

The Brownsville Colored Normal School
Dorothy Granberry, Geneva Miller Historical Society

The flyer accompanying this article is from the early 1880s, probably 1881 or 82 as Rev. Martin Winfield is listed as a member of the school's Board of Managers and he died before 1883. The flyer announces that the Brownsville Colored School offers a teacher's training course (normal course of study). It is assumed that this is the same 1867 school that by 1890 was known as Dunbar High School. Rev. Martin Winfield, the pastor at First Baptist church, was one of the original trustees of the 1867 school. The Brownsville Colored School operated 10 months out of the year. Its curriculum included bookkeeping, algebra, natural philosophy, physiology, geography, music, etc.

The principal was H. C. Smith who may have been brought to Brownsville specifically to head the school just as John R. Gloster was recruited from Roger Williams University in 1886. H. C. Smith is not listed as a Brownsville resident in the 1880 census.

Eight others are listed as associates of the school in addition to Rev. Winfield and Principal H. C. Smith. G. Estes is likely Green Estes, a 35 year old barber who was elected as a county official in the early 1880s. Robert Hafford was in his early 40s, farmed and was born in NC. W. Mabry is likely William Mabry, a fisherman in his early 40s who was born in GA. C. Johnson is likely Ceasor Johnson, a farmer in his mid 40s.

Readers who recognize other listed persons or have additional information are encouraged to share this with the Geneva Miller Historical Society. Such information can be sent to the writer at dgrnbrry@aol.com or given to John Ashworth.