

Fort Scott Colored Public Schools

We moved to Fort Scott, Kansas in 1879 from South Carolina. The war had ended and we decided to move here to go to school.

I was really nervous about the move, but eventually got used to the idea after we'd lived here a while. I, along with other students, worked for another family doing housework and such.

I started school in the fall, and my first day was the hardest of them all. Everything was so new. Before I wasn't even allowed to learn our letters, but here they taught us things from English to Art. I barely knew my left from my right until I came to Fort Scott Colored Public School, but had learned a lot before I left.

This school has been many things as I hear. I've learned that originally it was a hospital for soldiers. Towards the end of the war, it was a schoolhouse for colored children and adults, called the Freedmen's school. Freedmen's school was then replaced after the war with its current school, Fort Scott Colored Public School. Most kids here were more than willing to go to school. We all wanted to learn.

Although I was scared at first, I began to feel comfort here, as I saw the equally scared faces of the others. None of us really knew what to expect.

When I walked down the hall, I saw a sea of dark faces similar to mine. Overall scared expressions filled their faces, but faded after a while. Our fear was soon replaced by the craving to learn new things.

Some subjects in school intrigue me, but others I find to be confusing. Science isn't my favorite subject but it's interesting. I like hearing about how things are made and how they work. I'm confused by math. It took me a while to learn my

letters but took even longer for me to learn my numbers. Needless to say it's not my favorite.

I love history; I enjoy hearing about the people that came before us. Art is also fun. They teach us to draw, paint and other creative things. I hope one day to be a writer though, for it is my favorite class to take.

I've made friends with most of the other kids here. George Carver is also in my class, he shows a lot of potential in science and math. He often has to explain things to me.

I enjoy going to school, as do most of the other students here. We're taught things that we weren't even allowed to learn before. Life across the U.S. is really changing. I went from being born into slavery with limitations on what I could know or not, to being taught new things in a school.

Public Colored schools give people a new start to broaden their knowledge and meet people. A lot of us here connect because of our lives and because of the things they'd been told and or seen. These schools are a new opportunity for the students. All in all these schools are good for us, all of us that attend them. These schools are progress. I believe it's a start to something better.