley Burnett who, as Chair of the Topeka NAACP, was  
relentless in his campaign to convince the Topeka Board of Education to open the doors of its  
elementary schools to all children. People like the Scott family of attorneys and their colleague  
in this case, Charles Bledsoe. Women like Lucinda Todd, who was a *Brown* case strategist and  
has the distinction of being the first person to sign on as a plaintiff for the Topeka NAACP case.

During their effort to assemble a group of plaintiffs, it was attorney Charles Scott who asked my father to sign on. Ultimately, the plaintiff roster would be comprised of 13 parents representing their children, 20 children in all. With the intervening of fate, the case namesake of this civil rights milestone was my now deceased father, Oliver Brown. Because of that, it is not possible for me to express my support without, in part, making a personal appeal.

This bill represents our recognition of the unique history of this great state. I take inordinate pride in being a Kansas native, because our state had an unparalleled impact on shaping the civil rights history of this nation. It is a message I proudly shared two weeks ago at Utah Valley University in Orem, Utah, last week at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee and will share over the next two days at Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas. Informing the nation about our past is part of my life's work.

People travel to this state to learn firsthand about our progressive, activist past. They walk the halls of this building to view the mural of John Brown, they tour the Kansas Museum of history and pore over documents at the Kansas History Research Center, they reminisce about a bygone era at the Kansas Combat Air museum and Overland Station and they learn from the exhibits at the Brown v. Board of Education National Historic Site just how far we have come as a nation.

I support SB 54 because it proposes placing on the hallowed walls of this building a mural that would depict our historic continuum as a state and our pivotal role in civil rights history. Although John Brown chose armed confrontation to defeat pro slavery factions, the result was that Kansas entered the union as a state that did not allow enslavement, a stance that influenced the expansion of freedom. This mural would tell the story of how Kansans of

African descent turned to the rule of law and used the courts as early as 1881 to repeal a state law enacted in 1879 that allowed first class cities in our state, those with populations of 15,000 or more, to segregate their elementary schools. Legal challenges to this law spanned a period of 68 years and involved 11 State Supreme Court cases. Legal challenges from small towns like Ottawa, Parsons, Galena, and Coffeerville successfully ended the practice of racially segregated schools in compliance with state law. Topeka was the site of two earlier school desegregation cases one in 1903, *Reynolds vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, and again in 1941, *Grahm vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, prior to *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which was filed in 1951.

Even though the United States Supreme Court decision was not solely on behalf of the Topeka case, but rather combined cases from Delaware, Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia and Washington, D.C., this bill will allow us to depict the centrality of our state to the court's actions.

When the ruling was announced on May 17, 1954, Dwight D. Eisenhower of Kansas was the 34th President of the United States. The words that started the chain of events in the *Brown* decision came from the testimony of Luisa Holt, a psychologist at Menninger Clinic. Her words were written into the District Court opinion by Judge Walter Huxman, former Governor of Kansas. In 1957 in answer to a refusal to comply with the *Brown* decision, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to Little Rock, Arkansas, which brought national attention to his position on civil rights.

In keeping with the NAACP legal team on the national level, first led by Charles Houston and then Thurgood Marshall, who argued these cases before the United States Supreme Court,



we as Kansans must continue to remind each generation that our nation was born out of a disdain for injustice. We must share with each generation the words of Justice John Marshall Harlan, who was the dissenting vote in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, that - "Our Constitution is colorblind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among our citizens. In respect to civil rights, all citizens are equal before the law."

Placing this mural on the wall just outside of the historic Kansas Supreme Court Chambers would be a fitting tribute and perpetual lesson for all.

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# State of Kansas

Senate Chamber



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## Statement of Support for SB 54 By Senator Anthony Hensley February 8, 2010

Fifty-six years ago, the United States Supreme Court issued a landmark decision by declaring that state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white children denied black children equal educational opportunities.

The roots of this historic case – *Brown v. Board of Education* – lie here in Kansas. Every day, Topeka third-grader Linda Brown was forced to walk one mile through a railroad switchyard to get to her black elementary school, even though a white elementary school was only a few blocks away.

Linda's father, Oliver Brown, and a dozen more parents like him bravely turned to the courts demanding better education opportunities for their children.

The Court agreed. Chief Justice Earl Warren wrote in the Supreme Court's unanimous decision:

"It is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.

The Warren decision made the following conclusion:

"We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.

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Therefore, we hold that the plaintiffs and others similarly situated for whom the actions have been brought are, by reason of the segregation complained of, deprived of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment."

*Brown v. Board of Education* is not simply a story about children or education – it is a story about courage and hope. It initiated educational and social reform throughout the United States, paved the way for the modern Civil Rights Movement, and laid the foundation for international policies concerning human rights throughout the world.

The dream that inspired thirteen Kansas parents more than 50 years ago is a testament to the triumph of the human spirit. Their story should be forever told in this building – our Kansas State Capitol – with a mural commemorating the cause for which they fought and successfully achieved.

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SENATE CHAMBER

**DAVID B. HALEY**  
SENATOR  
FOURTH DISTRICT  
WYANDOTTE COUNTY

SENATE BILL 54

February 8, 2010

**BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION** CAPITOL MURAL

To: Hon. Lana Gordon, Chair; Hon. Owen Donohoe (in absentia) Vice-Chair & Members of the  
**KANSAS HOUSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM COMMITTEE**

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee, **Thank you** for hearing testimony on SB 54. I am honored and pleased to once again offer brief testimony for each of your learned considerations regarding this simple legislative directive, SB 54, ( a similar version of which Senator Hensley, former Senator Betts, other Senators and I co-sponsored in years past AND which unanimously passed the Senate yet failed in a House committee), will compel the planning and the placing of a mural on one of our newly renovated Capitol walls. The theme will be the landmark legal case of **Brown vs. Board of Education** which, quite frankly Madam Chair, is one of the few items in Americana for which Kansas is really even truly know.

My father, who contributed as a Kansas City attorney to the Brown pleadings, and I, as a law student in Washington D.C. and a staffer for former Senator Dole, took exceptional pride once when President Reagan remarked at a White House ceremony on Kansas and his own knowledge of the Brown decision. I was impressed by that then, Madam Chair. And it speaks volumes for our unique legacy. In 2004, both then President George W. Bush and then presidential candidate US Senator John Kerry came, on the SAME day, here to Topeka to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the US Supreme Court's decision underscoring the gravamen of the premise that "separate is NOT equal" in public education and overturning the 1896 decision of Plessy vs. Ferguson which argued "separate could be equal."

I won't go on here now, Madam Chair; members. I will add though that, in that, Kansas is best known world-wide for the Brown decision and that, second only perhaps to the "Wizard of OZ", this is our State's best identifying legacy, we ought to be pleased to rush this bill back to the Senate floor and through the House and should **FUND** this project even with our meager State general funds. This history, like the John Brown mural, is who we really and truly are, at our best, who I personally hope Kansans always aspire to be.

Thank you again, Madam Chair & Members.

At the appropriate time, I'll be pleased to stand for any question(s).

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
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PUBLIC HEALTH & WELFARE

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**Economic Development & Tourism**  
Date: 2-8-10  
Attachment # 5

From: Charles Jean-Baptiste  
Johnson County NAACP Unit

February 8, 2010

To: Chairwoman Lana Gordon and Members  
Economic Development and Tourism  
Committee

Subject: Senate Bill 54: (SB-54)

Honorable Chairwoman Lana Gordon and Members of the Committee, thank you and this audience for providing me an opportunity to come before you in support of Senate Bill 54.

Briefly, what is SB-54? SB-54 is a Bill that would allow for the development of a mural in the Kansas State Capitol commemorating the United States Supreme Court decision entered May 17, 1954, in the case of *Browns v. Board of Education*.

The physical recommended location of mural is next to the former Supreme Court Room which is presently closed to the public for renovation. SB 54 will allow a newly created Capitol Preservation Committee to oversee such development for the placement of the mural.

Furthermore, the mural would not be funded utilizing taxpayers' resources (funds). The mural will be funded through private donations and contributions. Guidelines and procedures would be established for receiving and accepting contributions and donations.

The State of Kansas has been in the forefront of providing freedom and safety for people of color. This is evidenced by the southern exodus through Kansas which resulted in the creation of a town called Nicodemus, Kansas. During the month of February, as we celebrate Black History which is American History, passage of SB-54 would further establish this state's commitment to pluralism and its respect and appreciation for all of its citizens. Today we cannot sign a document, flush a toilet, press a shirt or maneuver through traffic without recognizing the contribution of Americans of African descent.

The State of Kansas is a cheerleader for changes, this so because the Brown versus the Board of Education's decision made it possible for the many recognitions it received (academic achievements, sports-Championships-social, politically). Many of the participants were educated in Kansas schools. Most recently, two African-Americans because of that decision were selected to lead Kansas schools, Turner Gill the Kansas Jayhawks and Ron Prince, Kansas Wild Cats. Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little, an African American woman, was chosen to lead the largest academic university (Kansas University) in the State. These honorable mentions are just a birds-eye-view of what is happening in Kansas and the significance of institutional change that we can claim today.

I am concerned that without the passage of SB-54 this generation and those to follow will forget the great sacrifices and accomplishments of the past and how they influence our present and future. My fellow Kansans, if we could use our political differences and bias to our advantage, a decision would be made that would return SB-54 to the HOUSE to be voted on.

I have faith and strongly believe that a favorable vote by the full House of Representatives would pass SB-54, thus becoming law. By this occurring it will provide an opportunity for all individuals that visit the State Capitol Building to view history and see the cultural and

education advancement still being made in Kansas from being a Free State in a time when America was becoming a United States.

The pictorial grandeur of a mural depicting this landmark decision that changed the nation and the world, would also give those visiting the State Capitol Building, inspiration and curiosity to visit and explore other important sites in the State. Kansas already attracts national and international visitors and thousands of school children. With the age of technology, more visuals are needed to fully enjoy and educate our children and their children. We can no longer depend on the written media as our dominate legacy carrier.

By enacting SB 54 into law, this would place the State of Kansas on the world stage, providing sound education for all citizens regardless of racial, political, language, ability or economic differences. The State of Kansas has exported many products throughout the world, I think now is the time to exported our culture and history and be recognized for our efforts. We should not deprive the citizens of Kansas its rich history while others are utilizing this historical decision to advance their own people. Many global communities utilize the 1954 Supreme Court Decision to advance their causes of equality, and education of their people. We on the other hand sometimes shoot ourselves in the foot by not providing our own citizens some of the richness of our history through visualization. We do not give ourselves full credit for this significant historical accomplishment.

The State of Kansas has been a trailblazer for many years, and now is not the time to stop, we must tell our story about one of the most important accomplishments in the history civil (human) rights movement in these United States through SB-54.

Not too long ago the United States reached a milestone in its history in which; Kansas played a major role in that accomplishment (elected its first African-American President with roots, right here in Kansas – President Barack Obama. His mother and grandparents were from Kansas). The SB 54 proposal will remind citizens that Kansas is a true trailblazer State and not one that just talk, but backs its talking through action and not reaction. The State can take great pride in being part of the accomplishment.

Once, traveling from Kansas City to Washington, D.C., one of the first observations made on Midwest Airline was an article entitled “History Lessons” in *My Midwest*, the official magazine of the airline. The writer of the article talked about the 1954 Supreme Court Decision Brown v. Board of Education. It’s time for Kansans to tell the story, let’s be in the fore front of accomplishment by sending SB 54 back to the Full House of Representatives. (see insert)

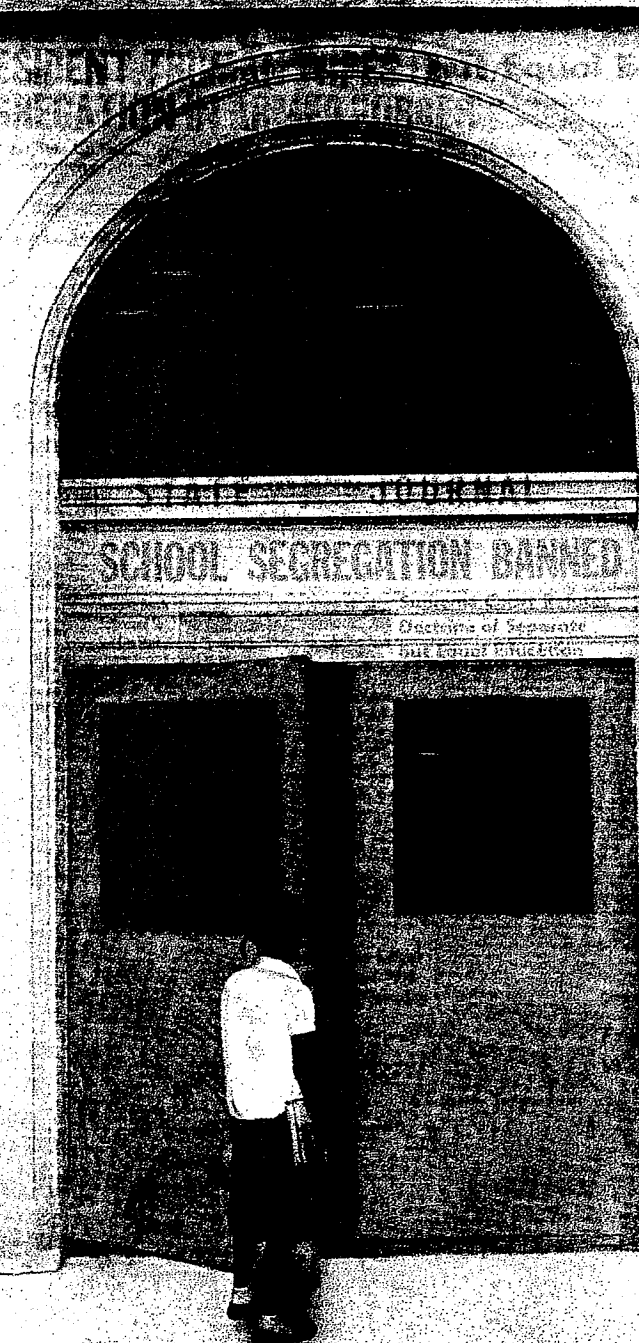
I am very much in support of SB 54 because every visitor to the State Capitol will leave with a greater appreciation of the Capitol and with a visual imprint that will last forever. Visitors will think of the State as one solidified institution. We have before us an opportunity to “set in stone” a unique and important part of American history for all to witness. Let’s not pass the opportunity that will provide future generations’ with visual historical information about our past, and carry them into the future with a better understanding of their role in the global community. For these reasons, I ask that you advance SB 54 to the next level as it will benefit the State of Kansas, our Country and the world. .

# History Lessons

A former segregated school in Topeka, Kan., takes visitors back to a time when division was taught before addition—and celebrates a court decision that changed race relations forever. By Sarah Smarsh • Illustration by Joel Peter Johnson

Tucked in a quiet corner of Topeka, Kan. (an hour from Kansas City), the former Monroe Elementary School sits amid a small cluster of warehouses and brick buildings. Enormous trees evoke a sense of calm, and the building itself is traditional 1920s architecture.

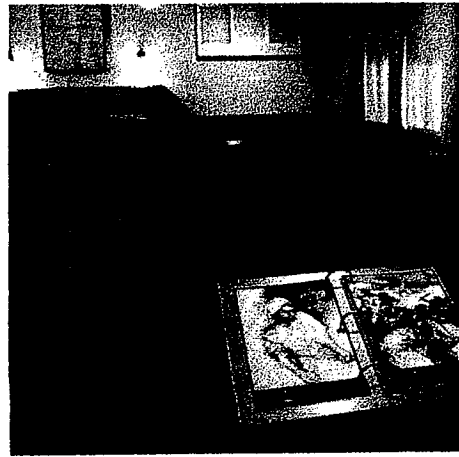
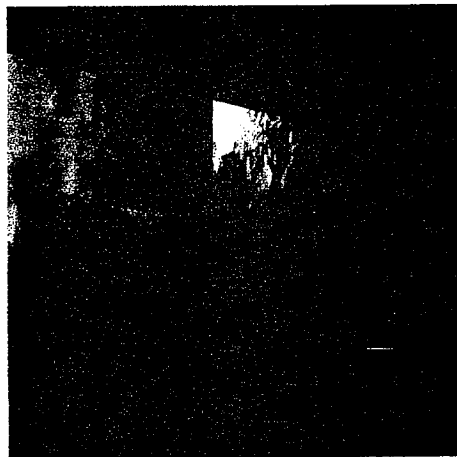
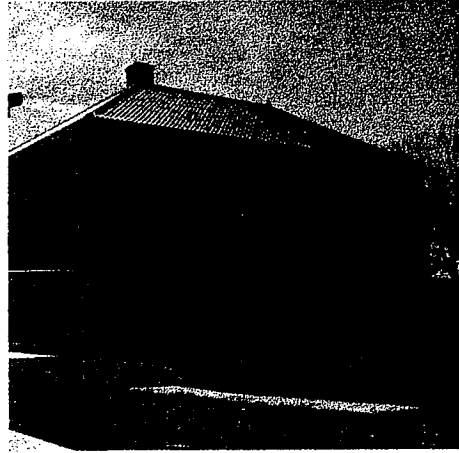
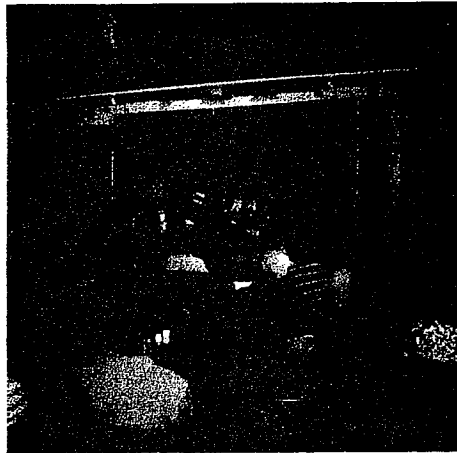
Fifty-five years ago, however, the scene was not so bucolic: Monroe was a pivotal location in the battle over racial separation in American classrooms. It was one of four grade schools for African-Americans in the capital city where the landmark Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* originated, in part. Monroe closed in 1975, but was reborn two decades later as the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site.



Since opening five years ago, tens of thousands of people from more than 20 countries have visited the school-turned-museum, which is operated by the National Park Service. Each year, about 30,000 visitors—including many school children—walk its halls and step into its classrooms to learn about racial segregation and the people who fought on all sides of the controversy.

Park ranger Joan Wilson says that visitors come to the site for many reasons.

"Some come here looking for closure. Some come to remind themselves of what they lived through. Some come to make amends; they were whites who didn't take a stand, or they were perpetrators themselves," says Wilson, who previously served as a ranger at



(clockwise from top left): A jazz concert in the auditorium; the site's exterior; a renovated classroom; the Hall of Courage

Grant's Tomb in New York City. She has been in Topeka since 2006, when she requested a transfer to immerse herself in a historic landmark she regards very seriously.

"The exhibits go all the way back to the enslavement of Africans in this country. Coming here is looking into history—a very confusing time where we, as Americans, came to a crossroads," Wilson says. "It's how we bury those old ghosts."

At the *Brown v. Board* site, those ghosts are everywhere. In the old auditorium, screens flash powerful images related to segregation. On the walls are photos of famous African-American thinkers including Ida B. Wells, Zora Neale Hurston, W.E.B. DuBois and Langston Hughes. Meanwhile, an older African-American man guides a schoolgirl through a history lesson in the film *Race and the American Creed*.

The "Education and Justice" exhibit includes interactive stations such as touch-screen history lessons and biographies of some of the first African-American students to enter white schools, including the famous "Little Rock Nine."

The most riveting experience of the whole site may be

the "Hall of Courage"—a dark, narrow passage between ceiling-high screens that show footage of the many whites who taunted and threatened students walking toward newly integrated schools. Wilson says that walking down this hall is an emotional experience for many.

The Hall of Courage was the brainchild of Cheryl Brown Henderson, president of the Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research, which spent 14 years working to make the site and its exhibits come to fruition.

"I wanted people to have a visceral experience—to feel how scary it was being part of this effort to integrate schools. It resonates for everyone, not just African-Americans," says Brown Henderson, whose father attempted to enroll her sister at an all-white Topeka school in 1951 and eventually became the "Brown" in *Brown v. Board*.

"The mission was to make the story accessible to the public. It's a universal story of people being denied certain rights. Education is the foundation of citizenship, yet it was being withheld from a group of people," says Brown Henderson, who was three years old when desegregation was mandated.

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"The goal was to tell the African-American experience in a way that is interactive and easy to understand."

While the case utilized Brown Henderson's father's name, it also involved 12 other plaintiffs in Kansas. The Supreme Court consolidated it with similar cases initiated by the NAACP in Delaware, Virginia, South Carolina and Washington, D.C. Deliberations were organized under the Kansas case to distance the dialogue from the deeply divided South.

Brown Henderson is quick to underline that *Brown v. Board* resulted not just from the courage of individuals like her father, but also from "a well thought-out, organized movement by the NAACP," and the "legal brilliance" of Thurgood Marshall and others. Similarly, the site resulted from this kind of tenacity—in this case, on the part of her foundation.

"People tend to think these national sites spring up because Congress woke up one morning and thought to create them, but that's not the case," says Brown Henderson, whose dedication earned her the National Education Association's highest honor, the Friend of Education Award, in 2005.

The site gives a nod to that collective energy necessary to affect change: In a former classroom space, the "Legacy of

*Brown v. Board of Education*" exhibit allows visitors to listen to protest music by artists from Billie Holiday to Bob Dylan. The walls are covered in images of current barriers to education—the Catholic-Protestant divide in Ireland, remnants of South African apartheid, regimes oppressing women in Afghanistan.

Near this classroom, a film shows an African-American man from the Civil Rights era, complete with fedora hat, skinny tie and thick black eyeglasses, passing a baton to an African-American boy, who turns and keeps running. It's this idea of keeping the Civil Rights legacy alive that drives the Brown Foundation, which provides scholarships and sponsors programs on diversity and education, including the "Race and the American Creed" series of events and exhibits taking place at the site throughout the year.

"Change is made one-on-one and becomes a chain reaction," says Brown Henderson, who acknowledges that there is much work left to be done in the pursuit of equal education. "You can legislate behavior, but [you] can't legislate the hearts and minds of people." ■

MIDWEST AIRLINES offers daily flights to and from Kansas City. Details can be found at [midwestairlines.com](http://midwestairlines.com).

## SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

The "Race and the American Creed" series at the *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic site features exhibits and concerts all year long.

### "Oh, Freedom Over Me"

Through Jan. 30 In the summer of 1964, eight photographers—who formed the Southern Documentary Project—recorded the rapid social change taking place in Mississippi and other parts of the South. This travelling photography exhibit is from the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University.

### "Quilting African American Women's History: Our Challenges, Creativity, and Champions"

Feb. 15 to March 30 This exhibition examining the rich history of African-American women was organized by the National

Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center of the Ohio Historical Society and curated by internationally renowned artist and historian Carolyn Mazloomi, Ph.D.

### *To Kill a Mockingbird: The Big Read*

Feb. 18 at 2:30 p.m. The Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library is partnering with the Brown site for a community discussion of *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.

### Saturday Night at "The Down Beat"

March 28 at 7 p.m. Renowned blues and jazz musician Kelly Hunt celebrates National Women's

History Month with a musical journey through the history of female singers.

### "To Enjoy and Defend Our American Citizenship: Fighting for Civil Rights in the Shadow of the Chinese Exclusion Act"

April 3-30 This important exhibit, presented by the Chinese Historical Society of America and the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, reveals how the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 tore apart families and halved the number of Chinese-Americans living in the country, while denying those who were here the ability to become U.S. citizens.

### *Brown v. Board of Education* National Historic Site Fifth Anniversary

May 17 Since its grand opening in 2004, tens of thousands of people from more than 20 countries have visited the site. Programming for the anniversary celebration is to be determined.

### "Desegregation and Civil Rights Political Cartoons by Herb Block"

June 1-30 This exhibition features a selection of original cartoons spanning Herb Block's career as a political cartoonist, including work about desegregation and civil rights.

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## Full History of the Bill

S 0054

Bill by Hensley, Faust-Goudeau, Haley

Concerning the state capitol and grounds. Effective date: Statute Bk.

01/21/2009 S Introduced -SJ 51

01/22/2009 S Referred to Federal and State Affairs -SJ 54

03/10/2009 S CR: Be passed by Federal and State Affairs -SJ 290

03/12/2009 S COW: Be passed -SJ 311; EFA: Passed; Yeas 40 Nays  
0 -SJ 311

03/16/2009 H Received and introduced -HJ 299

03/17/2009 H Referred to Federal and State Affairs -HJ 304

03/19/2009 H CR: Be passed as am. by Federal and State Affairs -HJ  
342

04/03/2009 H Withdrawn from calendar, referred to Economic  
Development and Tourism -HJ 638

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