

Renovations To Sadieville Kentucky's Historic Rosenwald School Put On Display With Public Open Houses

Rosenwald School opens its doors this Summer

SADIEVILLE, KY, UNITED STATES, May 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Historic Rosenwald School in Sadieville, KY is opening its doors to the public this summer June 19 and August 15 to showcase the culmination of a 14 year renovation and share an important part of our county's history brought back to life.

For those unfamiliar with the school, it is one of 5,000 similar institutions erected across the South from Virginia to Texas during the early part of the 20th century to provide education for African American children.



Exterior of the Rosenwald Academy

They were named for Julius Rosenwald, then president of Sears, Roebuck and Company and a noted philanthropist, who donated the funds for the schools.

Working in tandem with educator/activist Booker T. Washington, Rosenwald's ground-breaking project was often described as the seminal event in providing educational equality during the Jim Crow era.

Of the original 5,000 schools, approximately 500 remain, and of those, only 250 have been preserved.

"We are very fortunate to have one of them here in Sadieville," said Laura Centers, Sadieville clerk/treasurer and a tourism board volunteer.

The school was not only preserved, but renovated thanks to grants from Toyota Motor

Manufacturing Kentucky and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a donation from the Friends of Sadieville, Inc. and countless hours of selfless labor from community volunteers.

What visitors will see is a one-room schoolhouse furnished exactly as it would have been during its operation from 1920 until it closed in 1954 following integration.

Desks are scattered across a room with large windows to let in natural light as there was no electricity and the only heat came from a coal stove which remains as a focal point of the room.

Décor is sparse, but there are pictures and a book referencing *The Road to Nicodemus*, an African American diaspora west across the Mississippi River where they established a farming community in Kansas known as Nicodemus. The community still has a population of some 20 people, 14 of whom are descendants of the original settlers.



Interior of the Rosenwald Academy

Centers says that on the two opening dates there will be an onsite volunteer guide on hand to talk about the original Rosenwald School.

The guide will also describe the extensive renovation project which began in 2011, and included restoring the building's foundation; patching the drywall on the walls and ceiling; rehabbing windows and replacing doors; dealing with termite damage and redoing the pine floors.

The renovation won the Ida M. Willis Preservation Award in 2012, and was a key factor in Sadieville being listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

When asked if there would be more dates in the future when the school will be open to visitors, Centers was hopeful.

"Right now, we are attempting to gauge the interest of the public – both from a tourism and a historical perspective," Centers said. "We certainly think we have quite a story to tell."

Laura Centers
City of Sadieville
laura.centers@sadievilleky.gov
+1 502-857-4576

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