**The Woman’s Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in NC, 1902**

The Woman’s Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina was established in 1902. On March 20, 1902, Charles McGiver, President of the North Carolina Normal and Industrial College for Women at Greensboro, delivered a speech urging students to “Revolutionize the State!” Soon after, the students formed the WABPSH, starting it as simply a student organization and holding its first public meeting on April 3, 1902.[[1]](#footnote-1) Soon, the group’s membership climbed to a statewide organization with the enrollment of middle class, white women. The goals of the group revolved around education reform and better learning environments for students. Between 1902 and 1910, the association was a major player in education reform battling illiteracy and poverty by constructing or rebuilding hundreds of schoolhouses. The organization worked with prominent officials in each community to start the process of education reform.[[2]](#footnote-2) Not long after the program started being successful in the state, other states followed North Carolina’s example, launching their own programs, such as the Interstate Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses including numerous states including Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee, among others.[[3]](#footnote-3) The foundation of the WABPSH was the push that the state and country needed to devise a plan for education reform. It also inspired African American reformers to create their own programs for the betterment of African American schoolhouses and school programs nationwide.[[4]](#footnote-4)

1. Leloudis, James. "School Reform in the New South: The Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina, 1902-191." The Journal of American History. Vol. 69. No. No. 4 (March 1983): pp. 886-909. Accessed September 1, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Belton, Tom. “Women’s Association for the Betterment of Public Schoolhouses." Encyclopedia of North Carolina, 2006. Accessed September 1, 2012. http://ncpedia.org/womens-association-betterment-publi [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Leloudis, James. "School Reform in the New South: The Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses in North Carolina, 1902-191." The Journal of American History. Vol. 69. No. No. 4 (March 1983): pp. 886-909. Accessed September 1, 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Belton, Tom. “Women’s Association for the Betterment of Public Schoolhouses." Encyclopedia of North Carolina, 2006. Accessed September 1, 2012. http://ncpedia.org/womens-association-betterment-publi [↑](#footnote-ref-4)