

John Chavis opens a school for white and black students

From the Raleigh *Register*, 25 August 1808.

As you read...

John Chavis was an African-American minister and educator who taught both white and free black students. He was widely considered one of the best teachers in the state. Before the fall of 1808, he had taught students of both races together, in his home in Raleigh. After some white parents objected, he began teaching free black children in the evenings, separately. His school may have been the last integrated school in North Carolina until the 1950s.

It may surprise you to learn that free black children could attend school alongside white children as late as 1808. Why do you suppose that was? What does it say about changes in southern society that white parents began to object?

John Chavis takes this method of informing his Employers, and the Citizens of Raleigh in general, that the present Quarter of his School will end the 15th of September, and the next will commence on the 19th. He will, at the same time, open an EVENING SCHOOL for the purpose of instructing Children of Colour, as he intends, for the accommodation of some of his Employers, to exclude all Children of Colour from his Day School.

The Evening School will commence at an hour by Sun^I. When the white children leave the House, those of colour will take their places, and continue until ten o'clock.

The terms of teaching the white children will be as usual, two and a half dollars per quarter; those of colour, one dollar and three quarters. In both cases, the whole of the money to be paid in advance to Mr. Benjamin S. King. Those who produce Certificates from him of their having paid the money, will be admitted.

Those who think proper to put their Children under his care, may rely upon the strictest attention being paid, not only to their Education but to their Morals which he deems an *important* part of Education.

On the web

John Chavis

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/4986>

John Chavis (1762?–1838), a free African American living in North Carolina, was a widely respected minister and teacher with long-reaching influence on both whites and African Americans.

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Notes

1. An hour after sunset.