

institution began **October 1, 1938**. The initial enrollment at the opening of the school consisted of 44 pupils. There were [nine] faculty members, none of whom had seen a deaf child before. However, they were willing to accept the challenge. The original roster of faculty members included Helene Arthur, Owena Joyce Barnes, O. M. Hamilton, I. R. Johnson, J. Marie Spotts, Felton Tate, J. H. Theus, Joseph Eugene Peterson, and Noah Woods. These teachers received extensive training under the supervision of Mrs. Lillian Jones, a white supervising teacher at the Louisiana State School for Deaf (LSSD) Whites.

During the second year of operation, Dr. Wallace L. Bradford was appointed principal of Louisiana State School for Deaf (LSSD). He served in this capacity continuously until the merger of a unitary system in 1978. During his tenure as principal, Dr. Felton G. Clark was elected president of Southern University. Dr. Clark and Dr. Bradford sought purposeful change. They asked the Department of Education for a name change to better distinguish the two deaf institutions for whites and for Negroes. The names were changed to LSSD and SSD. Many thought the acronym stood for Southern School for the Deaf.

The school colors were blue and silver and its mascot was the wolf. Academic offerings were similar to those of the public school; however, training in the trade and vocational areas were more extensive. Training was offered in the areas of tailoring, home economics, beauty culture, shoe repair, laundering [cleaning and pressing], upholstery, woodwork, automotive, keypunch, etc.

For approximately 40 years SSD operated as a predominately segregated deaf institution. SSD was the last black deaf school in the United States to close its doors. In 1977 the Louisiana Legislature passed an act that provided for the unitary operation of SSD and LSSD. On **August 24, 1978**, the Board of Secondary and Elementary Education [BSE] voted to locate and operate the unified Louisiana School for the Deaf on the North and South Campuses, which previously housed the Louisiana State School for the Deaf. As an additional by-product of this move, the school was able to offer an expanded program utilizing educational and