

Brief Historical B & W Timeline

Rev. 3-8-19

- 1910 – Forest Hill School for African American children in Lexington’s west end closes.
- March 1915 - Board of Education purchases land at the corner of Georgetown and College (now Booker) Streets for the construction of a new school to serve students in the west end.
- October 1915 – Cornerstone is laid for the new school building to be later named for Booker T. Washington, educator and president of Tuskegee Institute.
- Fall of 1916 – Booker T Washington School opens.
- 1953 – Building renovated.
- 1954 – Auditorium constructed and dedicated
- 1970 – School closes
- January 1975 - Urban County Council votes to use community development funds to purchase and renovate the school, along with three other public school buildings, to become a neighborhood center.
- 1977 – Building dedicated as the Black and Williams Center. Named for Evelyn Jones Black and Alex Williams Jr. Ms. Black was a social worker and teacher and held several important positions with the local school system and the University of Kentucky. Mr. Williams was known as the “happy warrior of Lexington” whose accomplishments included hosting a “Cool Summer” radio show that advocated peaceful approaches during times of racial upheavals in Lexington. Mr. Williams was a vocal advocate for the school to be purchased by the Urban County Council.
- September 9, 1996 - Ribbon Cutting and Dedication of the gymnasium which had been unused since the 1970s and rebuilt with funding from the city government.
- 2016 - Major renovations completed to accommodate new offices for the city’s Division of Adult and Tenant Services and the Youth Development Program within the Division of Youth Services. On-site tenants include West End Community Empowerment Project (WECEP), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and Elder Crafters.
- 2017-2019 – Facility upgrades continue including new roof, windows, and electrical.