James A. Hazlett Papers

James A. Hazlett was superintendent of the Kansas City School District from 1955 to 1969. He was leading the school district when desegregation first became an issue.

Descriptive Summary

Creator: James A. Hazlett  
Title: James A. Hazlett papers  
Size: 6 boxes, 84 folders, 5 reel-to-reel tape-recordings  
Location: SC84

Administrative Information

Restrictions on access: Unrestricted access.

Additional physical form available: Reel-to-reel tape-recordings available on CD.

Acquisition information: Gift, February, 2001, Mrs. James (Mary Quinn) Hazlett.

Custodial history: There were items originally donated which dealt with Dr. Hazlett’s involvement with the Central United Methodist Church congregation where he was a long time Sunday School teacher. Mrs. Hazlett requested that these items be returned to her and given to the church.

Citation note: James A. Hazlett papers (SC84), Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library, Kansas City, Missouri.

Collection Description

Biographical/Historical note

James A. Hazlett was superintendent of the Kansas City School District from 1955 to 1969. Prior to this appointment, he was a teacher, principal and director of research for the school district. He was born on May 26, 1917, in Kansas City and died in the same city on September 14, 1997. Dr. Hazlett received all his pre-doctorial education in Kansas City and received his doctorate from the University of Kansas. He became superintendent in Kansas City soon after the landmark school desegregation case, Topeka vs. the Board of Education, and was associated with the district during its early struggles for school desegregation.

After leaving the Kansas City School District in 1969, Dr. Hazlett moved to Denver, Colorado, to work as administrative director of the Education Commission of the States and chairman of the policy committee of the National Assessment Program. After his stay in Colorado he returned to Kansas City and was employed by the Forrest T. Jones and Company insurance agency where he specialized in the administration of insurance programs for educator associations.
Scope and content note

The collection consists of books, photographs, manuscripts, speeches, correspondence, tape recordings, magazine articles, newspaper clippings, brochures, papers, reports, maps, note cards and various personal items and ephemeral material. Subjects deal primarily with education locally and in general as well as local historical subjects.

Noteworthy materials found in this collection include many of Dr. Hazlett’s writings including his educational degree works, the manuscript to an unpublished book entitled “Toward Higher Partnership Relations In Public Education,” some of his speeches, reel-to-reel tape recordings of presentations to teachers meetings in the district, some correspondence, and other papers which he produced. Educational related articles as well as local history related newspaper clippings were in his files. Also are found personal items as school diplomas, selective service draft papers, awards and honors, his resume, and his published obituary.

Of particular significance to the history of desegregation in this time period is the three folders of material concerning the middle school controversy experienced in the mid to late 1960s in the Kansas City School District. These files contain correspondence, reports, news releases from all sides in the situation including the NAACP and CORE, Dr. Hazlett’s testimony to the House Select Committee of the Missouri House of Representatives given in April 1989 is also in the collection, found with the correspondence, 1984-1989. His testimony to the House Labor, Health, Education and Welfare Subcommittee on Appropriations, May 13, 1974, can also be found in the Education Commission of the States folder.

Dr. James Hazlett’s wife, Mary Quinn Hazlett, donated the material and it was picked up on two separate occasions from her home in south Kansas City. She had gone through some of the material and had laid things out. Therefore, the original organization of the collection was not available when brought into Special Collections. The processor has thus arranged the material in folders by general topics and arranged these folders in alphabetical order.

The following books were included with the collection. (Classed in book collection):

- *At the River’s Bend* by Sherry Schirmer and Richard D. McKinzie
- *The Story of the Country Club Plaza* – pamphlet
- *Stein’s Day Trips from Kansas City* by Shifra Stein
- *Elmer Ellis, Teacher, Scholar and Administrator*
- *My First Ninety Years* by Clifford H. Nowlin
- *The Negro Pilgrimage in America* by C. Eric Lincoln
- *The Harry S. Truman Library* by Betty Meuller and Edward Miller
- *Dallas County, Missouri History*
- *The Life of Mabelle Glenn, Music Educator* by George Holgate
- *A Condensed History of the Kansas City Area...* by George F. Green
- *Kansas City, A Celebration of the Heartland* by Hallmark Cards
- *McGuffey’s Fourth Eclectic Reader* (In folder 3)
The following dissertation was included with the collection.


**Collection Inventory**

**Box 1**

**Folder 1**

- Article entitled “The Roots of America’s Educational Problems,” 16p., typewritten
- Handwritten notes (2) concerning publication of article in the Kansas City Star

**Folder 2**

- Photocopies of 8 magazine/journal articles dealing with education and American ideals. Most are from the late 1970s and 1980s.

**Folder 3 - Awards**

- University of Missouri-Kansas City Alumni Awards, 1973, Program
- Metropolitan Community Colleges – 1983
- American Association of School Administrators – 1962
- University of Kansas City, Alumni Association – 1959

**Folder 4 - Brochures**

- Organization of American Historians – Hazlett’s picture on cover
- “Largely Due to Jim’s Leadership…” – Promotional brochure for MSTA, first vice president position

**Folder 5 - Commencement Programs**

- Junior College of Kansas City – 1935
- Teachers College of Kansas City – 1937
- University of Kansas City – 1943
- University of Missouri – 1957
- Park College – 1958

**Folder 6**

- Correspondence – 1957 – 1983
Folder 7

- Correspondence – 1984 – 1989 - Includes a copy of the Metropolitan School Desegregation Case Opinion and the testimony of James A. Hazlett to the House Select Committee of the Missouri House of Representatives, April 19, 1989

Folder 8 - Death related items

- Funeral service program
- Photocopy of obituary from Kansas City Star
- Photocopy of editorial in Kansas City Star
- Kansas City Star obituary information sheet and typed obituary
- Photocopy of newspaper article, Kansas City Star, Dec. 28, 1997, featuring local people who died in 1997 including Dr. Hazlett

Folder 9 - Degrees granted

- Junior College diploma – 1935
- Teachers College diploma – 1937
- Park College presentation – 1958

Folder 10

- Education Commission of the States (1971-1974)
- Memorandums – 2 from Dr. Hazlett, 11/24/71 and 7/26/74 Compact Magazine, V.5, #2, April 1971
- Telegram, 7-8-74, from Frederick Mosteller
- Paper – “Three Areas of Problems Between DAS and Elementary/Secondary—MAEP” – 4/16/74, typewritten
- Minutes – Meeting of DAS/Elementary-Secondary Departmental Staffs, 4/8/74
- Miscellaneous papers

Folder 11 - History Related Papers


Folder 12 - History Related Papers

- “Early Kansas City and Some of Its Leaders,” handwritten, 5 pages, outline form

Folder 13 - History Related Papers

- “The Streets of Kansas City,” typewritten, 5 pages
- Newspaper clipping, photocopy – “George Metcalf: Teacher, homesteader, grandfather,” undated
Folder 14 - History Related

- Newspaper clippings, mostly from the Kansas City Star/Times, dated and undated

Folder 15 - Honors

- School Board resolution expressing gratitude to Hazlett, 1969
- Program- Kansas City School Administrators, honoring Mr. and Mrs. Hazlett, 1969

Folder 16 - Kansas City School District

- “Policy Statement of the Board of Education of the Kansas City, Missouri”
- School District on Desegregation of Education in the Kansas City Metropolitan Area,” typewritten, 8 p., July 23, 1975

Folder 17 - Middle School Controversy

- Correspondence to Hazlett from Bishop Eugene M. Frank, June 10, 1969, Typewritten, 1p.
- “Committee Report Relative to a Proposed Middle School in the Kansas City, Missouri, School District," typewritten, 10 p.
- Hazlett’s statement concerning the Middle School released to school board, typewritten, 5 p., June 15, 1967
- Correspondence, to Mr. James Hazlett from Daniel U. Levine, typewritten, 5 p., June 19, 1967
- “Comments on the Location of a Middle School” by Robert J. Havighurst, Daniel U. Levine, University of Missouri at Kansas City, April 17, 1967, typewritten, 4 p.
- “Previous Estimates on Facility Needs Suggested by Enrollment Trends in the Kansas City, Missouri Public Schools,” typewritten, 4 p.
- Correspondence between Mr. Hazlett and Daniel Levine, May 22, 1967 and June 29, 1967. typewritten.
- Correspondence between Hazlett and Mrs. Edward A. Smith (Education Committee, Kansas City Commission on Human Relations), April 14, 1967, typewritten, 2 p., (2c.)
- Correspondence to Hazlett from Carleton Scofield (Citizens Advisory Committee to the Kansas City Public School Administration), April 10, 1967, typewritten, 3 p., (2c.)

Folder 18 - Middle School Controversy

- “Statement of the Council for United Action on the Proposed Middle School,” typewritten, 4 p., n.d. (2c.)
- “Statement of United Church Women of Kansas City, Missouri Concerning Middle School,” June 1, 1967, typewritten, 1 p.
- “Regional Director’s Report on Racial Isolation in the Public Schools of Kansas City,” NAACP, June 20, 1967, typewritten, 4 p., copy.
- Correspondence to Hazlett from Carleton Scofield, June 19, 1967, typewritten, 1 p.
- Correspondence to the Members of the Board of Education from J. Wallace Carlson (Metropolitan Area Citizens for Education), June 20, 1967, typewritten, 2 p.
- Correspondence to Hazlett from Mrs. Harry Hagan, June 16, 1967, typewritten, 2 p.
- Correspondence to Hazlett from Benjamin L. Hunton (Equal Education Opportunity Program), June 27, 1967, typewritten, 2 p.
- Correspondence to Hazlett from Harry Allen, July 11, 1967, typewritten, 1 p. with article from Focus on Public Affairs, V.1, #11, July 1, 1967, concerning school segregation.
- Correspondence to Mrs. Tom Stubbs from Mrs. Barbara Vaughan, July 6, 1967, typewritten, 2 p.
- Correspondence concerning CUA “Request for Information,” involving Mrs. Thelma King, Edward Matheny, Mrs. Faye Mealy, August, 1967, typewritten, 7 p.
- Kansas City School District maps with some shading in of various areas of the district, 10 c. and a graph indicating total pupil enrollment by race.

Folder 19 - Middle School Controversy

- “Annual Survey of Integration of Staff of Local Schools,” from the office of the Superintendent, October, 1966, typewritten, 6 p.
- Chicago Sun-Time, June 18, 1967, typewritten, 1 p.
- “Kansas City Public Schools Outside City Limits of Kansas City,” 1967, typewritten, 2 p.
- Numerous photocopies of magazine articles dealing with school integration and mostly published in 1967.

Folder 20 - Miscellaneous

- “The Legend of the Squire of the Noland Road,” poem, penciled in
- “About Glenn Travis…,” 5/14/88, typewritten, 2 p.
- “Remarks to Editorial Staff of KC Star” (concerning editorials and cartoon)
Box 2

Folder 1 - Newsletters

- The Country Club Christian, V.34, #26, March 2, 1960
- The School Administrator, May, 1970
- ASBSD Bulletin, V.25, #21, Nov. 1, 1972

Folder 2

- Newspaper clippings, education related, 1976-1991 (Photocopies)

Folder 3

- Newspaper clippings, family related, 1955-1969 (Photocopies)

Folder 4

- Notes and note cards concerning physical Education, Home Economics, etc.

Folder 5

- Notes and note cards continued, including references from magazine articles, etc.

Folder 6 - Pamphlets (Including reprints of articles)

- “The Universe and Dr. Einstein,” Harpers, April, 1948
- “Rewards of Maturity for the Teacher” by Robert J. Havighurst, The Educational Forum, January, 1956

Folder 7 - Pamphlet


Folder 8 - Paper


Folder 9 - Paper

- “Forty Years of School Desegregation,” typewritten, 2 p.
Folder 10 - Paper


Folder 11 - Paper

- “Conflicting Philosophies of Education—Their Issues and Leaders” by James A. Hazlett, typewritten, 10 p., 2 c.

Folder 12 - Paper


Folder 13 - Paper


Folder 14 - Paper


Folder 15 - Paper


Folder 16 - Paper


Folder 17 - Paper

- “Interest and Effort in Education,” typewritten, 3 p.
- “School and Society,” typewritten, 5 p.
- “Reconstruction in Philosophy,” typewritten, 5 p.

Folder 18 - Paper


Folder 19 - Papers

- Untitled paper starting with Contents page, on psychology, typewritten, 36p.

Folder 20

• Paseo High School Reunion Booklets, 1982 and 1983 (2c.)

Folder 21 - Personal Items

• Draft cards and papers
• Paseo Methodist Episcopal Church Youth Service Bulletin, Oct. 29, 1933.
• Public School Diploma, K-7 grades, June 7, 1929
• Grade card – Paseo High School, 1933
• Paseo High School play program, May 12, 1933
• National Honor Society induction ceremony program, April 29, 1932
• Paseo High School diploma, June, 1933

Folder 22 - Photographs - 13

• 3 b & w snapshots of cornerstone laying ceremony, School Board Building at 12th and Oak
• 1 color snapshot, Hazlett in front of church in Johnson City, TX, March, 1978
• 1 b & w, Hazlett receiving award from Terry Bond, President of State Board of Education, August 12, 1985, Jefferson City, Mo.
• 1 b & w, Hazlett shaking hands with Dr. Charles Wheeler
• 1 b & w, Hazlett shaking hands with unidentified man
• 1 b & w snapshot, Hazlett, Mary Quinn, Mayor Ilus Davis, Aug., 1969
• 1 color snapshot, unidentified lady, man (Hazlett?) dressed as Santa, Christmas, 1968
• 2 b & w photos of Hazlett seated at his desk, n.d.
• 2 b & w, 8x10 photos of Hazlett at his desk, n.d.
• 1 b & w, 8x10 portrait view of Hazlett, n.d.

Folder 23 - Programs

• Conference on High Education, Junior League of Kansas City, Missouri, Feb. 17, 1961 (Hazlett on discussion panel)
• National Conference of Christians and Jews, Kansas City Region, April 23, 1963 (Hazlett listed as being honored)
• Rockhurst Day Banquet, June 2, 1956 (President Kennedy attended)
• Rockhurst Jubilee Mass and Convocation, Oct. 4, 1959 (Hazlett received Pro Meritis Award)

Folder 24

• Record Collection List, typewritten, 3 p., handwritten, 1 p.

Folder 25

• Resumes – 3 c., typewritten, 2 the same and 1 different
Folder 26


Folder 27 - Speeches (Possible, may also be papers)

- “What is Your S.A.-Q?”, commencement address, Lawrence Memorial High School, Spring, 1959, typewritten, 4 p.
- “Literacy and Educational Institutions,” typewritten, 8 p.
- “Summary,” typewritten, 4 p.
- “Government and Literacy,” typewritten, 6 p.
- “Volunteerism and Literacy,” typewritten, 4 p.
- “What is Literacy?”, typewritten, 4 p.
- Poster featuring James A. Hazlett as speaker at South Central Business Association meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 6th, n.d.
- “A Larger View of Teaching,” typewritten, 12 p.

Folder 28 - Speeches/Papers, not by Hazlett

- “Moral and Spiritual Values” by Dr. G. H. Reavis, 3/30/56, typewritten, 4 p. and includes letter from author to Hazlett
- “The Religious Invasion of our Public Schools” by R. Lester Mondale, typewritten, 12 p.
- “Some Reflections on Education in America,” typewritten, 1 p.
- “Individuality and Experience” by John Dewey, typewritten, 4 p.
- “The Beavers and the Dam: A Fable Dedicated to All Those Who've Ever Programmed” by Phil Schrodt, typewritten, 4 p.

Box 3

Folder 1

- Thesis, Master of Arts, University of Kansas City, 1942 – James Hazlett
- Revivals and Itinerant Preachers on the Frontier, 1790-1840

Folder 2

Folder 3


Folder 4


Folder 5


Folder 6


Folder 7

- Thesis – Loose material at end

Folder 8

- Transcript/Grades, correspondence concerning

Folder 9

- World War II interview project with Mary Quinn Hazlett, done by Whitney Pope (great, great niece of Mary Quinn). Probably done for a school project.

Folder 10 - Writings concerning friends

- “Our Friends—the Joneses,” typewritten, 6 p.
- “In Remembrance of My Friend, Ruie,” May 9, 1990, typewritten, 4 p., includes newspaper clipping of his obituary.

Box 4 - 5 reel-to-reel tape recordings

- 5 inch reel, in box, Recorded 9/8/59. French translation tape. Speed not given. Location unknown. Converted to CD, April, 2001, by Marr Sound Archives. 12:23 minutes

- 7 inch reel in box, Teacher’s General Meeting, Sept. 4, 1956, Speed not given. Location unknown. Converted to CD, April, 2001, by Marr Sound Archives. 44.37 minutes. Contents: Address by Mr. Hewitt of the Board of Education Address by Mr. Hazlett


Box 5

Folder 1

- Book Manuscript – Toward Higher Partnership Relations in Public Education – Vita, handwritten outline, typewritten summary of chapters, title page, preface (9 p.), table of contents (2 c.)

Folder 2


Folder 3


Folder 4

- Book Manuscript – Chapter I – “Has the Quality of Education Deteriorated?”, 98 p., typewritten, edited version.

Folder 5

Folder 6
- Book Manuscript – Chapter I – “The Decline of Basic Education,” 86 p., typewritten, also the title page, summary, preface.

Folder 7
- Book Manuscript – Chapter I – “Has the Quality of Education Deteriorated?”, 88 p., typewritten.

Folder 8
- Book Manuscript – Chapter II – “Teaching: The Struggle for Professional Status and Role Definition,” p. 87-162, typewritten.

Folder 9

Folder 10
- Book Manuscript – Chapter II - “Teaching: The Struggle for Professional Status and Role Definition,” p. 87-162, typewritten.

Folder 11
- Book Manuscript – Chapter II - “Teaching: The Struggle for Professional Status and Role Definition,” p. 87-162, typewritten.

Folder 12
- Book Manuscript – Chapter II [Chapter III] – “Teachers and Teaching,” 77 p., typewritten, somewhat different from other versions.

Box 6

Folder 1

Folder 2

Folder 3
Folder 4


Folder 5


Folder 6


Folder 7


Folder 8


Folder 9


Folder 10


Folder 11


Folder 12


Folder 13


Processed by Special Collections Librarian, Sara J. Nyman, March/April 2001.