Haydee E. Campbell

Haydee E. Campbell, a native Texan, was the first Black female to receive formal kindergarten training under Susan Blow at the St. Louis Kindergarten Training School. In 1882 she became the supervising principal of the kindergartens for African-American children in the St. Louis Public Schools. The philosophy of the kindergarten program was based on the works of Freidrich Froebel, which emphasized the value of play in how children learn. Ms. Campbell, Josephine Silone Yates, and other kindergarten advocates understood that "high-quality kindergarten training was the key to the success of the public kindergarten movement" (Beatty, 1995, p. 109). In 1896 Campbell became the National Kindergarten Organizer of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) under the leadership of Mary Church Terrell. In Campbell's first speech, "Why the National Association Should Devise Means for Establishing Kindergartens," presented at the 1899 NACW Convention, she says:

> The plan of the Kindergarten system has been molded according to the nature of the child, and through it he may be led to a higher state of development of body, mind and soul and a fuller consciousness of this relationship to nature, to this fellow-man and to his God. This is the aim, the vital purpose of the Kindergarten education. The Kindergarten assists the natural growth of the child, developing the good that in him lies and helping him to receive from his environment the good it may contain. As tools to this end, Froebel has given us songs, games, stories, talks, gifts, occupations, lunch and garden work, and these are only tools to be subordinated always to the thought which directs their use (Campbell, 1899, para. 4).

Sources:

Beatty, B. (1995). Preschool education in America: The culture of the young children from the colonial era to the present. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Campbell, H. (1899). Why the national association should devise means for establishing Kindergartens? Tuskegee, AL: *National Association Notes.*

[Image Source]