Letter from Brenda Moryck Francke to W. E. B. Du Bois, October 14, 1941

Concerning a recommendation for a boarding school for Du Bois Williams.

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35 West 110 Street
New York City
October 14, 1941

My dear Dr. Du Bois,

Knowing that the education of little Du Bois is a close and grave concern of yours, I thought you might be interested to know of a good boarding-school in the Berkshire which takes little children.

I am planning to send my young daughter, Betty-Olivia, there in September, 1942, and have visited the school on several occasions with that aim in view.
Dr. and Mrs. Altaras, the heads of the school, seem to be very fine people indeed, foreigners without prejudice, and have an eleven year-old daughter of their own in the school. They have been highly recommended from several quarters, and I believe, if you and Mrs. De Bois and Yolande were interested, could safely be entrusted with little De Bois’s care and training for the next few years.

Of course, you may already have made adequate provision for her elsewhere, Mildred Johnson told me last year she did not think she could arrange for a fourth grade, and De Bois would have to leave the school. I have not seen her this year.
I do not know of your plans for Dr. Kepis.

I thought, however, since a country school, with room atmosphere, good standards, in the beautiful Berkshire, offers a rigorous, alert, independent, lively child all these outlets it so definitely needs, and can secure only under the greatest difficulties in the city - horseback riding, swimming, winter sports, summer camps (if an all-year-round school is the parents prefer) you might like to know of it for some future date, if not now.

Since Betty, Osborne and Dubois know each other, and have found
each other congenial, although Kelly is a year older than Don Loz, it would be nice if the two of them entered together next year.

Instead of dormitories, the children have rooms—very attractively decorated, two in a room, with separate beds—a feature I found most delightful.

Ms. Altavac is a graduate of the Mannsorck School of Music and has charge of the music, which is included in the regular schedule.

As we week-ended in the Berkshire this past week-end we spent an entire day at the school and enjoyed it exceedingly.
The school is in Monterey, on a very lovely site, and would be ideal for Betty-Osborne, who can not lead the sort of life a child should have in New York City, even though attending a good school, right now, but my husband being in England since the Haitian Legation in Paris folded up and unable to send any of his income to us, I could not make the financial arrang-
ments necessary in so short a time after I learned the school would accept one or two Negro children.
She goes in September, however, definitely,- if there is a September, 1942.
interested, you can write
Dr. J. M. Altaraz
Altaraz School
Great Barrington, Mass.
and he will give you all necessary
details.

I thought of little Mr. Koi because
I know you are anxious that she shall
not become provincial-minded, as
she will, of necessity, be forced to become
through attendance at a Maryland
or Georgia public school.

Wade sending Betty Osborne to have
her out of New York City in an environ-
ment which provides wholesome outlet
as well as good education.

With all good wishes, Dad,
Sincerely yours, Brenda Maryck Franks