

Negroes and later a college and then university, the school has provided resources for educating teachers, high school students, and farmers. "Teachers were needed to transform former slaves into literate students ready for the rigors of advanced instruction and ultimately better economic opportunities," reads the 2001 National Register for Historic Places nomination.

At the turn of the 20th century, the school offered progressive training in industrial courses such as carpentry, sewing, mattress making, gardening, and printing. The university also provided an education for the agricultural extension service and even had a dairy and livestock with their own pastures on campus. Alabama A&M offered short courses during the winter for local African American farmers to become better educated about their land, seed, and production.

The Laboratory School at Alabama A&M University was the only high school for African American students in Madison County in the early 20th century. It offered higher (than 8th grade) educational courses by professional faculty. This high school was part of a tradition of higher education provided by historically black colleges and universities as a means to fill a gap. High schools such as these played a dual role in providing an opportunity for young educators to obtain training and for providing higher education to the African American community. The students of the Laboratory School in turn were provided with the skills and knowledge to become qualified applicants to colleges and universities.

Also located on the university's campus was the Councill School, one of nine Rosenwald schools built in Madison County. Approved in 1925, it was a two-room schoolhouse and cost \$3,200, one of the more expensive schools only surpassed by the \$3,700-Toney School. The African American community gathered an impressive total of \$1,600 for the school, while \$900 of public funds were allocated, and the Rosenwald Fund provided another \$700. The school was insured for \$2,100.

The school was named for William Hooper Councill who had many schools around Huntsville named after



(Left) Councill Training School in the 1950s (Huntsville Revisited Facebook Page) **(Middle Left)** A Dairy Barn on the Alabama A&M Campus (National Register of Historic Places Nomination Photographs) **(Middle Right)** A Dairy Barn Complex on the Alabama A&M Campus (National Register of Historic Places Nomination Photographs) **(Bottom)** Old Councill Training School on the Alabama A&M Campus (National Register of Historic Places Nomination Photographs)



him. The school served grades 1 through 6, two grades per room, including a third teacher working in the large industrial room. More rooms might have been added later. Records show it also had a nearby privy or outhouse. The Councill School was originally located just northwest of Alabama A&M University's Palmer Hall but was moved to the west side of Meridianville Road next to the ROTC center on campus, before being moved again to an unknown location.