

George S. Buck

IPS Shortridge principal and proponent of segregated public schools

At the 12:35 minute mark of the 2016 WFYI documentary, *Attucks: A school that opened a city*,¹ the narrator stated, "The Chamber of Commerce joined the segregationist push as did parent-teacher organizations and the principal of Shortridge."

Interestingly, the film shows the person in their office at their desk, but the narrator never mentions the principal's name...why?

Could it be because on September 19, 1922, Shortridge principal George Buck went before the IPS school board and endorsed the building of an all-Black Attucks High School² and the consequent Jim Crow school district?

Today a K-6 IPS school, George Buck School 94 at 2701 Devon Avenue, 46219, is named after him.

- <https://myips.org/georgebuck/>
- <https://myips.org/georgebuck/about-us/>

School History

George S. Buck was born in Ohio in 1866. He attended public schools, and began teaching in a one-room school at the age of seventeen. He left teaching long enough to obtain a degree from Wittenberg College, then resurged his career. He came to Indianapolis in 1910 as principal of Shortridge High School, the oldest high school in the city. During the thirty-one years he headed Shortridge, he saw the enrollment and the teaching staff of the school double. The school itself was moved from the old downtown site into the handsome building at 34th and Meridian. The school gained recognition as one of the most outstanding high schools in the United States, widely known for the academic achievements of its graduates.

Buck was famous for his touch with the pupils at Shortridge, an attitude that mixed kindness with firmness, and for his ability as a counselor of young people. The school staff respected him for his leadership, as an educator who knew both the problems and the solutions of running a large secondary school. He became the spokesman on matters affecting high schools in the city, trusted by educators and laymen alike.

Long a resident of the Irvington area, he was active in Methodist affairs and served for years as a Sunday school teacher. He was a thirty-second degree Mason, and a worker in civic and literary activities of Irvington and the larger community. Interested and influential in the work of educational associations, he received honorary degrees from Wittenberg and Butler. Retiring in 1940, he died at Indianapolis in 1949.

1. <https://www.pbs.org/video/wfyi-education-programs-attucks-school-opened-city/>

2. IPS school board minutes *Book W*. p. 397