

11 Graduate From Oakland Community School

"WE WANT TO SET EXAMPLES FOR THE LITTLE CHILDREN"

(Oakland, Calif.) — It was a time for beautiful memories as well as anticipation of the future at the Oakland Community School (OCS) graduation ceremonies here last Wednesday. In the beautifully simple language of children, the 11 graduates—seven girls and four boys—of the model elementary level school paid tribute to the unique, quality education they received.

Following their processional into the crowded auditorium of the Oakland Community Learning Center (OCLC), the graduating class began their last program as OCS students. The 11 children made a striking picture as they took the stage, with the girls attired in lovely white dresses and the boys in sharp beige suits.

The 1977 OCS Graduating Class included Elizabeth Baker; Lorene Banks; Mary Banks; Walter Butler; Sean Carter; Alisha Keyes; Lasonja Means; Steven Smith; Glen Thornton; Louise Williams; and Billie Jo Wright.

The graduates began by reciting a poem they wrote reflecting on how the spirit of love and concern that pervades the OCS contributed to their individual and collective growth and development.

Perhaps they best summed up their feelings in the statement, "We want to make things better for the little children we will leave behind."

The children then did an excellent pantomime of remembrances from the past year. As one student explained aloud the different activities which the children were involved in, other children acted these activities out. Included among the highlights of the 1976-77 school year were the School Spelling Bee; the Black Engineers Conference last fall at which the OCS was the only school to put on an exhibit; a field trip to the Afro-American Cultural and Historical Society in San Francisco; and the unforgettable baseball games played with the staff.

Next, the graduates were joined by all of the children of the School in singing "There's A Little Wheel A' turning In My Heart" and "Love Is The Answer."

Children have dreams of the future, of what they will be when they become adults, of what they would like the world to be. In the next portion of the program, the graduates shared their dreams with their parents, teachers and friends. Among the lives which the graduates aspire to pursue are those of a nurse, doctor, social science, science, mathematics and language teachers, and professional basketball and football players.



Following the singing of the inspiring "We Can Do Anything," the graduates received their beautiful school rings.

Next on the program was the presentation of the Parent of the Year Award. Elaine Brown, executive director of Educational Opportunities Corporation (EOC), the community-based, nonprofit organization which administers the OCS, announced that Mrs. Mary Means, mother of graduate Lasonja Means, had been selected as this year's winner of the coveted award. Mrs. Means, who headed the Parent Advisory Board during the past year, received a lovely bouquet of red roses and a necklace in appreciation for her tireless efforts on behalf of the School.

The program concluded with Ericka Hugins, director of the OCS, presenting the certificates of graduation to the 11 proud and happy children. □



(A) 1977 OCS graduates, (B) ERICKA HUGGINS hands graduation certificate to MARY BANKS, (C) Graduates doing pantomime on remembrances of past year, (D) OCS student body, (E) ELAINE BROWN with OCS Parent of the Year, Mrs. MARY MEANS.

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Oakland Community School Graduation

"I WANT TO HELP MY PEOPLE BE FREE"



BPINS photo

The proud and beautiful 1976 Oakland Community School graduates: (left to right) **THERESA WILLIAMS, VALERIE WILSON, BARBARA BAKER, JEANINE WILLIAMS, CLEVELAND WILLIAMS, STEFAN GIBSON, EUGENE BURKS, and ALPHONSO LITTLE.**

(Oakland, Calif.) - "We can do anything because anything is possible. . . We can save the world. . . We can bring harmony. . . We can make life begin again, you and me."

These words from the song *We Can Do Anything*, sung by the eight truly "Black and beautiful" 1976 graduates of the Oakland Community School (OCS) at the June 10 graduating ceremonies, appropriately captured the uplifting spirit of pride and joy that filled the OCS last Thursday evening.

An overflow crowd gathered in the auditorium of the Oakland Community Learning Center to witness the memorable program (the third graduation for the School), which alternately had the audience laughing in stitches and openly and shamelessly shedding tears of happiness and togetherness. The center of attention was quite naturally the graduates — Valerie Wilson, Eugene Burks, Theresa Williams, Jeanine Williams, Barbara Baker, Stefan Gibson, Alfonso Little and Cleveland Williams. Clearly aware that this was their last activity as OCS students, the young graduates took the opportunity to give their heart-felt expression on what the OCS had meant to them. In the process, they created a night that will live in their memories and those of the audience for years to come.

Strikingly dressed in white, the graduates proceeded into the auditorium beaming with smiles of expectation. After they had taken their seats on stage, they began the program with a recitation entitled "Our School" in

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SPONSORS A WIDE VARIETY OF VALUABLE PROGRAMS

O.C.L.C.: A HAVEN FOR THE BLACK COMMUNITY

Since its opening in October, 1973, the Oakland Community Learning Center (OCLC) has become a haven for the Black community of East Oakland, serving the community with a variety of free educational, cultural and social programs virtually nonexistent elsewhere in the city of Oakland. The following is Part 1 in a series of articles on the numerous OCLC programs — programs that make the OCLC the highly respected community institution that it is.

PART 1

(Oakland, Calif.) - The Oakland Community Learning Center is truly a multipurpose institution. Sponsored by the E.O.C. Service Corporation, a nonprofit, tax-exempt community-based organization, the OCLC, through its friendly and courteous volunteer staff, provides a wide variety of services and activities for local residents, young and old, to become involved in.

OCLC programs include the following:

•George Jackson People's Free Medical Clinic — Known throughout the Bay Area for its high quality free medical treatment and preventative health care, the George Jackson People's Free Medical Clinic pro-



The People's Free Medical Clinic provides quality free health care to Black and poor people.

vides an alternative to the high cost, inadequate health care that private doctors and public hospitals usually offer to Black and poor people.

Ablly assisted by a team of laboratory technicians, nurses and other volunteer health personnel, the doctors who freely give of their time at the Clinic treat patients for common physical ailments and refer them to specialists if necessary. Laboratory testing is also provided in conjunction with local hospitals.

The motto of the Clinic is "The



Right To Health Is The Right To Life." In keeping with its belief that human beings are entitled to decent health care, the Clinic offers comprehensive health care to the community, including: a Child Health Care Program; screening for Sickle Cell Anemia, iron deficiency anemia and tuberculosis; referrals; and complete physical examinations. Follow-up is key to the Clinic's services, and patients are encouraged to come in for periodic check-ups so that special pro-

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THIS WEEK IN BLACK HISTORY

October 28, 1862

On October 28, 1862, the First Kansas Colored Volunteers repulsed and drove off a superior force of rebels at Island Mound, Missouri. This was the first engagement for Black Union troops in the Civil War.

October 24, 1923

In the early part of the 20th century there was a mass migration of Black people from the South to the Northern cities. On October 24, 1923, the Department of Labor estimated that almost 500,000 Black people had left the South during the previous 12 months.

October 24, 1923

On October 24, 1923, *Runnin' Wild* opened at the Colonial Theater on Broadway. The Miller and Lyles production introduced the Charleston dance to New York and the world.

October 24, 1924

Dixie To Broadway, the first real revue by Black people, opened at the Broadhurst Theater in New York City, with Florence Mills in the starring role, on October 24, 1924.

October 26, 1934

At a conference in New York City, representatives of the NAACP and the American Fund for the Public Service planned a coordinated legal campaign against segregation and discrimination on October 26, 1934. Charles H. Houston, vice dean of Howard University Law School, was named to direct the campaign.

October 25, 1972

In an infamous decision, on October 25, 1972, Judge Philip Romiti acquitted former Cook County State's Attorney Edward V. Hanrahan and 13 co-defendants of charges of conspiring to obstruct justice in the December 4, 1969, shootout in which Illinois Black Panther Party leaders Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were murdered.

Fall Free Film Series

At The OAKLAND COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

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Nov. 2

The Other Francisco



The Other Francisco is a Cuban film that deals with slavery there in the early part of the 19th century. The story centers around a slave named Francisco and the woman he loves, who is also a slave. Eventually they are separated by the slavemaster for his own lustful purposes which ultimately leads to the death of Francisco. An excellent film not to be missed.



Rated G

Nov. 9

The Life & Times Of Judge Roy Bean



The critics have nothing but praise for this Western chronicle that is loosely based on the life of the Southwest's legendary "hanging judge," Roy Bean (Paul Newman). Bean, an outlaw wanted for a variety of frontier crimes, takes over a desolate west Texas outpost by gunning down 11 other outlaws singlehandedly and proclaims himself "the only law west of the Pecos."

Rated R

Nov. 16

Independence Day



Independence Day is the true story of a young Black couple who come to Los Angeles from the South, seeking a new life. The film depicts their struggle for self-determination in the working class community; a struggle against unemployment, and poverty; a struggle for better education, better housing, and better relations with each other. Independence Day is a chronicle of the difficulties that often befall Black people trying to better their lives, both individually and collectively.

Rated G

"I WANT TO HELP MY PEOPLE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

which they described those qualities and characteristics that make the OCS the special place that it is for them and for all those fortunate to be a part of it.

In "I Remember," each of the graduates spoke of the experiences and activities that meant the most to them while they were OCS students. Throughout this segment of the program, while one graduate related the "Remembered" experience, the other graduates pantomimed the stories.

YOUTH COMMITTEE

Barbara talked about the Youth Committee, an organization composed of two representatives from Groups 3 through 8 at the School which helps to set student policies; the Youth Store where the children sell various items in order to make money for the School; the

newspaper and the Movie Committee, of which Barbara was chairperson.

While Stefan recalled the trip to the Port of Oakland, the graduates pantomimed the day the AC transit bus came to the School to pick them up. Cleveland described the OCS radio station while the other graduates enacted all the different jobs it took to make the station work. Already a budding poet, Valerie talked about the themes of her poetry, explaining that they are "about my life" and "survival."

Theresa gave a touching account of her pet hamsters (and everyone had a good laugh watching Eugene portray one of the hamsters being fed, bathed and, eventually buried.) Eugene shared his love for track and field. A visit to the San Quentin 6 trial in Marin County was an experience that stood out in Alfonso's mind and the children enacted how they were

body searched. Jeanine reminisced about a visit she and Valerie made to San Quentin Prison to visit Johnny Spain, a member of the Black Panther Party and one of the defendants in the Six trial.

Graduation ceremonies usually bring to the graduate's mind, "What will I do with my life?" and the OCS graduates were honest and sincere as they attempted to answer this always burning and difficult question. Barbara said that she wants to be a lawyer; Stefan, a "revolutionary" doctor; Cleveland, a veterinarian; Valerie, a writer; Theresa, an actress; Eugene, a football player; Alfonso, a businessman and Jeanine, "Whatever I can do to make my people free." Indeed, each of the eight youth expressed his or her desire to use their skills and talents to serve their community.

The entire student body of the OCS—whose



The Oakland Community School graduates begin their processional march upon entering the OCS auditorium (left) and the youngsters from Groups 1 and 2 (right) sing along with the rest of the progressive school's student body.

The proud 1976 graduates of the Oakland student body sing together for

O.C.S. Director Ericka Huggins Highlights Chicago Alternative Schools Conference

Certainly one of the highlights of the recent Alternative Schools Conference held in Chicago on May 22 and 23 were the presentations made by Ms. Ericka Huggins, director of the widely acclaimed Oakland Community School. First, at a Saturday workshop on the subject of "Model Schools and the Model Schools Concept," and then in a Sunday address to the entire Conference body, Ericka explained how the essential dynamics of human concern and understanding — combined with creative teaching methods — help make the Oakland Community School the innovative place for learning that it is.

Following, THE BLACK PANTHER reprints Part I of Ericka's thought-provoking address to the Conference.

PART I

"Good afternoon. I still haven't recovered from the flight from Oakland, or the streets of Chicago. This city needs people to organize, people to get things done, not only in education, but in housing, in the courts, everywhere. I wanted to say that before I went on to talk about education. I realize there is a lot of apathy in the country and I certainly don't think Chicago is any different from Oakland, California, or any other city. People need to do some things. I feel that it's important that people not just sit and talk — and have conferences, and seminars, and

workshops. The most important thing is that they do whatever they want to do in their lives.

"I talked yesterday about the Oakland Community School, about alternative education, and community schools. I'd like to begin today to give you a history of the Oakland Community School, why we started it, whom it serves, and in what direction we feel we're heading.

"First, we don't call ourselves an 'alternative school.' We know that we are, but the word 'alternative' has taken on such a negative meaning with Black and poor people that in analyzing who we were, whom we were serving and what we were trying to do, we decided to call ourselves a 'model school.'

"We call Oakland Community School a 'model school' — and it is. We serve 125 children. We're located in East Oakland. We serve children who have been labeled 'educationally disadvantaged,' 'economically deprived,' 'uneducable.' We're working with children who would be in public schools; who have not been to private schools or other alternatives; whose parents have no political affiliation and just want their children to have the best. I know we all want the best for our children. Children deserve the best because they are the future.

"So, in 1971, as a result of harassment that certain children were getting in Oakland — by

certain children I mean sons and daughters of members of the Black Panther Party — a group of parents and instructors got together and decided to form what was then called the Intercommunal Youth Institute. This was the summer of 1971. We began in a storefront with 15 children. What we did was to give our students supplementary Language Arts and Mathematics after school.

"As time went on people became interested



BIPINS photos

#2

BE FREE"

125 children range in age from two and one-half to 11—next went on stage and enthusiastically sang *Love Is the Answer* and *Come Along to the New Creation*. The children gave their typically fantastic performance and received a standing ovation from the appreciative full house audience of family and friends.

The graduates then sang the inspiring "We Can Do Anything," written by talented songwriter and community activist Ms. Elaine Brown, who is also executive director of the Educational Opportunities Corporation (EOC)—the nonprofit, tax-exempt, community-based organization that administers the Oakland Community School.

As the children sang, the tears began to flow down their cheeks and those of many in the audience. These were tears shed by youth who had finished one stage of their development



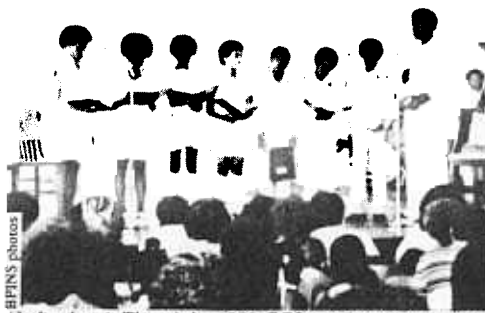
Community School (left), and (right) the entire OCS first time in the 1975-76 school year.

in what they saw us doing and they wanted to include their children in this kind of supplementary education. We gained more children, more community support, and more instructors volunteered to work with us.

"In 1973, we decided to form a nonprofit, tax-exempt, community-based corporation, which we called Educational Opportunities Corporation (EOC). When I say we, I mean the people who were working with the school. I'm not talking about the Black Panther Party alone. In September of that year, we moved into a building which was formerly a Missionary Baptist Church in East Oakland, which is the 'target' Black community in Oakland. Black and Chicano people predominate there.



The presentation of Oakland Community School Director Ms. ERICKA HUGGINS (inset) at the recent Chicago Alternative Schools Conference was one of the event's high lights.



(Left photo) The eight 1976 OCS graduates on stage before the audience. (Right photo) Ms. JEANETTE KEYES (right) receiving the Huey P. Newton "Outstanding Parent" Award from EOC Executive Director, Ms. ELAINE BROWN.

and were about to begin a yet unknown experience; tears shed by a group of children who have the unique distinction of loving their school (how many Black and poor children in America actually love the schools they attend?) and were sad that they had to leave its warm and loving atmosphere; tears of togetherness and love.

OCS students Albert Armour III and Alisha Keyes then presented the graduates with lovely silver rings inscribed with the logos of the School that includes the motto, "The World Is the Child's Classroom."

Elaine Brown followed, making a special presentation. Thanking the community for the strong support it has given the OCS since its founding in 1971 by Black Panther Party leader and founder Huey P. Newton. Elaine announced that beginning with this graduation, each year a Huey P. Newton Award would be given to the most outstanding parent of the School. A surprised and happy Mrs. Jeanette

"We moved in with 50 children and within the span of a month we had 90 children. We have an enrollment now of 125 with a waiting list of 200.

"The children are primarily Black, but we also have Chicano students, Asian students, Native American students and White students. We provide three meals a day, free medical care, parent-student counseling, a full curriculum and a lot of love and individual attention — and the last two things, love and individual attention, are almost the most important.

"Our curriculum includes Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Music, Drama, Dance, Art, Spanish, Physical Education (which includes yoga and martial arts, as well as all of the other sports) and Environmental Studies.

"All of the subject matter that we involve the children with is given to them in a unique way. First of all, our classes are very small; there are no more than 10 children to any one instructor. Though there may be 20 children in one group, there are two instructors for that group as well as volunteers, aides both from universities and community colleges, parents, relatives and people who have just come to us through the publicity about the School.

"We are very much concerned that children learn how to think and not what to think. I really don't feel that people understand what I mean when I say that, so I have a little example.

"In giving a Mathematics lesson our instructors may say to a child, $2 + 2 = 4$, rather than $2 + 2 = ?$ or $2 + ? = 4$. We tell the children $2 + 2 = 4$, instead of the mystery of $2 + ? = 4$. Then we say, 'How do you come about getting four?' This causes a child to



Keyes was honored as the 1976 Huey P. Newton Award winner. Jeanette received a necklace with the School logos and a plaque.

Next, Ms. Ericka Huggins, director of the OCS, presented the proud youth with their certificates of graduation after which they recessed from the auditorium.

After the program was over, everyone enjoyed delicious refreshments in the cafeteria of the Learning Center where they crowded around the graduates to congratulate them and to get their autographs. Later, the graduates and other children of the School enjoyed a fun-filled party.

As one brother commented after the graduation program, "Man, I wish I could have had a graduation like that when I finished elementary school." Glad that the children of the Oakland Community School could, indeed, fulfill such a dream, his thoughts were obviously shared by all who attended—confident that their future was in fine hands. □

think, instead of looking over at another person's piece of paper, asking the person next to them or getting the answer by just complaining that they just don't know how to do it.

"We want the children to learn how to think because we were never given that chance. We were always told what to think, how seriously we should think about it, how long we should think about it, and where it was in terms of priorities in our thinking. All of that. We were duped, all of us — except perhaps the young children who are sitting in the front row because I'm sure their parents won't allow that to happen to them. We were all fooled. We still are fooled, so we want our children to learn how to think.

"We're very, very particular at the Oakland Community School about knowing each child and finding out the problems in the home (if there are some and there usually are because our children are from poor families). Our typical parent is a single working mother. Our next typical parent would be a welfare recipient.

"It's impossible for a child to think about Language Arts if he or she has no food at home. It's impossible for a child to think about Mathematics if she doesn't know whether she'll be able to get to school in the morning, because she doesn't have a pair of shoes. If a child is seeing constant argument or struggle at home, it's impossible to think about what makes flowers grow and why there are stars and the sun and the moon.

"So we try to wipe all the obstacles out of the way and then we involve the children in learning. **TO BE CONTINUED**

O.C.L.C. : A HAVEN FOR THE BLACK COMMUNITY

The following is Part 2 of a **BLACK PANTHER** series of articles on the Oakland Community Learning Center (OCLC), whose wide variety of free educational, cultural and social programs has made it a haven for the Black community of East Oakland.

PART 2

(Oakland, Calif.) — One of the reasons why the Oakland Community Learning Center is so highly respected is that it provides a wide variety of services and activities for local residents, young and old, to become involved in.

In addition to the George Jackson People's Free Medical Clinic, the Seniors Against A Fearful Environment (S.A.F.E.) Club, the Legal Aid and Educational Program, the Adult Education Program, the Free Employment Program and the Free Film Series (see last week's issue of **THE BLACK PANTHER**), other OCLC Programs include:

• **Sports Program** — Martial arts, track, basketball, baseball and soccer are all a part of the OCLC Sports Program. The largely youthful participants in the Sports Program, often coached by well known sports personalities who volunteer their services, periodically compete against local schools and teams. Students in the All-Open Martial Arts Program have participated in numerous local and statewide matches, and have won several honors.

• **Teen Program** — The OCLC Teen Program is highly popular



Two Oakland Community Learning Center activities: African Liberation Day Celebration (top photo) and a jam-packed teen dance.

with Black and poor youth in East Oakland, since the Learning Center is the only place they have to go for after school hours recreation and socializing. Members of the Swingers Teen Club initiate their own activities, which include skating, bowling, dances, parties, photography classes and rap sessions. The teens sponsor fund raisers like bake sales to

secure money for their activities.

• **Sunday Community Forum** — Each Sunday at 4 p.m. the OCLC hosts the Community Forum which features messages by community activists and leaders and top-flight entertainment by local and well-known performers. An excerpt from the Forum's Statement of Purpose says:

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S.A.F.E. Club Sponsors Lively Halloween Party



(Oakland, Calif.) - Last week, the S.A.F.E (Seniors Against A Fearful Environment) Club sponsored a lively Halloween Party for the residents of East Oakland's Lakeside Apartments senior home. Activities for the evening included music and dancing, card games, checkers, dominoes, and bingo. Over 60 seniors attended the event, enjoying the good times and good food that was provided. BPINS photos

THIS WEEK IN BLACK HISTORY

November 1, 1787

On November 1, 1787, the first free school in New York City, the African Free School, opened.

November 7, 1841

On November 7, 1841, there was a slave revolt on the slave trader ship "Creole" which was en route from Hampton, Virginia, to New Orleans, Louisiana. The slaves overpowered the crew and sailed the vessel to the Bahamas where they were granted asylum.

November 2, 1875

"The Mississippi Plan" was implemented soon after the defeat of the Reconstruction government by Southern bigots in the Mississippi state elections on November 2, 1875. The plan included staging riots, political assassinations and massacres. Social and economic intimidation was used later to overthrow the Reconstruction governments in South Carolina and Louisiana.

November 5, 1935

November 5, 1935, was the beginning of the Swing Age, the start of the commercial success of the "Big Band" sound. The late thirties were the heyday of the big bands of Chick Wells, Amy Kirk, Cab Calloway, Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford and Duke Ellington.

November 5, 1968

A record number of Black congressmen, nine, were elected to the House of Representatives on November 5, 1968. The previous high was seven during Reconstruction years.

November 2, 1971

The Black Congressional Caucus and other Black political leaders issued a call for a national Black political convention on November 2, 1971, in Washington, D.C. The goal of the convention would be to persuade the major political parties to develop programs to meet the needs of Black people.

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REVOLUTIONARY CHINESE LEADER DIES AT 82

Creative Curriculum, 150 Students

OAKLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL EXPANDS SERVICES TO YOUTH



The popular and innovative Oakland Community School, one of the most influential educational institutions in the country, began its sixth year with an expanded curriculum and an enrollment of 150 predominantly Black and poor students.

(Oakland, Calif.) — The Oakland Community School (OCS), one of the most influential educational institutions in the state of California, began its sixth year of quality, innovative education here on Monday, September 13, with an expanded curriculum designed to better serve its 150 predominantly Black and poor students.

Fresh from the three-month summer vacation, OCS students — many of whom are new to the School — are starting the year off not only with an enlarged curriculum but with a freshly painted and beautifully redecorated building, the product of long hours of hard work voluntarily donated by parents, staff members and other supporters of the popular model East Oakland school. There was a feeling of excitement and anticipation as the children settled down for what promises to be a challenging school year.

In past years, OCS students, ages 2½ to 11, were organized into eight groups. That structure has been changed this year, however, with the creation of 12 levels that allow the School to expand its curriculum into secondary education.

Providing some insight into why the curriculum has been enlarged, OCS Director Ericka Huggins explained that last year an eight-year-old boy attending the School excelled in mathematics, performing on a high school level. Since he was too young to go to high school but had the ability to do some high school work, the OCS staff began to see the

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At the OCS children of various ages are able to learn at their own rate of speed, receiving specialized instruction in areas in which they excel.

OAKLAND COMMUNITY SCHOOL

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

need for creating a new curriculum structure to meet his needs and those of others like him.

The 12 levels—1 through 3, preschool; 4 through 6, primary, and 7-12, secondary — provide a method whereby children who excel in a particular area can receive the specialized instruction they require. Other children, then, are not pressured to perform beyond their abilities. A 10-year-old child may be in Level 11's mathematics class but in Level 8 for instruction in Language Arts.

In this way, the overall educational goal is achieved—enabling the children to learn at their own rate of speed, a situation almost totally lacking in the highly competitive atmosphere of the public school system. (See next week's issue of THE BLACK PANTHER for details on the OCS curriculum.)

STOREFRONT BUILDING

Since it first opened in a storefront building with 25 students in January, 1971, the OCS has steadily strengthened its educational program. Today, it is a source of inspiration for educators who come from throughout the state and across the nation to view the School as well as nonprofessional people anxious to start a similar program in their own communities. The OCS is so highly respected in the community that already there is a waiting list of over 100 children.

Besides its model approach to education—focusing on teaching the children *how* to think, not *what* to think—the School provides three free meals a day, free medical care and clothing for those who need it. Classes include Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Mathematics, Art, Music, Physical Education and Environmental Studies. Field trips are a vital part of the School's curriculum, in line with the OCS motto, "The World Is

The Children's Classroom."

The 35 OCS staff members—both paid and volunteers—come from all over the country, many having given up higher-paying jobs because of their commitment to the kind of education the School provides. They are more than teachers: they serve as friends and counselors to their students and totally join with the children in the learning experience, a unique experience that children everywhere deserve. □

The children of the Oakland Community School exhibit a closeness in work or at play that is seldom found in the public school system.



The youngest participants in the innovative school program offered by the OCS are the youth in Group 1.

THIS WEEK IN BLACK HISTORY

September 13, 1663

The first serious slave conspiracy in colonial America occurred on September 13, 1663, in Gloucester County, Virginia. The plot conceived by Black slaves and White indentured servants was eventually betrayed.

September 12, 1787

Prince Hall, a Black Revolutionary War veteran, received a charter from the Grand Lodge of England for the first Black Masonic lodge in America, African Lodge No. 459, on September 12, 1787.

September 17, 1861

The school which laid the foundation for Hampton Institute was established at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, on September 17, 1861, with a Black teacher, Mary Peake.

September 18, 1895

Booker T. Washington delivered his "Atlanta Compromise" speech at the Cotton Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 18, 1895.

September 12, 1956

Black students entered a Clay, Kentucky, elementary school under National Guard protection on September 12, 1956. They were later barred from the school on September 17.

September 12, 1962

A fourth Black church burned down near Dawson, Georgia, on September 12, 1962. Three White men admitted to burning the church and were sentenced to seven-year prison terms for arson.

September 15, 1963

Four young Black girls were killed in the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church on September 15, 1963. It was revealed earlier this year that the FBI had prior knowledge of the tragic act but did nothing to prevent it.

September 12, 1969

Robert F. Williams, who was forced to flee the U.S. due to his advocacy of Black armed self-defense, returned to the country on September 12, 1969, after eight years of exile. In radio broadcasts from Hanoi, North Vietnam, Havana, Cuba, and Peking, China, Williams called for an armed revolt in America.