



Born in Troup County, Georgia, Mrs. Mable (Heard) Holley Holley attended the Historic Randolph County Training School in Roanoke, graduating with the Class of 1953.

She enrolled at our beloved H.B.C.U., Alabama A & M In Huntsville, where she received her Bachelor Of Science Degree in Elementary Education.

In the 1960's Mrs. Holley began a long, impressive tenure — spanning twenty-six (26) years — as a public school teacher in Randolph County. From 1965 to 1967, she taught school at Pleasant Hill, in the Delta community. Later, she was assigned to teach at the Randolph County Training School (RCTS), where she was embraced, loved and mentored by such superb veteran teachers as: the late Mrs. Hattie Clark, Mrs. Carrie Winston, Mrs. Attrie B. Henderson, Mrs. Ida C. Shaw, Lilian V. Shealey; and others. Her career took shape under such strong administrators as: the late Mr. Herman L. Shaw, and Mr. Lewis R. Higgs and Dr. Benjamin A. Outland. On July 24, 1970, she made history when she became one of the first African American teachers to desegregate Roanoke City Schools. She was hired to teach at Handley Middle School in Roanoke, Alabama.

In 1991, after 26 years of successful, effective teaching, Mrs. Holley retired from Roanoke City Schools.

One of Mrs. Holley's most pivotal contributions to education locally was serving as an instrument through which the Roanoke City Schools successfully gained Unitary Status. This was important because achieving unitary status means that a school board has satisfied its desegregation obligations and that the Court's supervision of the school can therefore end. This status signaled an end to a decades-long and nationwide struggle to end racial segregation in public schools.