



## **Transcript Walter Key, Jr.**

**Valinda Littlefield, Interviewer:** So when you think back on teachers and principles what do you think their contributions are to the civil rights movement?

**Walter Key, Jr.:** Well it... at that time it was great and the teachers and principles seem to have had more impact on the people and students at that time than what I hear going on this day and time. And of course it was a struggle and everybody was aware of what we were going through and everybody kind of had a feeling of despair at times and we wanted to improve the conditions. And the teachers and principles had the opportunity to work with the students, parents to try to give them some guidance, some hope as to what could be and what should be so things began to move forward and take place so principles and teachers had very much impact on that era.

**Valinda Littlefield, Interviewer:** Do you know what year you integrated?

**Walter Key, Jr.:** That was in 19..., well when we consolidated it was in 1957, but we started integrating in '64.

**Valinda Littlefield, Interviewer:** And that was in Aiken County.

**Walter Key, Jr.:** Aiken County.

**Valinda Littlefield, Interviewer:**

So when you started integrating did it start out as a voluntary system?

**Walter Key, Jr.:** Right, Right.

**Valinda Littlefield, Interviewer:** Then when did it move to full fledged integration?

**Walter Key, Jr.:** The way we started we had Ridge Spring and Ridge Hill high and elementary were on the same campus. I was principle of the elementary school and Mr. Anderson was principle of the high school. And we had 547 students in the elementary school at that time and there were a



little over 250 students in the high school. So what they started to do...they started in the elementary school, they started at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level and took the 4<sup>th</sup> out of our elementary school and carried them over to the white elementary school. Then the next year they came back and got the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and then to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, a three year period. Then they brought all of them from over at the white school back over to the elementary school and made the high school the middle school and the elementary school was integrated with the black and white.

*End of Video.*