

# Two Schools

In honor of the parents of  
the Brook School  
in Hillburn, New York

David W. Haas

# Two Schools

**Piano**

$\text{♩} = 84$  *mf*

**rit.**

G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D C G D C Bm D

**S.** *mp*  $\text{♩} = 96$  G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D

When I was a child there were two schools two schools in my  
Keep chil-dren a - part, keep them se - parate, des - perate in my

**A.** *mp*

When I was a child there were two schools, two schools in my  
Keep chil-dren a - part, keep them se - parate, des - perate in my

**T.** *mp*

When I was a child there were two schools, two schools in my  
Keep chil-dren a - part, keep them se - parate, des - perate in my

**B.** *mp*

When I was a child there were two schools, two schools in my  
Keep chil-dren a - part, keep them se - parate, des - perate in my

**Pno.**

10 G Bm C 1. D

S.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.

A.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.

T.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.

B.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.   
 — town, in my town, in my town, in my town.

Pno.

14 2. D F C F C Dm C

S.   
 town. town. Feels like one step for - ward and then two steps   
 town. town.

A.   
 town. town. Feels like one step for - ward and then two steps.   
 town. town.

T.   
 town. town. Feels like one step for - ward and then two steps   
 town. town.

B.   
 town. town. Feels like one step for - ward and then two steps   
 town. town.

Pno.

\*The young man referred to in these lyrics is Thurgood Marshall. More information is provided at the end of this score.

18

G Bm C D

S. back. Then came a young man,\*  
Said se-parate's not fair, an at-tor - ney\_ on his jour - ney\_ to my  
can't be two schools, can't be two schools in my

A. back. Then came a young man,\*  
Said se-parate's not fair, an at-tor - ney\_ on his jour - ney\_ to my  
can't be two schools, can't be two schools in my

T. back. Came a man\*  
It's not fair an at - tor - ney\_ his jour - ney\_ to my  
can't be two can't be two schools in my

B. back. Came a man\*  
It's not fair an at - tor - ney\_ his jour - ney\_ to my  
can't be two can't be two schools in my

Pno.

\*Thurgood Marshall

22

G Bm C 1. D 2. D

S. town, to my town, to my town, to my town. town. Feels like  
town, in my town, in my town, in my town.

A. town, to my town, to my town, to my town. town. Feels like  
town, in my town, in my town, in my town.

T. to my town to my town to my town to my town Feels like  
in my town in my town in my town

B. to my town to my town to my town to my town feels like  
in my town in my town in my town

Pno.

27 F C F C Dm C F C F C Dm C

S. one step for - ward and then two\_ steps, one step for - ward and then

A. one step for - ward and then two\_ steps, one step for - ward and then

T. one step for - ward and then two\_ steps one step for - ward and then

B. one step for - ward and then two\_ steps, one step for - ward and then

Pno.

32 G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D G D

S. two\_ steps back.

A. two\_ steps back.

T. two\_ steps back.

B. two\_ steps back.

Pno.

37 Bm<sup>7</sup> C Bm<sup>7</sup> G start of 4-part fugue

S. We be-lieve we\_\_\_ can be bet-ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage. When I was a child.

A. We be-lieve we\_\_\_ can be bet-ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage.

T. 8

B.

Pno.

42 Bm<sup>7</sup> C D D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup> C Em<sup>7</sup>

S. \_\_\_ there were two\_\_\_ schools, two\_\_\_ schools in my town, in

A. When I was a child\_\_\_ there were two

T.

B.

Pno.

47 F G G Bm<sup>7</sup> C

S. my town. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble. when will this dream come

A. — schools, two — schools in my town, in my

T. When I was a child — there were two — schools, two

B.

Pno.

52 D D<sup>7</sup> C Em<sup>7</sup> F G

S. true? We be - lieve we — can be bet - ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage.

A. town. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, when will this dream come true?

T. — schools in my town, in my town. A -

B. When I was a child — there were two — schools, two — schools in

Pno.

57

G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D D<sup>7</sup> G<sup>7</sup>

S. When I was a child there were two schools, two schools in

A. We be-lieve we can be bet-ter if we can sum-mon the cou-age.

T. me-ri-ca the pos-si-ble, when will this dream come true?

B. my town, in my town. A -

Pno.

61

C Em<sup>7</sup> F

S. my town, in my

A. When I was a child there were two schools, two

T. We be-lieve we can be bet-ter if we can sum

B. me-ri-ca the pos-si-ble, when will this dream come

Pno.



end of  
4-part fugue

64

G G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D

S. town. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

A. — schools. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

T. - mon. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

B. true? A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

Pno.

69

G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D G

*mf*

S. We be- lieve we — can be bet- ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage, — no door we.

A. *mf* We be- lieve we — can be bet- ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage, — no door we.

T. *mf* We be- lieve we — can be bet- ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage, — no door we.

B. *mf* We be- lieve we — can be bet- ter if we can sum - mon the cou - rage, — no door we.

Pno. *f*

74 Bm<sup>7</sup> C D G

S. — can- not o- pen, no dis- grace we can't e- raise. 'Cause one man changed the world.

A. — can- not o- pen, no dis- grace we can't e- raise. 'Cause one man changed the world.

T. — can- not o- pen, no dis- grace we can't e- raise. 'Cause one man changed the world.

B. — can- not o- pen, no dis- grace we can't e- raise. 'Cause one man changed the world.

Pno.

78 Bm C D G Bm Em Bm<sup>6</sup>

S. — He changed the world. — He changed the world. — He changed my world. We be- lieve, — there is

A. — He changed the world. — He changed the world. — He changed my world. We be- lieve, — there is

T. — He changed the world. — He changed the world. — He changed my world. We be- lieve, — there is

B. — He changed the world. — He changed the world. — He changed my world. We be- lieve, — there is

Pno.

83 C D G Bm<sup>7</sup> C D/C C G/C D C/D Bm D G **rit.**

S. no-thing we can't a-chieve. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

A. no-thing we can't a-chieve. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

T. no-thing we can't a-chieve. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

B. no-thing we can't a-chieve. A - me - ri - ca the pos - si - ble, let's make this dream come true.

Pno. **rit.**

## Two Schools

When I was a child there were two schools, two schools  
 in my town, in my town, in my town, in my town.  
 Keep children apart, keep them separate, desperate  
 in my town, in my town, in my town, in my town.  
 Feels like one step forward and then two steps back.

Then came a young man, an attorney on his journey  
 to my town, to my town, to my town, to my town.  
 Said separate's not fair, can't be two schools, can't be two schools  
 in my town, in my town, in my town, in my town.  
 Feels like one step forward and then two steps,  
 one step forward and then two steps back.

We believe we can be better if we can summon the courage.

When I was a child there were two schools, two schools  
 in my town, in my town.  
 America the possible, when will this dream come true?  
 We believe we can be better if we can summon the courage.

America the possible, let's make this dream come true.

We believe we can be better if we can summon the courage,  
 no door we cannot open, no disgrace we can't erase.  
 'cause one man changed the world.  
 He changed the world. He changed the world.  
 He changed my world.  
 We believe there is nothing we can't achieve.

America the possible, let's make this dream come true.

**PERFORMANCE NOTES:** The vocal style to be chosen when performing this piece may depend upon the lived and ancestral experiences of the performers.

**BACKGROUND:** Thirty miles northwest of New York City, in the town of Ramapo, lies the village of Hillburn. There were once two schools in Hillburn. The Brook School, for Black students, was unheated, had a small rocky playground, no library, and only outdoor latrines. The Main School, for White students, was well equipped with a gymnasium, library, and indoor toilets. In 1943, Brook School parents engaged the services of Thurgood Marshall, special counsel for the NAACP (the "young man" in this song). In September of 1943, to protest the separate and unequal school system, parents refused to send their children to the Brook School. By October, the New York State Commissioner of Education ordered that all children be admitted to the Main School. In an attempt to circumvent the law, Ramapo township leaders redrew district lines, assigning most Black families to the Brook School. White families withdrew their children from the Main School sending them to nearby parochial schools. Brook School ultimately closed. Thurgood Marshall's experience in Hillburn informed his strategy when, in 1954, he successfully argued *Brown v Board of Education* before the United States Supreme Court, which ruled that separating children in public schools based on race was unconstitutional. From 1967 until 1991, Thurgood Marshall served as the first Black Supreme Court justice. Students, including myself, who attended public schools in Ramapo were never taught about these historic events in our town. I first learned of this from the 2017 documentary film, "Two Schools in Hillburn", written and directed by Joe Allen (free to view on YouTube).

All the best... David W. Haas