



Mrs. Susie Mae Tharpe

Mrs. Tharpe was born in Worth County, Georgia, on October 5, 1909. She attended elementary school in Perry and high school at the Fort Valley Normal School. She received a B.S. in Elementary Education from Fort Valley State College, now University, and did post-graduate work at both Fort Valley State and Atlanta University.

She taught at many schools, including some in rural areas and in church buildings, before transferring to the Houston County Training. Mrs. Tharpe was frequently seen outside the classroom raising funds for school projects, selling or taking tickets for sporting events, or chairing committees for school improvement or community outreach.



Mrs. Tharpe further enriched the lives of her students by taking them on trips to sites such as the Atlanta Zoo and the State Capitol. She was instrumental in bringing the Head Start Program to Houston County – meeting with officials, drafting proposals, and then teaching in the program for two years. In the 1960s she worked with Vernon Jordan of the Economic Opportunity Council in Atlanta to secure federal grants to benefit the community. Mrs. Tharpe passed away in April of 1969 after dedicating more than 25 years of her life to helping the children of Houston County.