

## Fred Rausch Jr. interview

Fred Rausch, Jr. grew up in East Topeka and attended Parkdale Elementary School, Lincoln Junior High, and East Topeka Junior High. Rausch was elected to the Topeka School Board in 1957, shortly after the Brown v. Board Supreme Court decision that declared segregated educational facilities unconstitutional. He was partially responsible for the integration of teachers. When the school board attempted to place African American teachers in positions at formerly white schools they encountered harsh opposition from both white and black parents. He recalls that this furor died down after a few years. Rausch also discusses how the school districts were rearranged so that children attended a grade school that was no more than six blocks from their home, although he vehemently maintains that the school board never gerrymandered districts for racial purposes. While he admits that, sociologically, integration may have improved students' feelings of self-worth, he is not convinced that integration has improved students' learning abilities and overall education. Rausch left the Topeka Board of Education two years before the Brown case was reopened in 1979. Cheryl Brown Henderson conducted the interview. The Brown v. Board oral history project was funded by Hallmark Cards Inc., the Shawnee County Historical Society, the Brown Foundation for Educational Excellence, Equity, and Research, the National Park Service and the Kansas Humanities Council. Parts of the interview may be difficult to hear due to the quality of the original recording.

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