A decorated Korean War veteran, the late Rod Richards made a tremendous impact within the Memphis City Schools as a system-wide driver education teacher and administrator. Born in Mashulaville, Richards went to Macon High School and was a three-sport athlete. Along with playing baseball and running track, he was an All-Choctaw Conference fullback and named honorable mention all-state as a senior. Richards declined a football scholarship from Ole Miss to enlist in the United States Air Force in 1952. While serving with the K-9 Division of the USAF’s Air Police, he was honored with the National Defense Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, Korean Service Medal with Bronze Star, and Good Conduct Medal. Following his tour of duty, Richards played two seasons (1956 and 1957) for legendary football coach Bob “Bull” Sullivan at East Mississippi Junior College. As a team co-captain for the Lions, Richards received a team contribution and cooperation award during his sophomore year. Richards earned a football scholarship to attend Memphis State University, but an injury during his first spring training on campus ended his football playing career. Having received both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Memphis State, Richards began his education career in 1960 as a teacher, assistant football coach and head track coach at Memphis’ Kingsbury High School. He then moved to Memphis East High School in 1965 to become head football coach and athletic director. Four years later, Richards found his public education niche in being hired as one of the first teachers in the system’s newly formed driver education program. Named the Memphis City Schools’ Supervisor for Driver Education in 1979, he served on the Mayor’s City of Memphis Task Forces on Safe Driving as well as Drunk Driving. Having died on Sept. 29, 2008, Richards is survived by his widow, the former Mae Sue Sanders of Macon. They were married for 50 years and have two children – son, Michael, who is a retired U.S. Marine Corps helicopter pilot, and daughter, Karen Miller, who is a flight attendant for Delta Air Lines – along with five grandchildren and one great-grandchild.