

**The Desegregation of Southampton County, Virginia Schools**

**1954 - 1970**

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in

Educational Administration

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June, 1998  
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Topic of Prospectus: The Desegregation of Southampton County, Virginia Schools  
1954-1970

Proposed Outline

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# THE DESEGREGATION OF SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA SCHOOLS

1954-1970

By

Carolyn C. Modlin

Committee Chairpersons: Dr. Thomas C. Hunt and Dr. Robert R. Richards

(ABSTRACT)

The struggle to achieve integration of public schools in Southampton County, Virginia, has been an ongoing process that has occurred through the years since the Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483, 493, 74 S.Ct. 686, 691 (1954) and Brown v. Board of Education, 349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753 (1955), and Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, Virginia, 391 U.S. 430, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968). The time frame of 1954 until 1970 is particularly significant because of happenings that took place prior to the time that Judge Robert R. Merhige, federal judge of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, ruled that all school divisions which operated dual school systems for Black and White students must fully integrate.

Through the use of acceptable methods of historical research including personal interviews to record the oral history, school board minutes, personal correspondence, newspaper articles, books, and other such materials available to the writer, this dissertation records information regarding the desegregation of Southampton County

Schools.

The purpose of this study is to examine the roles of individuals and groups in the desegregation process that took place in the public schools of this rural, southside Virginia county during the years of 1954 to 1969. This study will provide a greater understanding of leadership, local governance, racial, and social class concerns of Southampton County citizens, as well as, a documentation of an important part of the history of Southampton County, Virginia.

## Dedication

This study is dedicated to the many individuals who believe that all children should be provided with an education that is not determined by the color of their skin, their social status, or their economic condition. It is also dedicated to those who believe that public education must be supported as a means of creating a more equal opportunity for all children.

This research project is dedicated to Marie Jarratt Carter and William Wood Carter. Their belief in learning as a lifelong process has encouraged this writer through the years.

## Acknowledgements

The writer of this study gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement of her husband, James F. Modlin, Sr., and her children, Ella Dee Modlin and James F. Modlin, Jr. Their patience and willingness to allow the writer to research, study, and write during the past years has made this effort possible. Thank you Jimmy, Dee, and Jim for not allowing me to stop when I became discouraged.

Dr. Thomas Hunt inspired this writer to look for the story behind the events. He encouraged the writer to question and look beyond the surface in studying the occurrences that took place in the writer's home state of Virginia. Always caring and concerned, ever the scholar, Dr. Hunt, I thank you for believing that an historical study was of value and a possibility.

Dr. Robert R. Richards, who believed that it was always possible to improve the writing, encouraged the writer to edit, rewrite, and improve. His determination to push the writer has been appreciated. I acknowledge your support and thank you for it.

Thank you also, to Dr. Glen Earthman, Dr. Claire Cole Vaught, and Dr. Alline Riddick who willingly took time from their busy schedules to read, offer help, and reread many times the work of this writer.

The help of individuals who willingly allowed me to question them about events of the past made this study possible. There are two key individuals which must be mentioned

because they wanted this study to take place and believed strongly that this writer should be the one to do so. Mrs. S. W. Tucker (Julia), wife of a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People attorney who fought for the desegregation of public education in Virginia, shared files and newspaper articles with the writer. Her background information was invaluable. Mr. Gilbert W. Francis, an attorney in Southampton County, Virginia, always believed that the story of the changes in public education in Southampton County should be told. As an avid historian, he shared his love of Southampton County and its people with me. Sadly, Mr. Francis did not live to see the completed project. Somewhere, the writer believes he knows that the story is finally being told.

Mrs. Linda Beatty, friend and supporter of the writer, shared typing expertise and computer knowledge with the writer. She also helped with making contact with members of the Camp family. Thank you, Linda, for having the willing spirit to share your skills with me.

Finally, the writer of this study could not have undertaken the project without the support of the Greensville County Public School System. Many times, the writer was provided the time and opportunity to work, travel, and write. To those of you who helped, encouraged, and would not let the writer make excuses about not having the time to do the research, thank you.

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## Chapter One

### Purpose and Significance of Study

The decisions handed down by the United States Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U. S. 483, 493, 74 S.Ct. 686, 691 (1954) (commonly referred to as Brown I), Brown v. Board of Education, 349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753 (1955) (commonly called Brown II), and Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, Virginia 391 U.S. F430, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968) had a significant impact on public education in Virginia, particularly in the rural counties of southside Virginia where there was a large African-American population. This study will attempt to record relevant occurrences during the desegregation of Southampton County, Virginia Schools after the Brown I decision in 1954, until the time that the county was ordered to implement the full integration of the public schools in 1969 under the Green decision. Judge Robert R. Merhige, of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, based on the Green, decision ordered any school system not in compliance with the Court's ruling to implement full integration of all public schools for the 1969-1970 school year.

The recording of events and the recollections of individual citizens are significant if one agrees with the premise that the present and the future are built upon our knowledge of the past. It is important that this record be available for study so that people can use the information from the past in making decisions about the future and to help with

understanding the background of some decisions which were made or have been made since that time. This information will provide a basis for determining how Supreme Court decisions at the federal level influenced the actions of individuals in one rural Virginia county. The study will provide a greater understanding of the leadership, local government, race, and social class in the process of ending segregated education. It will allow the reader to have a greater understanding of the Southampton County Schools during this time frame. A final reason for this study is to allow the writer to explore and make that understanding available to policy makers and interested citizens regarding schooling in Southampton County, Virginia since 1954.

### Methodology

The research has been conducted through the use of court documents and U. S. Justice Department correspondence, school board minutes, recording of oral history through the use of personal interviews (see Appendix A for interview notes), personal correspondence, newspaper articles, books and other materials which were available.

Documentation has been provided through acceptable means of historical research. The researcher used primary sources such as board minutes, diary entries, court documents, and official U. S. correspondence whenever they were available. Secondary sources were used when necessary. This included gathering information about other areas and people of Virginia to provide additional background information to the researcher.

The triangulation of data from primary and secondary resources was utilized to provide validity and reliability of the information. Copies of the interview notes were typed, shared with the interviewees, and in many cases, approved prior to being included in this study.

Citations from early school board minutes reflect the recordings of those meetings. The minutes did not follow the parliamentary, brief format used today.

### Definition of Terms

Certain terms used throughout this dissertation are defined as follows: **Schooling** is defined as public education for grades one through twelve, unless otherwise noted. **Education** is defined as having the opportunity for learning and gaining knowledge in a school setting. The term education, is used as a synonym for schooling by the writer.

Throughout the research a number of terms are used to indicate individuals of African-American ethnicity, including terms such as Negro, Black, and Colored. Such terms were commonly accepted for usage during the time frame 1954 to 1970. The writer of this study refers to such individuals as African-Americans, except where they were identified by other terms used in telling a story about the time or events that were discussed.

**Segregation, desegregation, and integration** are key terms. The following definitions for these terms are those that the writer has chosen to use and accept.

Segregation means to separate people either by race, law, custom, or some other factor.<sup>1</sup> Separation of people by race was a common practice in the southern part of the United States under what are referred to as "Jim Crow" laws<sup>2</sup> most of which were enacted during the 1880s.<sup>3</sup> Such segregation was identified by law (de jure segregation) and where not officially prescribed by law, occurred by custom (de facto segregation). The public schools in Southampton County were segregated with separate facilities for African-American and Caucasian children. This was in accordance with the 1902 Constitution of Virginia (de jure segregation).

**Desegregation** refers to the process of ending segregated schooling for children. It occurs when individuals from one race are no longer separated by custom or law from another race. The writer subscribes to the belief that desegregation occurs when there is intentional effort to end separation of individuals; however, the writer does not believe that desegregation means integration of ideas, cultures, customs, or people.

**Freedom of Choice** is defined by this researcher as the plan offered in many school divisions to allow parents of students to select which school their children would attend. It was an option which in many areas, such as Southampton, that was not used by

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<sup>1</sup>Henry Savage, Jr., *Seeds of Time, The Background of Southern Thinking* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1959), 226.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Savedge, Jr., *Seeds of Time The Background of Southern Thinking* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1959), 225-226.

<sup>3</sup>Savage, Jr., 226.

the Caucasians and infrequently by the African-American citizens, thus limiting desegregation. Freedom-of-Choice was legal under action taken by the Virginia General Assembly in 1958 that stated each child had a right to choose the school she/he would attend. This included both public and private schools.<sup>4</sup>

The writer considers **integration** to be the mixing of African-American students with Caucasian students in the same educational setting or facility such that all children are able to attend school without any discrimination based on race. For integration to take place, there must be a blending of common goals, ideas, and purpose.<sup>5</sup>

Several key groups are mentioned in this study. One significant group is the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People**, often referred to as the NAACP. This national organization has chapters at the national, state, and local levels. The NAACP was organized in 1909<sup>6</sup>. Through the years the NAACP has become a significant force in the civil rights issues of the United States. The NAACP "Brain Trust" is referred to in this study. The so-called Brain Trust was a group of five attorneys who became a driving force in the demand for equal opportunity and civil rights for all individuals, particularly as they related to the desegregation of schools. The attorneys

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<sup>4</sup>James J. Kilpatrick, *The Southern Case for School Segregation* (New York: The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company, 1962), 106.

<sup>5</sup>Savage, Jr., 302.

<sup>6</sup>Available on [www.friends-partners.org/oldfriends/ccs/csusa/law/naacp.html](http://www.friends-partners.org/oldfriends/ccs/csusa/law/naacp.html).

were: Thurgood Marshall, Spottswood Robinson, Martin A. Martin, Oliver Hill, and Samuel W. Tucker.<sup>7</sup> Thurgood Marshall, who had been appointed as a judge in New York and could not actively take part in the Virginia activities, remained a part of the private discussions involving the law and right of individuals. Spottswood Robinson played an active role in the "Brain Trust" discussions until he was appointed to a federal judgeship. Martin A. Martin was a practicing attorney in Danville, Virginia. Oliver Hill and Samuel W. Tucker, referred to as S. W., were partners in the Richmond, Virginia law firm of Hill, Tucker, and Marsh. These attorneys represented the NAACP in drafting a resolution that the emphasis of the NAACP involve the desegregation of schools, not the equalization of segregated facilities.<sup>8</sup>

The term, **interposition**, is used occasionally in references made by some individuals addressing issues dealing with the desegregation of schools. Interposition was a term used frequently by prominent writers of this time period, such as James J. Kilpatrick, a Richmond newspaper editor, to refer to the rights of individual states.<sup>9</sup> Kilpatrick strongly believed that states maintained the right to interpose their will or refuse

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<sup>7</sup>Personal interview with Julia Tucker, widow of Samuel W. Tucker, at her home in Richmond, Virginia on March 9, 1997.

<sup>8</sup>Bob Smith, *They Closed Our Schools: Prince Edward County, Virginia 1951-1964*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1965), 46.

<sup>9</sup>James Jackson Kilpatrick, *The Southern Case for School Segregation* (New York: The Crowell-Collier Publishing Company, 1962), 106.



to accept those rulings from the federal government with which they did not agree. Kern and M. David Alexander further discuss the meaning of interposition to describe those situations where state intervention delayed federal guidelines or decisions from Brown being implemented.<sup>10</sup>

**Brown I** is the short name by which the case of Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483, 493, 74 S.Ct. 686, 691 (1954) is often called. This significant U. S. Supreme Court decision ruled that separate facilities for educating children was inherently unequal.<sup>11</sup> It also brought attention to a practice that had existed since the 1896 United States Supreme Court ruling in Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537, 16 S.Ct. 1138, of having separate facilities based upon race.<sup>12</sup>

The case of Brown v. Board of Education, 349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753 (1955) is often referred to as **Brown II**. This can be briefly defined as the decision of the Supreme Court that "segregation must end with all deliberate speed."<sup>13</sup> The case did not offer solutions as to how the segregation was to end or a date by which it had to occur.

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<sup>10</sup>Kern and M. David Alexander, *The Law of Schools, Students, and Teachers*, (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1984), 167-168.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 165-166.

<sup>12</sup>Kern Alexander, Ray Corns, Walter McCann, *Public School Law Cases and Materials*, (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1969), 636.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

**Freedom of Choice** is defined by this researcher as the plan offered in many school divisions to allow parents of students to select which school their children would attend. It was an option which in many areas, such as Southampton, that was not used by the Caucasian citizens, and infrequently by the African-American citizens.

Other terms that may need clarification or definition will be provided by the writer in the study. The terms defined above may have additional definitions that are applicable to specific situations. In such cases, the writer will provide additional clarification.

#### Limitations

This study is limited to an historical recording of racial desegregation of the Southampton County, Virginia schools. Primary sources were used when available; but, when unavailable, secondary sources were used to provide triangulation of data.

## Chapter Two

### Early Settlers and Location

Southampton County was settled by the Anglo-Saxons as they spread inward from the Atlantic Coast to claim the land from the native Americans who inhabited the area. The geographical features of the land were not conducive to many large plantations; therefore, smaller farms became the norm for this area.<sup>14</sup>

Farming and activities related to the growing of peanuts, soybeans, corn, cotton, and the raising of hogs were the predominant occupations of the people of Southampton. The other large area of employment opportunities related to the timber industry. An abundance of loblolly pines made the lumber industry successful. The largest lumber plant in the county is the one that was founded by the Camp family in 1887.<sup>15</sup>

This significant family owned operation provided jobs and money to the Franklin and Southampton County areas. It has also influenced the lives of many of the employees and local citizenry through the years as the largest employer; its effect on local governing bodies; and, its philanthropic activities. This large pulp and paper company affiliated with

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<sup>14</sup>Thomas C. Parramore, *Southampton County, Virginia*. Published for the Southampton Historical Society. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1978), 28-33.

<sup>15</sup>Parker Rouse, *The Timber Tycoons*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1968), 35.

the Union Bag Corporation and became the Union-Camp Corporation of Franklin, Virginia. Throughout this study, the Camp name will often appear.

Prior to the 1950's, there were no significant industries other than the Camp Mill that employed the unskilled labor that was available. This changed with the arrival during the 1950s of the St. Regis Paper Company to Franklin, the Hercules Powder Company outside of Franklin, and the opening of the Boykins Narrow Fabrics (Narricot Industries) of Philadelphia during the 1960s.<sup>16</sup> The location of industries in the area provided an opportunity for many unskilled workers to obtain regular employment, better wages, and insurance benefits. This eliminated much of the cheap farm labor that had previously been available thus impacting on the agricultural economy.

The county borders Northampton County, North Carolina and Hertford County, North Carolina on its south side. To the west are the counties of Greensville and Sussex, and to the north and east, Isle of Wight County and the city of Suffolk (previously Nansemond County). It is one of the largest counties in Virginia by land area. The county has a small city, Franklin, within its borders, several small towns, and many small villages. The incorporated towns are Ivor, Courtland, Newsoms, Boykins, and Capron. Many other small communities exist within the county such as Berlin, Burdette, Drewryville, Sedley, Branchville, Sunbeam, Adams Grove, and Handsom. The existence of small communities is significant because of the tradition for many years of locating one and two

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<sup>16</sup>Parramore, 218.

room schools for Caucasian children in each community with separate one and two room schools for African-American children being located near the small settlements or on large farms<sup>17</sup>. Support for small community schools and the closeness of neighbors later made it especially difficult to be supportive of public schools.<sup>18</sup>

Until 1961, Franklin was the largest incorporated town within the county's borders. In 1961, Franklin received a charter from the Virginia General Assembly as a second class city. Though Franklin had its own school board prior to this time to deal with the operation of the county owned schools located there, the designation as a city required a breaking away or separation of county and city schools. This is discussed later in this study, particularly as it relates to the desegregation of the schools. S. W. Rawls, Jr., a prominent Franklin businessman, stated in an interview that the Franklin area petitioned the Virginia legislature to gain city status as one means of keeping the schools segregated since Franklin's schools were large and naturally separated by race because of segregated neighborhoods.<sup>19</sup>

In talking with Mrs. Pauline Morton, an African-American resident of Franklin since 1935, Mrs. Morton said that she disagreed with Mr. Rawls comment. She said that

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<sup>17</sup>Marie Sykes, interviewed by Carolyn Modlin, 28 October, 1996.

<sup>18</sup>Personal interview with Roberta J. Naranjo, Southampton County School Board Member from 1972 until the present, on 12 November, 1996.

<sup>19</sup>In an interview with S. W. Rawls, Jr., by Carolyn Modlin on 22 November, 1996.

the conservative little town was growing as the Camp Manufacturing Company grew and it was the right time to become a city.<sup>20</sup>

### Segregation and the Courts

The issue of segregation had been addressed on several occasions in the United States judicial system prior to the decision rendered in the case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka et al, 347 U.S. 483 in 1954.<sup>21</sup> Those cases that had previously been brought before the courts had not found segregation to be the major issue and had dealt with the need for equal opportunity and facilities, while allowing for races to remain separate. The consideration was first discussed in Plessy v. Ferguson [163 U.S., 537, 16 S.Ct. 1138, (1896)]<sup>22</sup> that allowed for separate schools as long as they were equal. The Plessy decision set a precedent for "separate but equal" under the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution.

Separate facilities, including schools, were not declared unconstitutional until the ruling of the U. S. Supreme Court on May 17, 1954 in the Brown I case. The ruling of the Supreme Court that was rendered by Justice Warren stated that separate educational

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<sup>20</sup>Personal interview with Pauline Morton in Franklin, Virginia, on April 2, 1998.

<sup>21</sup>Kilpatrick, 197-212.

<sup>22</sup>Alexander and Alexander, 163.

facilities were inherently unequal.<sup>23</sup> The rendering of the Brown I decision in 1954 was one of monumental consequence and a major victory for the legal defense team of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which was led by Thurgood Marshall, who later became a Supreme Court Justice. The Court did not give guidelines to localities, according to Alexander and Alexander, but "charged plaintiffs, defendants and friends of the Court to return and present alternatives for implementation."<sup>24</sup> In an interview with Judge Robert R. Merhige of the Fourth U. S. Court, he said that the ruling did not go far enough because it did not require implementation of ending segregated schooling within a specific time frame.<sup>25</sup>

The Brown I decision set the stage for years of disruption, dispute, and turbulence in the public schools of Virginia. The decision forced individuals to examine issues involving their political, religious, and personal views on equality and opportunity.<sup>26</sup> Examining ideas and beliefs however, did not create change in the way in which education occurred. In a conversation which took place in Southampton County between Lloyd Sykes, an African-American educator and B. T. Watkins, Superintendent of Southampton

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 165-166.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 167.

<sup>25</sup>Interview with Judge Robert R. Merhige at the Federal Court Building in Richmond, Virginia, on 27 January, 1997.

<sup>26</sup>Savage, Jr., 282.

Schools at that time, Mr. Sykes commented on the ending of separate schools for children of different races. He recalled that Mr. Watkins told him that "integration would not occur in their lifetimes."<sup>27</sup>

The case of Brown v. Board of Education,, 349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753 (1955) is often referred to as Brown II. The Supreme Court ruled that "segregation must end with all deliberate speed." It is interesting to note that even though segregation was declared unconstitutional, the Court did not demand that integration had to occur.<sup>28</sup> The Court invited the Attorneys General of the states to provide suggestions for ending segregation.<sup>29</sup>

In a further discussion of the Brown II case, Chief Justice Warren wrote:

While giving weight to these public and private considerations, the courts will require that the defendants make a prompt and reasonable start toward full compliance with our May 17, 1954, ruling. Once such a start has been made, the courts may find that additional time is necessary to carry out the ruling in an effective manner. The burden rests upon the defendants to establish that such time is necessary in the public interest and is consistent with good faith compliance at the earliest practical date. To that end, the courts may consider problems related to administration, arising from the physical condition of the school plant, the school transportation system, personnel, revision of school districts and attendance areas into compact units to achieve a system of determining admission to the public schools on a nonracial basis, and revision of local laws and regulations which may be necessary in solving the foregoing problems. They will also consider the

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<sup>27</sup>Personal interview with Lloyd Sykes, 28 October, 1996.

<sup>28</sup>Alexander and Alexander, 167.

<sup>29</sup>Alexander, Corns, McCann. *Public School Law Cases and Materials*, 646.



adequacy of any plans the defendants may propose to meet these problems and to effectuate a transition to a racially nondiscriminatory school system.<sup>30</sup>

According to Alexander and Alexander, the Supreme Court may have realized that there would be many issues that would result from this decision and that time would be needed to bring about change.<sup>31</sup>

The Brown decisions were actions to end segregation. They were not actions to require integration. This was clarified in the case of Briggs v. Elliot, 132 F.Supp.776 (E.D.S.C.1955) when a South Carolina judge wrote, "[A]ll that is decided, is that a state may not deny to any person on account of race the right to attend any school that it maintains . . . The Constitution, in other words, does not require integration. It merely forbids segregation."<sup>32</sup>

When the second Brown decision was rendered on May 31, 1955, Justice Felix Frankfurter stated that efforts to end segregation were to take place with "a prompt and reasonable" speed towards compliance with the decision.<sup>33</sup> Brown II, as the Brown v. Topeka Board of Education, 349 U.S. 294, 74 S.Ct. 753 (1955) decision came to be

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<sup>30</sup>Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas [349 U.S. 294, 75 S.Ct. 753].

<sup>31</sup>Kern Alexander and M. David Alexander, *American Public School Law*.3d ed., (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Company, 1992), 417.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup>Kilpatrick, 209-212.

called, set the wheels in motion for Virginia's "Massive Resistance". Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia was quoted in the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* on February 25, 1956, as saying, "If we can organize the Southern States for massive resistance to this order [of the Supreme Court in the school desegregation cases] I think that in time the rest of the country will realize that racial integration is not going to be accepted by the South."<sup>34</sup> Virginians immediately picked up on Byrd's use of the term "massive resistance".

Reactions to the rulings of the Supreme Court varied depending upon the area of Virginia in which one lived. J. Harvie Wilkinson III, wrote in *Harry Byrd and the Changing Face of Virginia Politics 1945-1966*, that there were basically four areas of Virginia. Understanding those areas helps one to understand why there were different reactions to the Supreme Court ruling. The first area is the one of which Southampton County is a part. This area was called the *black belt* because of the large percentage of African-Americans who lived South of the James River. This area in southside Virginia was made up of 31 counties including the 18 counties of Virginia that had the highest percentage of African-Americans. According to Wilkinson the *black belt* is typified by difficulty with social change because of a "traditional racial caste system" and "the highly rural, courthouse-controlled counties of the black belt or Southside Virginia... (that) exerted a prodigious influence over state policy."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, February 25, 1956.

<sup>35</sup>J. Harvie Wilkinson III. *Harry Byrd and the Changing Face of Virginia Politics 1945-1966*,

The second area of Virginia was called the *middle ground*. The percentage of African-Americans in the population according to Wilkinson was between 10 and 40 percent. The smaller percentage of African-Americans and the opportunity for jobs in business and industry made this area very different from the black belt.<sup>36</sup>

The third area was referred to as the *white belt*. This area was made up of the western counties of Virginia that had very small African-American populations. Here, the percentage of African-Americans was less than ten percent reported Wilkinson.<sup>37</sup>

The fourth area that Wilkinson refers to is the small group of cities that did not fit into any of the above categories. These cities contained African-American communities that were tightly knit and well organized with their own professionals and community leaders.<sup>38</sup> Petersburg and Richmond are cited by Wilkinson as examples of well-organized African-American communities.

According to Gates, what occurred during the time frame of May, 1954 and September, 1956, was a plethora of meetings, editorials, letters to the editors of various newspapers, many lengthy legislative sessions, petitions, committee meetings, and a state-wide referendum concerning tuition grants for private education. One could draw two

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Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1968, 114.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid, 115.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 115.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 115-118.

conclusions from the two years of intense activity. The conclusions were that there were: "a definite majority of Virginians [who] preferred a segregated public education; and, a bare majority of Virginians [who] would rather abandon public education than to submit to any racial integration."<sup>39</sup>

The Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, Virginia 391 U.S. F430, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968) which occurred nearly fifteen years after Brown was an extremely significant case for ending segregation. This case demonstrated that desegregation efforts would never achieve a unified system of education for all children without relief from the Court. According to Judge Robert R. Merhige, this case established a measure to determine whether or not a school system was in compliance with the court-ordered end to segregation.<sup>40</sup> This is the ruling which ended "Freedom of Choice" and other such plans that were attempts to delay integration.<sup>41</sup>

### Chronological Overview of Events in Virginia

On May 19, 1954, Governor Thomas B. Stanley, announced that the policy of segregation would continue for the coming year. Five African-American leaders were

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<sup>39</sup> Robbins L. Gates, *The Makings of Massive Resistance*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962) 30.

<sup>40</sup> Personal interview with Judge Robert R. Merhige, 27 January, 1997.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

invited to meet with Governor Stanley on May 24 to discuss what the Brown decision would mean for Virginia. The meeting was held at the Governor's Office in the Capitol Building in Richmond. The five men chosen to attend were: Oliver W. Hill, representing the legal defense of the NAACP; Reverend Fleming Alexander, editor of the Roanoke Tribune; P. B. Young, editor of the Norfolk Journal and Guide; James B. Woodson, president of the all black Virginia Teachers Association; and Dr. R. P. Daniel, president of Virginia State College. Governor Stanley asked the men to ignore the Court's ruling. He told them to encourage others to continue the practice of segregated public schooling in Virginia. The men would not agree with the request as made by Governor Stanley.<sup>42</sup>

On June 19, 1954, a meeting was held in Petersburg by twenty representatives and senators from Southside Virginia, along with other distinguished leaders from the area. The meeting was led by Watkins Abbitt of Virginia's Fourth District. At this meeting, Senator Garland Gray was chosen to chair the committee. The committee would be formed to pursue legal means to continue segregated education.<sup>43</sup> An article about this meeting appeared on June 20 in the Farmville Herald which Bob Smith cited in his book *They Closed Our Schools*:

We therefore conclude that the public education as it is presently constituted has been undermined and toppled to fragments by the general decision of the Supreme Court.

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<sup>42</sup> Gates, 30.

<sup>43</sup> Gates, 31.

We submit that Virginia has not abandoned public education; the Supreme Court has abolished it. What will be put in its place of necessity will be a far change from the successful system developed in the past. In counties where there are a few Negroes it is conceivable that schools can be desegregated without harm to the students or to education. But in Southside Virginia, where the school populations are about equal, desegregation will present problems incapable of solution.<sup>44</sup>

On June 25, 1954, Governor Thomas Stanley abandoned his idea of having a committee study the issue. He announced to the state that he would "use every legal means at (his) command to continue segregated schools in Virginia."<sup>45</sup> Governor Stanley also told the public that Section 129 of the 1902 Virginia Constitution should be reviewed carefully. This section defines the state's responsibility to provide an efficient system of free public education for the children of Virginia.

Following this, a group of individuals organized to preserve segregated schools in Virginia. They called themselves the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties. This very conservative organization was chartered on October 26, 1954.<sup>46</sup> Maintaining the rights of states to control education without interference from the federal government, the organization quickly spread throughout southside Virginia, including

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<sup>44</sup>Bob Smith, *They Closed Our Schools: Prince Edward County, Virginia 1951-1964* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 1965), 89.

<sup>45</sup>Smith, 85.

<sup>46</sup>Robbins L. Gates, *The Making of Massive Resistance* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 36.

Southampton County.<sup>47</sup> Benjamin Muse refers to this organization as the largest pro-segregationist extremist group in Virginia.<sup>48</sup> This group wanted a revision to the Virginia Constitution that would abolish public education in Virginia rather than allow an end to segregation.<sup>49</sup> The Defenders are given credit for moving Virginia from "token compliance to massive resistance."<sup>50</sup>

In August, Governor Stanley appointed a committee of legislators to study the issue of segregated public schools. This committee was made up of thirty-two of Virginia's legislators, not a racially mixed committee as Governor Thomas Stanley had originally hinted.<sup>51</sup> The representatives were all white. Garland Gray, the senator from Sussex County that joins Southampton County, was chosen to be the chairman of the committee. There was strong sentiment to continue segregated schools.

The exclusion of African-Americans from the Gray Commission eliminated any opportunity for them to be involved in the decision making through non-judicial channels. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) determined that the only recourse was to pursue desegregation through judicial means if massive

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<sup>47</sup>Smith, 90.

<sup>48</sup>Benjamin Muse, *Virginia's Massive Resistance*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961), 9.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Wilkinson III, 122.

<sup>51</sup>Wilkinson III, 123.

resistance was to be prevented or ended.<sup>52</sup>

On February 22, 1955, the Virginia Council on Human Relations was formed. This organization was made up of Caucasians and African-Americans who wanted to prepare Virginia for the desegregation process.<sup>53</sup> The leadership was not made up of leaders in the Caucasian power structure, but simply groups such as the American Association of University Women, League of Women Voters, and individuals such as club members, clergymen, or college professors. (None were considered powerful leaders.<sup>54</sup>) Due to a lack of strong leadership and a powerful push for integration, the organization was unable to combat the influence of the Defenders.<sup>55</sup>

From the Gray Commission's report which was released on November 11, 1955, came the idea of state tuition grants and a local option for those school divisions that wanted to have a local option for desegregating their schools. The Gray Commission Plan made three specific recommendations. The three recommendations were:

1. "A system of tuition grants from public funds to aid children who might attend private schools as an escape from public school integration;
2. A locally administered pupil assignment plan, which, though based on criteria other than race, was calculated to keep to a minimum the enrollment of Negroes in white

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<sup>52</sup>Wilkinson III, 124.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 124.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 124.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 124.



schools;

3. Amendment of the compulsory attendance law to provide that no child could be required to attend an integrated school. Significantly, the assignment plan proposal contemplated local option, and not a uniform policy in all sections to be laid down by the state.<sup>56</sup>

The Commission's report also resulted in the idea of holding a statewide referendum to amend Section 141 of the Virginia Constitution.<sup>57</sup> Governor Stanley called the Virginia General Assembly into a special session on November 30 to consider the recommendations of the Gray Commission and to vote on whether or not a referendum should be held. In a nearly unanimous vote, the General Assembly set January 9, 1956, as the date for a referendum election to amend Section 141 so that a tuition grant program could be adopted for the state.<sup>58</sup>

The referendum allowed the citizens to vote on whether or not the state should provide tuition grants to those wishing to attend private schools rather than having their children attend integrated schools, particularly in areas where there was a heavy black population. The date of January 9, 1956 was two days before the Virginia General Assembly was scheduled to begin its legislative session.

The days between the November General Assembly meeting and the actual

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<sup>56</sup>Benjamin Muse, *Virginia's Massive Resistance*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1961), 15.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 16.

referendum election that was held in January were extremely busy days for those interested in preserving public education in Virginia and the Byrd organization which primarily controlled Virginia politics during this time period. Religious groups joined and published articles in the *Baptist Religious Herald*, the *Virginia Methodist Advocate* and the *Presbyterian Outlook* against a state tuition grant plan.<sup>59</sup> Many clergymen and religious leaders used their positions to speak against tuition grants and the impact on public education. A group of individuals formed an organization called the "Society for the Preservation of Public Schools" to fight against the referendum.<sup>60</sup> Delegate and state-senator elect Armistead Boothe, from Alexandria, led this organization against the proposed referendum.<sup>61</sup> Armistead Boothe later ran for the governorship of Virginia and lost.

Equally outspoken in favor of tuition grants was Colgate W. Darden, Jr. a Southampton County native and respected gentleman and educator in his own right. Darden, former State Superintendent Dr. Dabney Lancaster, and Delegate Robert Whitehead, leader against the Byrd political machine, supported the tuition grant plan because they believed it would allow for local choice. In this way, the racial make-up of the population could be considered and there would remain a certain degree of control.

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 17.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 17.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

Muse notes that these three gentlemen later were strongly opposed to Massive Resistance efforts.<sup>62</sup>

Southside Virginia residents worked diligently to get the public out to vote in favor of the referendum. The focal point of their efforts was the idea that school segregation must continue. This group was strongly opposed to any forced mixing of the races in their schools.<sup>63</sup> The greatest fear and strongest argument that the segregationists had against desegregation of schools was that of racial amalgamation.<sup>64</sup> This would of course be totally unacceptable in an area that had clearly defined racial roles.

According to a diary kept by Richmond attorney, David Mays, of the law firm Valentine and Mays which had been retained by the Gray Commission, there had to be a plan to get the needed votes for the referendum. Mays wrote, "To win a large majority, our argument must be that we are not trying to destroy our public schools, but to save them from the potential destruction (in Southside and Tidewater Virginia) that the U. S. Supreme Court has brought about."<sup>65</sup> 450,000 Virginians voted in this referendum and

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<sup>62</sup>Muse, 17-18.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Bob Smith, *The Closed Our Schools*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1965), 95.

<sup>65</sup>Diary of David Mays, published in Richmond *Times-Dispatch*, 22 September, 1996.

approved it 304,000 to 146,000.<sup>66</sup> Muse records the vote as 304,154 in favor of the referendum and 144,000 against.<sup>67</sup> It is interesting to note that according to Thomas Parramore, the largest voter turnout that ever occurred in Southampton County was when the citizens were given the opportunity to vote on this referendum. The vote in Southampton was 3,325 for and 423 against the referendum.<sup>68</sup>

Mills Godwin, future Governor of Virginia, and strong leader in the Virginia General Assembly, became the outspoken leader of Virginia's massive resistance effort. He spoke of having to include local choice in the Gray Commission's recommendations because there were some localities that would be willing to integrate their schools.<sup>69</sup> Godwin and Gray became very vocal against local option and strongly supportive of massive resistance.<sup>70</sup>

The actions being taken by Virginia's conservative governing bodies gave the NAACP the needed impetus to fight for an end to segregation. The "Brain Trust" began to file lawsuits in areas such as "Arlington County, Norfolk, Newport News, and

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<sup>66</sup>David Mays, personal diary, 5.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Parramore, 214.

<sup>69</sup>Muse, 23.

<sup>70</sup>Muse, 33, and personal interview with Mills E. Godwin.

Charlottesville, in addition to the long-standing suit against Prince Edward County."<sup>71</sup>

These actions led to investigations of the attorneys involved and included the taking of S. W. Tucker's license to practice law and the accusation that he was a member of the Communist Party.<sup>72</sup>

Following the Supreme Court's decision on segregation, the General Assembly of Virginia set the date of September 30, 1956, as the time by which all school systems would no longer be allowed to have segregated public schools.<sup>73</sup> At this time, the courts, both state and federal, had put an end to any legal means of maintaining segregated schools.<sup>74</sup> According to Mills Godwin, J. Lindsay Almond<sup>75</sup>, Attorney General of Virginia, went on national television to state that, "for the record now, and hereafter, as Governor of this state, I will not yield to that which I know to be wrong and will destroy every semblance of education for thousands of the children of Virginia." One week later, Almond had to admit that there were no legal means left to continue a statewide massive

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<sup>71</sup>Muse, 28.

<sup>72</sup>Personal interview with Julia Tucker on March 9, 1997.

<sup>73</sup>Gates, 30.

<sup>74</sup>Mills Godwin, Some Recollections, personal memoir given to Carolyn Modlin on January 3, 1997, 22-23.

<sup>75</sup>J. Lindsay Almond argued the Prince Edward case which led to the Supreme Court decisions concerning segregated schooling in 1954 and 1955.

resistance.<sup>76</sup> Wilkinson wrote that Almond's "decision to abandon massive resistance marked the first major policy matter on which Senator Byrd, southside Virginia, and courthouse conservatism did not have their way."<sup>77</sup>

The Richmond *News Leader* published editorials on a daily basis about "interposition", a right of the states to interpose its ideas between the federal government and the people of the state when it was to the state's best interest.<sup>78</sup> James J. Kilpatrick, Jr. devoted much of his time and energy to defending the rights of the state to control its schools. Interposition became a common term throughout Southside Virginia as Kilpatrick used it on a regular basis in his daily editorials. The Richmond *News Leader* published a resolution of interposition in a form that could be brought forth in the Virginia General Assembly which opened two days after the referendum vote on January 11, 1955.<sup>79</sup>

The General Assembly finally adopted a resolution of opposition to the Supreme Court's ruling and stated its belief in interposition, though in milder terminology than Kilpatrick had offered through the *News Leader*. By unanimous vote the resolution said in part:

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid. 23.

<sup>77</sup>Wilkinson III, 150.

<sup>78</sup>Muse, 20.

<sup>79</sup>Muse, 21.

That by its decision of May 17, 1954, in the school cases, the Supreme Court of the United States placed upon the Constitution an interpretation, having the effect of an amendment thereto, which interpretation Virginia emphatically disapproves;

That with the Supreme Court's decision aforesaid and this resolution by the General Assembly of Virginia, a question of contested power has arisen: The Court asserts, for its part, that the States did, in fact, in 1868, prohibit unto themselves, by means of the Fourteenth Amendment, the power to maintain racially separate public schools which power certain of the States have exercised daily for more than 80 years; the State of Virginia, for her part, asserts that she has never surrendered such power....

[That Virginia] anxiously concerned at this massive expansion of central authority...is in duty bound to interpose against these most serious consequences and earnestly to challenge the usurped authority that would inflict them upon her citizens....

And be it finally resolved that until the question here asserted by the State of Virginia be settled by clear constitutional amendment, we pledge our firm intention to take all appropriate measures, legally and constitutionally available to us, to resist this illegal encroachment upon our sovereign powers and to urge upon our sister states, whose authorities over their own most cherished powers may next be imperiled, their prompt and deliberate efforts to check this and further encroachment by the Supreme Court, through judicial legislation, upon the reserved power of the states.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 21-22.

The Gray Plan was adopted as proposed by the Virginia General Assembly during its regular session in 1956. Though not yet called Massive Resistance, the concept of interposition began its resistance of federal interference in education.<sup>81</sup>

During the time period of 1955 to 1958, there were several desegregation lawsuits filed by NAACP lawyers.<sup>82</sup> The lawsuits involved school systems in various parts of Virginia, including Norfolk, Charlottesville, Arlington, and Prince Edward.<sup>83</sup> By 1958, Massive Resistance reached the point of school divisions closing schools rather than desegregating when some Negro students tried to enroll in previously all white schools. This action led to the beginning of a strong movement to develop private schools.<sup>84</sup> This was a distinct effort on the parts of many citizens to maintain segregated schools. The massive resistance movement was a major factor in preventing desegregation from effectively taking place throughout Virginia.

A State Pupil Placement Board was created by the Virginia General Assembly to assign students to schools with the understanding that no Negro children would be assigned to previously all white school. In addition, authority was granted that allowed any school to be closed if ordered to desegregate by the courts, and a tuition grant

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

<sup>82</sup>Personal interview with Mrs. S. W. Tucker (Julia) on 9 March, 1997.

<sup>83</sup>Muse, *Virginia's Massive Resistance*, 54.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid, 55.



program was instituted that would provide public funds for students to attend private schools.<sup>85</sup>

The Perrow Commission, as this group of legislators was called, also gained approval of the Virginia General Assembly to sell surplus school property if public schools were closed. The approval by the General Assembly worked well with the plans of educational foundations that were formed in many counties to help with securing funding for private schools and to maintain segregated education for children. This also changed the focus from statewide massive resistance to local control.<sup>86</sup>

1959 is considered to be the ending of massive resistance. Areas such as Charlottesville, Warren County, and Norfolk had resorted to hastily established private schools to prevent students from attending desegregated schools.<sup>87</sup> A three judge federal district court ruled in the case of *James v. Almond*, that denying students an education while providing free public education as a system was unconstitutional and at odds with the Supreme Courts rulings. The argument was used that the schools were not closed to prevent desegregation, but to prevent the chance of violence.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>Smith, 144.

<sup>86</sup>Wilkinson III, *Harry Byrd and the Changing Face of Virginia Politics 1945-1966*, 148.

<sup>87</sup>Muse, 115-117.

<sup>88</sup>Muse, 102-103.

On January 19, 1959, the Virginia Supreme Court issued its statement on massive resistance in the opinion written by Chief Justice John W. Eggleston. The opinion struck down massive resistance in that public schools could not be closed to prevent desegregation nor could state funds be cut as a means to prevent desegregation.<sup>89</sup> Chief Justice Eggleston's opinion further stated:

... That Section [129] requires the state to 'maintain an efficient system of public free schools throughout the state.' That means that the state must support such public free schools in the state as are necessary to an efficient system including those in which the pupils of both races are compelled to be enrolled and taught together; however unfortunate that situation may be.<sup>90</sup>

Governor Almond announced to the State of Virginia, in his speech on January 28, 1959, that the time had come to move on. He proposed that Virginia General Assembly pass legislation that would allow a tuition grant program that would operate independently of appropriated funding for public schools, "repeal the compulsory attendance law, and pass a law against bombing threats."<sup>91</sup> On Monday of the following week, Arlington and Norfolk integrated their schools in accordance with the court orders.<sup>92</sup>

In spite of bitter resistance from staunch segregationists such as Garland Gray and

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<sup>89</sup>Muse, 123.

<sup>90</sup>Muse, 125.

<sup>91</sup>Muse, 134.

<sup>92</sup>Muse, 135.

Frank P. Moncure, some Virginia localities began the process of change. Virginia's "four years of resistance to federal authority, came to an end."<sup>93</sup>

The principles which the 1955 Gray Commission had reported were evident in the recommendations of the Perrow Commission of 1959. Former Governor Mills E. Godwin was a member of the Perrow Commission as was Sam Pope, Southampton County's delegate in the Virginia House of Delegates. The Perrow Commission's report worked well with those who were trying to organize private schools or develop a second public school system. It did not require compulsory attendance, gave localities authority to solve problems dealing with desegregation, and allowed for segregated private schooling as an option.<sup>94</sup>

Oliver Hill, NAACP attorney of the law firm Hill, Tucker, and Marsh was quoted as saying, "The sit-ins and the marches of the first half of the 1960's was an appropriate response to the illegal, immoral and stupid program of "massive resistance" instituted by the racial segregationists in opposition to the Brown vs. Board of Education which declared the infamous Plessy vs. Ferguson doctrine unconstitutional."<sup>95</sup>

Virginians from this point forward, willingly or unwillingly, began the process of

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<sup>93</sup>Muse, 139.

<sup>94</sup>Muse, 161.

<sup>95</sup>Julia Tucker, *S. W. Tucker Civil Rights Pioneer Handbook on The Civil Rights Journey During the Sixties in Virginia*, February, 1995.

bringing public education into compliance with the Supreme Court's rulings. Some localities much more quickly made the changes. Localities such as Norfolk required the use of the police to stem problems within the communities as schools were desegregated. Prince Edward closed its schools rather than allow desegregated public schooling. Other areas had less difficulty. Each of these areas could have its own story about the desegregation process.

Freedom of Choice became the desegregation option that many localities chose to allow for the individual to attend a school of a predominantly different race from the individual. This allowed for local control, particularly in areas of southside Virginia where African-Americans were much less likely to select an all White school to attend.

### Summary

During the years after the Supreme Court's rulings in the Brown decisions many changes occurred in the state of Virginia. The politics of Virginia changed as did the way of life with the ruling that 'separate was not equal'. The move to end segregation marked the ending of a way of life for many people in Virginia. It also marked a change in the political picture of Virginia as the strong statewide Democratic political organization, "the Byrd Machine", ended with the ending of massive resistance of 1959.

Throughout Virginia, 1954 marked the beginning of major changes. Many

Virginians were actively involved in ways to maintain segregated educational opportunities for children. There was an organized effort to maintain options for segregation in spite of the Supreme Court ruling.

Between the time of the 1950s and the 1960s, Southampton County went through changes from being an agricultural based economy to one that had several industries being developed. This provided jobs and opportunities. It also increased the need to have educational opportunities available for those locating in the area to work in industry.

## Chapter Three

### Actions and Reactions to Desegregated Schooling

While meetings were being held in other parts of the state to discuss what the Supreme Court's decision in Brown I would mean for public education, local meetings were also being held. In December of 1955, the Southampton County School Board and the Franklin Parent Teacher Association went on record as being opposed to the integration of the schools and encouraged all voters to vote for the proposed state referendum on January 9, 1956. A mass meeting was held at Southampton High School, which featured Judge Segar Gravatt, an avid states' rights defender, as one of the key speakers. In his speech, he made the statement that was quoted in the January 5 issue of The Tidewater News:

Any man who knows and understands the temper of the people in that section [southside Virginia] between James River [and] Lynchburg knows that there will be no public schools in this area ... if compulsory integration is placed upon these communities by the NAACP.

The impact of this meeting could be felt when the referendum was held to amend the state constitution to allow the use of state funds for the private education of the students. The vote was 3,325 for to 423 against, as reported by Parramore in his book recording the history of Southampton County.<sup>96</sup> Southampton joined with its southside Virginia neighbors in supporting the referendum.

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<sup>96</sup>Parramore, 214.

In an interview with S. W. Rawls, Jr., a close personal friend of Mills Godwin and Elmon Gray, son of Garland Gray, he described some of the intense activity that occurred in the Franklin-Southampton County area. He shared that after the 1954 decision, a group of leading citizens, especially the attorneys in the area worked very quietly to explore alternatives to public education in case the public schools closed or integration was forced upon them.

John C. Parker, an attorney for the Camp Manufacturing (later Union-Camp Corporation) quietly contacted all of the attorneys in the area and key community leaders to develop a plan of action.<sup>97</sup> Gilbert W. Francis, a Boykins attorney, confirmed that John C. Parker had contacted him about joining this group in opposition to desegregated schooling.<sup>98</sup> Mr. Francis stated that he was not supportive because of his belief in the rights of all individuals to an education.

The group of attorneys and businessmen organized themselves as the Southampton Education Foundation. Sol W. Rawls, Jr. became the president of the Southampton Education Foundation. The group had originally begun meeting in 1957, but did not request a state charter until January of 1959.<sup>99</sup> The purpose of the organization was to provide an alternative to public education if the schools closed and to allow families a

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<sup>97</sup>Personal interview with S. W. Rawls, Jr. on 22 November, 1996.

<sup>98</sup>Personal interview with Gilbert W. Francis 22 November, 1996.

<sup>99</sup>Rawls, Jr. interview.

choice.<sup>100</sup> J. Vaughan Beale, a Franklin attorney, became the director of the Foundation. R. N. Darden, cousin to former Governor Colgate Darden, from Newsoms, Paul Camp Marks from Capron (Southampton School Board member), Harvey Pope from Courtland, Homer Saunders from Ivor, Sam E. Pope from Capron (a delegate in the Virginia General Assembly), H. T. Smith from Boykins, H. B. McLemore from Courtland (Clerk of the Southampton County Court), and S. W. Rawls of Franklin were directors of the Southampton Education Foundation.

According to Mr. Rawls, the group was very serious in its concerns about education. Mr. Rawls stated that, "We went house to house to get the reaction of the white citizens to find out if they would send their children to a private school system if the public schools integrated. Ninety to ninety-one percent of the houses that we went to signed saying that they would."<sup>101</sup> The signatures became the possession of Mr. Rawls, Jr. who placed them in a locked box at an unnamed bank where they remained until a few years ago when he removed the list and destroyed it.<sup>102</sup>

Mr. Rawls, Jr. explained that the group that made up the Education Foundation did not want to start a private school; instead, they wanted to develop a private school system. The system would be financed through tuition grants that the state would furnish

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.



due to the efforts of "massive resistance" and the work of the Perrow Commission.<sup>103</sup>

Schools would be set up in temporary facilities throughout all parts of the county to wait until such time that the school system had to sell off the schools as surplus property when they were no longer needed due to the drop in enrollment. Everyone in the Foundation agreed that the schools would be inconvenienced by not having permanent facilities but, that they could be patient and wait until the schools had to be sold as surplus property.<sup>104</sup>

In a speech to the Franklin PTA, Rawls stated that the Foundation had been formed for all white families to join together because 72% of the school age population in Southampton County was black. He did not believe that the blacks wanted integrated schools and that no one should have desegregation forced upon them. He was concerned that in a classroom of students, white children would be the minority.<sup>105</sup> He also shared that plans were beginning for private schools for all white children if there was a need. This statement later became significant as Rawls led the movement for the organization of a private school system.

The Southampton Education Foundation "fell apart" when massive resistance came to an end and the tuition grants that had been counted on did not come through. "The courts forced integration on all of us and there was not any way to support a system. The

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Rawls interview, Tidewater News, 1959, March 12, 1.

members of the group, along with many other citizens, supported the Freedom of Choice as to what school the children would attend. When integration was forced in 1969, the Southampton Academy came about as a way to at least offer a choice."<sup>106</sup>

The Southampton Academy was organized under the leadership of John C. Parker and G. E. "Hap" Pillow. In the late 1960s, the "Academy" was opened as a small school. The Camp Foundation, of which Mr. S. W. Rawls, Jr. is president, provided a large part of the funding for this endeavor. Large contributions were also made by members of the Camp family which has continued to contribute financial support for the Academy.

Southampton Academy was established to educate children in grades one through seven. As interest in the Academy grew, it established an Upper School as well to cover grades eight through twelve. The Southampton Academy continues to exist in 1998 with programs established for pre-school through grade twelve.

According to Mr. Rawls, Jr., the Camp family supported public schools until the consolidation of Southampton and Franklin City schools became an issue during the late 1950s. At one time, there was an effort to merge the Franklin High School with Southampton High School. William "Bill" Camp, uncle of S. W. Rawls, Jr. was highly in favor of building a high school on the Darden farm (home of former Governor Colgate Darden) between Courtland and Franklin. A name was even selected for this proposed school. It would be named the Colgate Darden High School. When the idea failed to

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<sup>106</sup>Ibid.

materialize, Franklin began intense efforts to break away from Southampton County. Mr. Rawls, Jr. stated that this is one reason that Franklin became a second class city. The people simply wanted more say about their schools.<sup>107</sup> When the consolidation efforts failed, the family withdrew its support.<sup>108</sup>

It must be noted that the Camp family, Camp Foundation, and other philanthropic organizations involving the Camp family have returned to providing significant financial support to the public schools of Southampton and Franklin.

In a further discussion with Mr. Rawls, Jr., he remarked that the actions following the court decisions related to segregation, were not issues of race. He stated that there had long been good relations between the Blacks and Whites in the community. The people showed respect between the races. Those that had the most difficult time with the changes that occurred were those of the lower socioeconomic classes because of their limited options.<sup>109</sup> In reflecting upon the issues of desegregating the schools, Mr. Rawls, Jr. stated that he believed the problems really could have been because of class, not race.<sup>110</sup>

Mr. Lloyd Sykes, a prominent African-American educator and community leader

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Personal interview with S. W. Rawls, Jr. on 22 November, 1996.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

echoed many of the comments which S. W. Rawls, Jr. had made. Mr. Sykes said that the time of integration was difficult. Public schools could have been abandoned in Southampton County.<sup>111</sup> There were White people and Black people who supported the idea of integration, but did not want their names used as being supportive. He also commented that the adults had much more difficulty dealing with the concept of integrated schooling than the children ever had. "If the adults had stayed out of it, the children could have handled it easier."<sup>112</sup>

Mr. Paul Camp Marks, grandson of one of the founders of the Camp Manufacturing Company, represented the Capron District on the Southampton County School Board during the time prior to mandated integration. Mr. Sykes said that during the time Mr. Marks was on the school board, he was also supporting the efforts to organize the Southampton Academy. This support for Southampton Academy finally cost him his seat on the Southampton School Board.<sup>113</sup>

Eppa Prince, the school board member representing the Newsoms District, also became involved in the issue of divided loyalties between the public schools of Southampton and the private Southampton Academy. While serving on the School Board, he placed the name of his only child on the waiting list to enter Southampton

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<sup>111</sup>Personal interview with Lloyd Sykes on 28 October, 1996.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid.

Academy when an opening occurred. In order to get his son's name placed on the waiting list, he paid a full year's tuition so that when an opening occurred, he would be enrolled.<sup>114</sup>

Only one event stood out strongly in Eppa Prince's mind about his divided interest. He said there was a time when "a colored man named Charlie Williams came to me and asked me why my son, Doug, was going to the Academy." Prince stated that he told him, "I think my son will get a better education."<sup>115</sup>

After that event occurred, Prince spoke to the PTA in Newsoms and offered to resign. He was told to finish out his term. When his term ended in 1972, Prince joined the Board of Directors for Southampton Academy along with Paul Camp Marks of Capron. The reason given for their appointments was that both had experience after having served on the Southampton School Board. Their experience was needed by the Academy.<sup>116</sup>

Mr. Prince said that integration was slowly coaxed into Southampton County through the Freedom of Choice plan which made it easier and a smoother transition. He said that Sol Rawls, Sr. and Jr. had a lot of political pull in this area and along with Sam "Sales Tax Sam" Pope, the county stayed on the outside of Harry Byrd's massive resistance movement.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>Personal interview with Eppa Prince on 29 October, 1996.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid.

"There were conscientious people on both sides and certainly there were no racial incidents to speak of," said Prince. "All the colored folks wanted it (integration) and the white ones didn't."<sup>118</sup> He believed the process was smooth because of the leadership provided by Ed Trice, Southampton Superintendent of Schools, and Jack Powell, Southampton's Director of Instruction.

Nancy Sandidge, the first African-American teacher hired to teach at the all white Southampton High School, echoed Eppa Prince's comments about the leadership within the schools. She also added that Viola Peden and Captolia Hall, African-American supervisors in the Southampton County school system provided leadership and kept the goal of improving the schools during the desegregation process at the forefront.<sup>119</sup>

In a discussion with Prince about the reactions of individuals to the idea of desegregating the schools, Mr. Prince said that private academies were an alternative for some families. Tidewater Academy in the adjoining county of Sussex provided the answer for many people from the Ivor area in eastern part of the county.<sup>120</sup> Many people in that part of the county were already frustrated with the Southampton Schools because of the location of the Southampton High School in 1954 in Courtland on Route 58 rather than on the eastern side of Courtland. During the time frame of 1954 until 1967, the people of

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<sup>118</sup>Ibid.

<sup>119</sup>Personal interview with Nancy Sandidge, in Franklin, Virginia on March 27, 1998.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid.

Ivor refused to support the public schools, threatened to secede from the county, argued with the School Board to provide transportation for the children to attend the nearby Sussex County Schools, and supported the growth of the private Tidewater Academy.<sup>121</sup>

Tidewater Academy got its start in 1958, long before Southampton Academy. Mr. Leroy Dail, a long time coach at Newsoms High School and later at Southampton High School left public education and became a coach at Tidewater Academy. He made the drive each day from Newsoms to Wakefield in Sussex County. He took Leigh Ann Vick, a Newsoms resident, with him each day so that she would not have to attend public school.<sup>122</sup>

In Prince's discussion of Southampton Academy, he noted that Robert "Bobby" Marks, brother of Paul Camp Marks, was on the founding board of the Academy. He recalled that Camp Manufacturing and Narrow Fabrics were beginning to grow and bring new people into the area with new ideas. Some of these people influenced change. For example, Jack Martino, the head of Narrow Fabrics, had children and sent them to the Academy. His wife served on the Board of Directors for Southampton Academy. As other people were brought in by him to work in the management of Narrow Fabrics, they also sent their children to the Academy.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Personal interview with Bill J. Wright on 21 August, 1996.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

The financial base upon which the Southampton Academy was built was provided by the Camp family and the Camp Foundation. The Camps took over and provided classrooms, a gym, and a library. Their help allowed the Academy to grow and serve more children.

Robert Poland, a pharmacist in Boykins, later became caught up in the controversy of divided loyalties between public education and the private Southampton Academy. Mr. Poland served only two years on the Southampton School Board during the 1970s. He resigned because of the pressure put upon him because of taking his son out of the local public school and enrolling him in Southampton Academy.<sup>124</sup>

Roberta "Bobbi" Naranjo provided the writer with background information on the actions of some of the people in the southern part of Southampton County to the order to integrate the public schools. She recalled the very intense pressure put on families by community members to make a choice between private or public education. Mrs. Naranjo said that Boykins resident, H. T. "Snappy" Smith was in charge of raising money for a private school. He asked each family to contribute \$5000 so that private education could be funded.<sup>125</sup>

Some families in the Boykins community chose to support public education and their belief that public education was a major component of a democratic society. This

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<sup>124</sup>Personal interview with Roberta Naranjo on 12 November, 1996.

<sup>125</sup>Ibid.



group organized and held its meetings in the office of Dr. Jorge Naranjo after closing hours. It is from these meetings that support grew for Roberta Naranjo to join the Southampton School Board, a position that she still holds in 1998.<sup>126</sup>

Each town or large community had its own school for white children. Towns such as Ivor, Courtland, Newsoms, Sebrell, Sedley, Boykins, Drewryville, and Capron had a school at the center of the community which housed grades 1 through 11, with grade 12 eventually being added to the curriculum. Throughout the county there were many one and two room schools for Blacks prior to 1954. Marie Sykes recalled teaching in one such school. Supplies were not provided for the children or for the teacher to work with. Churches and community groups would have benefits or activities to raise money to provide what was needed.<sup>127</sup> The town of Franklin was large enough to have a separate elementary and high school for White children as well as an elementary and high school for Blacks.

The Hayden Schools in Franklin were named for an early Negro educator named Della Hayden who had started the first school to educate Negro children.<sup>128</sup> Any African-American child living in Southampton County who wanted to attend high school had to

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Personal interview with Marie Sykes on October 28, 1996.

<sup>128</sup> Sarah S. Hughes, "Social Organization in the Black Community," *Readings In Black & White Lower Tidewater Virginia* (Portsmouth, Virginia: Portsmouth Public Library, 1982),43.

provide his/her own transportation to the Hayden High School prior to 1937.<sup>129</sup> Lloyd Sykes recalled paying \$0.15 per day for private transportation to and from Hayden High School.<sup>130</sup> Nancy Sandidge spoke of a child who walked from Black Creek in the northeastern part of the county to Franklin each week in order to attend school, a distance of approximately eight miles.<sup>131</sup> She also told of how a group of parents in the Ivor area raised enough money to purchase an old bus that they used to transport their children from the Ivor community to Hayden. Bob Sandidge, a former Hayden High School principal, recalled that those students who traveled to Hayden were serious about wanting an education.<sup>132</sup>

Franklin operated as a special school district with its own school board and administrative officials; however, according to Southampton County School Board Minutes for July 14, 1948, Southampton County retained ownership of the buildings located within the town limits of Franklin. The Southampton County Training School for Black children was located outside of Courtland and opened in 1937. It was available to any children who could afford the bus transportation to get there. Marie Sykes, a retired Southampton County teacher, recalls that J. C. Mills, an African-American who lived in

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<sup>129</sup>Nancy Sandidge and Lloyd Sykes interviews.

<sup>130</sup>Lloyd Sykes interview.

<sup>131</sup>Nancy Sandidge interview.

<sup>132</sup>Personal interview with Bob Sandidge on March 27, 1998.

the western part of the county, purchased an old bus and charged a fee for transporting children to school.<sup>133</sup>

In an interview with Marie and Lloyd Sykes, African-American educators, Mrs. Sykes shared what education was like in Southampton County when she was hired to teach in 1954 at the Pope's Mill School. Pope's Mill School was like many of the other "one room schools for Negro children which dotted the landscape of the county."<sup>134</sup> Her duties as a teacher included arriving early to build a wood fire for the school. She was expected to teach all subjects and all grade levels. At the end of each day, it was her responsibility to see that the school was cleaned with the broom that the county provided her each year.<sup>135</sup>

Mrs. Sykes said that most of the children walked to school and brought their lunches with them. The students were required to purchase their own textbooks. Due to the cost of purchasing books, most families tried to buy a reader, speller and an arithmetic book. These books would then be passed through the family.<sup>136</sup>

When Southampton County began its efforts to consolidate one room schools, Capron District School was the first school built for African-American children. The land

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<sup>133</sup>Personal interview with Marie Sykes by Carolyn Modlin, 28 October, 1996.

<sup>134</sup>Personal interview with Marie Sykes on 28 October, 1996.

<sup>135</sup>Ibid.

<sup>136</sup>Ibid.

on which the school was built had been sold to the county by Lloyd Sykes.

Sykes, a Southampton County native, had been educated in one of the tiny one room schools. He had traveled from Capron to the Hayden High School in Franklin in order to get an education. After graduating from Hayden and later receiving a master's degree from Columbia State Teacher's College, Sykes returned to his home in Southampton.

In talking about the schools prior to integration, Mrs. Sykes stated that families and churches tried to be supportive of the Negro schools. Bazaars were sometimes held to raise money for the schools. According to Mr. Sykes, after the Civil Rights legislation in 1964, the schools were supplied with toilet tissue, erasers, and chalk.<sup>137</sup> Education for Negroes was a "no frills" situation.<sup>138</sup> Pauline Morton, an African-American Franklin resident who was employed at the State Department of Education as Home Economics Supervisor, recalled the lack of supplies and the differences in salaries of Black and White educators.<sup>139</sup>

#### Making the Transition

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Personal interview with Pauline C. Morton in Franklin, Virginia on April 2, 1998.

In the Southampton County School Board Minutes of January 6, 1962, a resolution was passed which recognized Franklin as a city. This action followed the General Assembly's recognition of Franklin as a second class city. (Second class city status is based on size and population.) The resolution stated that Franklin and Southampton County Schools would operate under the Southampton County School Board's direction until June 30, 1962. At that time, those schools that were located within the city limits would be given to the city by the Southampton County School Board.

In February 1962, the city of Franklin proposed a twenty year agreement which would allow the city to pay Southampton \$168,156.40 for debt assumption and the transfer of the buildings from Southampton County to the City of Franklin. Dr. Woodrow W. Wilkerson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, became involved in advising Southampton's school superintendent, Mr. B. T. Watkins, about the proposed combined district of the city of Franklin with the county of Southampton. A letter dated April 3, 1962, was sent to Mr. Watkins. In the letter, Dr. Wilkerson wrote:

...the State Board of Education approved the establishment of the new school division consisting of the City of Franklin and Southampton County until July 1, 1962; but that no action was taken regarding the request that the City of Franklin constitute one school division and the County of Southampton constitute another after that date. It was further stated that the State Board of Education had expressed concern over the further establishment of small divisions, and it was suggested that local officials might explore the matter of the operation of schools for the City and the County as provided under Section 22-100.1-22.100.12 of Article 5 of the Virginia School Laws.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>140</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes, April 3, 1962.

The City of Franklin had agreed at a special meeting of the School Board on April 2, 1962, to authorize the signing of an architectural agreement to build a combined elementary and high school for Negroes within the newly defined city limits. This is noteworthy in that Hayden Elementary and High Schools were to revert back to Southampton County.

At the April 19, 1962 Southampton School Board meeting, Southampton agreed to continue to operate the Franklin City Schools for the 1962-63 school year. At the beginning of the 1963-64 school year, Franklin City would take over the operation and funding of the schools within their boundaries.

The February 1963 school board meetings held in the City of Franklin and Southampton County were significant. Southampton's school board met on February 4. The major action of the evening was to deny a request that had been made by the City of Franklin to operate all of the Negro schools in the city for the 1963-64 school year, if the county would allow the city to operate all of the white schools. On February 25, 1963, the City of Franklin, the School Board of Franklin, the Southampton County School Board, and the Southampton County Board of Supervisors reached an important agreement. The agreement stated that:

1. The City of Franklin would own the Franklin High School and Franklin Elementary School, effective July 1, 1963.
2. Hayden Elementary and Hayden High School would be Southampton County schools.

3. Transportation for pupils who lived in the city and wished to attend county schools would be provided, as well as, transportation for those in the county who wished to attend city schools would be provided.
4. The county and city agreed to compensate one another for the cost of educating each other's students.<sup>141</sup>

By March of 1963, Southampton was interested in selling the Hayden school properties. The offer was made by Southampton to sell Hayden Elementary and High School for \$650,000, pending approval of the Southampton Board of Supervisors and the School Board.

In May of 1963, the African-American faculty of the Southampton County Training School requested that the Southampton School Board change the name of the school facility. The faculty proposed several names from which a selection could be made. The names were: Courtland High School, Nat Turner High School, or Riverview High School. The Board voted on May 13, 1963 to change the name of the all Negro school to Riverview, the least inflammatory of the proposed names.<sup>142</sup>

African-American citizens in the city were upset with the continued efforts to maintain segregated educational facilities, in spite of the Brown decisions having been

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<sup>141</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated February 25, 1963.

<sup>142</sup>Southampton School Board Minutes dated May 13, 1963, p. 1710. The all white Courtland High School had closed when the consolidated county school was built in 1954.

made nearly ten years prior. The Reverend Samuel Daly, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Franklin, became the spokesman for this group of citizens in Franklin. When the Franklin School Board met at its regular meeting on August 6, 1963, Daly asked the Board to provide for the building of a non-segregated school system.<sup>143</sup>

After Reverend Daly addressed the Board, Superintendent E. E. Brickell responded to Reverend Daly and the delegation that he represented. Mr. Brickell told them that there were "errors and misconceptions in the statements presented by Mr. Daly." He told the group that they should be talking to the Southampton County School Board and not Franklin since Southampton County operated the Hayden Schools. In his remarks, Mr. Brickell also told the group not to "throw up roadblocks."<sup>144</sup>

The following week, a special meeting of the Franklin School Board was held at Hayden High School. On August 13, 1963, the Franklin School Board offered to purchase the Hayden High School for \$400,000 from the Southampton County School Board.<sup>145</sup> Southampton rejected this offer and asked Franklin to pay \$600,000 for the Hayden property and buildings. Southampton continued the bargaining process with the Franklin School Board. It is interesting to note that Southampton County School Board agreed to accept payment from the City of Franklin for Hayden in the amount of \$390,000

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<sup>143</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes for August 6, 1963.

<sup>144</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes on August 6, 1963.

<sup>145</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes for August 13, 1963.



at the special meeting held by the Franklin School Board on September 10, 1963. On September 17, 1963 the Franklin School Board officially accepted the offer and set the transfer date as July 1, 1964.<sup>146</sup>

As was done in many school divisions as an effort to satisfy the African-American citizens, schools were built in Black communities across the state of Virginia.

Southampton County School Board built new Black elementary schools for the elementary grades one through seven in Boykins, Newsoms, Courtland, Ivor, and Drewryville. The schools were quickly built in their neighborhoods, many by the same simple plan. This was part of the neighborhood concept reasoning as a means to prevent desegregation. The new schools were clean, and modern in contrast to the older schools White children attended which had originally been for students in grades one through eleven (later twelve).<sup>147</sup>

Franklin was no exception. At the January 7, 1964, meeting of the Franklin School Board, it was announced that drawings for a new Negro elementary school had been submitted to the state for approval had been accepted. The land for the new school was land that had been condemned from the Pretlow Estate on the southeastern side of Franklin. At this same meeting, Mr. Brickell, the Superintendent, requested that the school board appoint a committee to select a site on which to build a new white high

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<sup>146</sup>Franklin School Board minutes September 17, 1997.

<sup>147</sup>Marie Sykes, interviewed by Carolyn Modlin on 28 October, 1996.

school.<sup>148</sup>

The Southampton School Board held its regularly scheduled January board meeting on January 11, 1964. Mr. Brickell, Superintendent of Franklin Schools, requested that the<sup>149</sup> Southampton County School Board advise him of the county's plans for children who were attending the city schools for the school year of 1965-66. A discussion of the federal Civil Rights Act took place at the meeting, but no actions were taken.<sup>150</sup>

The Franklin School Board held its regular meeting on March 3, 1964. A prominent Franklin citizen, Mr. S W. Rawls, Jr. addressed the school board as a representative from the Franklin Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Rawls, Jr. requested that the Superintendent meet with a group representing the Chamber "to discuss certain matters pertinent to local schools." Mr. Bob Phillips also addressed the board at this meeting. He made a similar request to that of Mr. Rawls, Jr.. W. T. Jones, a Franklin School Board member made a motion that was seconded by Mr. J. P. King, to meet with the groups separately to discuss their concerns. The motion passed with the qualifications that the meetings would be held as soon as they could be scheduled; the press would not

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<sup>148</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated January 7, 1964.

<sup>149</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated March 3, 1964.

<sup>150</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated January 11, 1965.

be allowed to be present; and, the questions had to be sent to the Superintendent in advance of the meeting.<sup>151</sup>

The meeting that had been requested by the Chamber of Commerce was arranged for March 12, 1964, with the Franklin School Board. Mr. S. W. Rawls, Jr. acted as spokesman for the Education Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, along with several other Chamber members who attended (see Appendix C). Mr. Rawls, Jr. addressed the Board and stated that they were there to get answers and information about the schools. At this point, Mr. Brickell addressed the questions that had been submitted to him prior to the meeting.<sup>152</sup>

On the following night, March 13, 1964, the Superintendent met with Mr. Bob Phillips, Mr. Joe Hutt, and Mr. L. P. Jervey as representatives of a group of 69 citizens. Again, Mr. Brickell gave answers to questions that had been previously submitted to him.<sup>153</sup>

In May of 1964, the Franklin School Board reported that the Franklin City Council had appropriated \$35,000.00 for the building of a Negro elementary school. The school was to be named for a longtime Negro educator who was highly respected in the Franklin - Southampton community, S. P. Morton, principal of Hayden Elementary and High

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<sup>151</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated March 3, 1964.

<sup>152</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated March 12, 1964.

<sup>153</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated March 13, 1964.

Schools. While Franklin was busily addressing citizen concerns and discussing their building plans, Southampton School Board was meeting and directing Harold McGrath, Chairman, "to sign the Assurance of Compliance Act with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Regulation under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964." The Superintendent was requested to prepare a "Freedom of Choice" policy by the next board meeting.<sup>154</sup>

At Franklin's January 5, 1965, board meeting, the Franklin School Board voted that no action would be taken at this time on "signing ...the 'no discrimination' pledge being required by the U. S. Government under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It was decided to [wait and] see if the State Board of Education takes a leadership role in the matter."<sup>155</sup> In March, the Board voted 4 to 1 to sign the Compliance agreement.<sup>156</sup>

Southampton County School Board did not agreed to comply with the Civil Rights Act until their April board meeting. The Compliance agreement was signed after Southampton's School Board Chairman, Harold McGrath, presented a report to the board on the possibility of merging the Southampton County and City of Franklin schools. He

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<sup>154</sup>Southampton School Board Minutes dated March 8, 1964.

<sup>155</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated January 5, 1965.

<sup>156</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated March 16, 1965.

stated that the idea had been suggested to him by certain members of the School Board and Board of Supervisors.<sup>157</sup>

On April 12, 1965, the Southampton County School Board passed a resolution stating, "Resolved, that this School Board, having executed Form #HEW 441 agreeing to comply with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, shall henceforth adopt as its policy that all parts of the school system be based on a freedom of choice insofar as same may be reasonable and prudent and not interfere with expeditious and efficient operation of this school system to the end that all pupils may be given the option of attending the school of his choice without regard to race, color, or national origin."<sup>158</sup>

When the Southampton School Board met on May 20, 1965, procedures for compliance with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act were discussed. The superintendent was instructed by the board to develop a "Freedom of Choice" plan and present it to Mr. Edward Mearns who was a consultant for the United States Office of Education.<sup>159</sup>

Within a few days, the Franklin School Board met and unanimously approved the "Freedom of Choice" plan which the Superintendent proposed. The plan allowed for choice to be available to students entering grades 1, 8, and 12. The plan would allow for additional grades to be added after the 1965-66 school year. Such action would bring the

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<sup>157</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated March 29, 1965.

<sup>158</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated April 12, 1965.

<sup>159</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated May 20, 1965.

city into compliance with Section 601, Civil Rights Act of 1964, "to meet requirements of Sec.80.4(c)(2), Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations, and to establish eligibility for federal financial assistance in the operation of public school in the city."<sup>160</sup> At this same meeting, the City of Franklin officially withdrew from the State Pupil Placement Board.<sup>161</sup>

On May 27, 1965, Mr. Ed Trice, Superintendent of Southampton County Schools, presented to Mr. Mearns, the freedom of choice plan that he had developed for Southampton County Schools. Mr. Mearns provided tentative approval of the plan and approved the right of the county to implement the plan.<sup>162</sup>

During the month of June, those who wished to take advantage of the freedom of choice plan for Southampton were given the opportunity to do so. At the July board meeting, the applications provided under freedom of choice were approved.<sup>163</sup>

In August of 1965, the Franklin City School Board was provided with a revised desegregation plan which Superintendent W. B. Blanks had developed. In order for the city to be in compliance with the Civil Rights Act, at least four grades had to be given the option of freedom of choice. It was decided that the second grade would be added.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>160</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated May 24, 1965.

<sup>161</sup>Ibid.

<sup>162</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated May 27, 1965.

<sup>163</sup>Southampton School Board Minutes dated July 12, 1965.

<sup>164</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated August 3, 1965.

At the September meeting of the Franklin School Board, it was announced that a letter had been received from the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) which notified the school division that all grades must be desegregated by the 1966-67 school year.<sup>165</sup> This meant that further revisions would be necessary to desegregate the city schools.

Southampton County had already begun the revision process of its freedom of choice plan. Superintendent Ed Trice reported at the first meeting of the new school year that there were 57 Negroes in previously all white schools (39 at Southampton High School and 18 in four of the county's elementary schools). He announced that the revised freedom of choice plan had been approved with certain conditions on August 27, 1965, by the U. S. Department of HEW. Mr. Trice stated that he would be meeting in Petersburg during the following week to discuss with other school superintendents from southside Virginia what was necessary for compliance with the regulations set by HEW. For the first time in the school system's history, Mr. Trice announced that students had been assigned to sit in specific seats on school buses.<sup>166</sup> This prevented white and black students from being seated together.

Freedom of choice impacted on white students as well as African-American. At the November board meeting, the Southampton School Board approved all 558

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<sup>165</sup>Franklin School Board Minutes dated September 7, 1965.

<sup>166</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated September 13, 1965.

applications that had been made under the pupil tuition grants to attend the predominantly white city schools in Franklin.<sup>167</sup> This large number of white students withdrawing from the county system to attend the predominantly white system of Franklin City Schools created a distinctly "White" system in Franklin and a "Black" system in the county.

In January of 1966, Ed Trice, Southampton's Superintendent of Schools, verbally recommended to the School Board that the county withdraw from the state Pupil Placement Board. He told the board that he would have the recommendation to them in writing by the February meeting.<sup>168</sup>

By March of 1966, Mr. Trice had received the notification from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare of the guidelines for the desegregation of the faculties and staffs of the county schools.<sup>169</sup> The guidelines created fertile grounds for discussion as to how to bring the county schools into compliance without destroying the public schools for its White citizens.

The members of the county school board were deeply concerned about the HEW Form 441B. Board members expressed the feelings that white citizens would not accept desegregation if it were forced too rapidly upon them. At the May meeting, the school board requested that Mr. Trice sign the Form 441B with an attached letter stating that the

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<sup>167</sup>Ibid, November 8, 1966, p. 1783.

<sup>168</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated January 10, 1966.

<sup>169</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated March 14, 1966.



Southampton County School Board reserved the right to accept or reject changes made to the Freedom of Choice Plan which the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare had adopted in August, 1965.<sup>170</sup>

At the June meeting, Ed Trice gave a report to the board on the Freedom of Choice plan implementation in the county schools. He noted for the Board that no White students had chosen to attend the Negro schools. He also stated that 70 Negro students had chosen to attend the White schools.<sup>171</sup>

Southampton County had complied with the law in adopting a plan for desegregation, Freedom of Choice; but the desegregation was inadequate. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare was not satisfied. The county was now subject to review by HEW according to a letter dated June 22, 1966, to Superintendent Trice.<sup>172</sup> At the August 8, 1966 Southampton School Board meeting, Mr. Trice announced that officials from the Health, Education, and Welfare Department would be in the county on August 16 and 17 to review the county's desegregation plans.<sup>173</sup>

The Southampton School Board held a special meeting on August 22, 1966. After reviewing the recommendations of the HEW officials, the Board voted to agree to

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<sup>170</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated May 23, 1966.

<sup>171</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated June 3, 1966.

<sup>172</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated July 11, 1966.

<sup>173</sup>Southampton School Board Minutes dated August 8, 1966.

"comply with the recommendations of HEW relative to the re-registration of all students with the exception of those presently assigned to white schools, and to distribute questionnaires of all teacher personnel in the county for the purpose of ascertaining their willingness to teach in schools predominantly different in race from those in which they are now teaching."<sup>174</sup>

When the teachers were surveyed, no white teachers volunteered to teach in Negro schools. Thirteen Negro teachers volunteered to teach in schools that were of a different race. The survey also revealed that 25 Negroes and 70 White teachers indicated that they would not accept a reassignment to a school of another race.<sup>175</sup>

In January of 1967, a special meeting was held by the Southampton County School Board to discuss a letter dated January 10, 1967, relative to HEW document #67. The letter stated that there were 52 charges against Southampton County for not being in compliance with the directive to desegregate schools. The Board was given twenty days in which to respond. Of the charges, 36 were determined to be true, 15 were false and 1 did not apply to the school system.<sup>176</sup>

Adhering to the decision to follow the Freedom of Choice plan as the method of choice for desegregation, April 1 through 30 was set as the registration period for

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<sup>174</sup>Southampton School Board Minutes dated August 22, 1966.

<sup>175</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated September 12, 1966.

<sup>176</sup>southampton County School Board Minutes dated January 16, 1967.

Freedom of Choice at the February 13, 1967 school board meeting. It was also announced that the Southampton County School Board would be given a hearing before the HEW Department in Washington, D. C. on February 20.<sup>177</sup>

A special meeting was held on February 27, 1967 at Courtland, Virginia. This meeting was to inform school board members about the February 20 meeting that Superintendent Ed Trice has attended. The announcement was made that the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare had determined that Southampton County's faculties must be desegregated before beginning the 1967-68 school year.<sup>178</sup>

Desegregation of the faculties within Southampton County was not the only issue before the School Board. The Freedom of Choice form used by the Southampton County School Board was called into question by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Changes were required in the form if the county was to continue to use a Freedom of Choice plan. Board members Paul Camp Marks, son of Texie Camp Marks (one of the major stockholders in the Camp Corporation and member of the Camp Foundation Board) and Stanley Johnson strongly supported the continuance of the Freedom of Choice Plan. They believed that this would still allow the county to meet the requirement that every school must be desegregated by September of 1969.

Mr. Trice, Superintendent, voiced a major concern at this February meeting. He

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<sup>177</sup>Southampton School Board Minutes dated February 13, 1967.

<sup>178</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated February 27, 1967.

stated that the small, local community schools throughout the county were not large enough to support the comprehensive programs that were becoming necessary without being deficient according to standards required by the Virginia Department of Education. Coupled with the problems associated with desegregation, and possible compulsory attendance regulations were major needs that they would have to address as a school board. A decision would have to be made as to add to presently existing Negro schools and combine with mobile units; or, either add Negro students and faculty to existing White schools in the county.<sup>179</sup>

The March School Board meeting opened with a discussion of the first major bus conflict since beginning desegregation. A confrontation had taken place on a school bus that traveled from Southampton High School to the western edge of the county. A problem had developed between two White males and three Black females. Bill Wright, principal of Southampton High School, had dealt with the students by giving warnings about the boys' confrontational and harassing manner since December when it was brought to his attention. Otis Jones, the first Negro deputy sheriff in the Southampton County Sheriff's Department stopped the school bus on the ride home and talked to the boys involved about their treatment of his wife's niece and her friends. The situation was brought to Mr. Wright's attention. When he questioned the bus driver about what had occurred, the driver stated that his attempts to end the problem had been met with him

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<sup>179</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated February 12, 1968.

being called a "Nigger lover." Mr. Wright issued a one week bus suspension against each of the boys and warned the girl to not respond to problems with the use of profanity. It was noted that Bill Wright was praised by the School Board for his handling of the situation.

Following the discussion of the disciplinary matter, Bill Wright posed a situation for consideration and direction from the School Board. Sussex Central High School, a Negro high school in the adjoining county had requested to be admitted to the Virginia High School League (VHSL). If the VHSL accepted Sussex Central, as it was expected to do, Southampton would need direction as to whether to withdraw from the VHSL or forfeit all games against Negro schools. The Board felt that playing the games would invite a potentially explosive situation, especially for an indoor sport such as basketball. The Board wanted to study the matter further before giving Mr. Wright any direction as to how to handle the situation.<sup>180</sup>

When discussing this situation with Roberta Naranjo, she spoke of athletics being a particular problem in the desegregation process. Athletic situations created a special problem because of the close contact. Many of the students had to deal with outside pressures and prejudices of attending the public school and deciding whether or not to play.<sup>181</sup> This issue was also brought up in a discussion that took place with former

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<sup>180</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated March 11, 1968.

<sup>181</sup>Personal interview with Roberta Naranjo on November 12, 1996.

Governor Mills Godwin. Former Governor Godwin reminisced about the efforts of Sam Pope in the Virginia General Assembly to have legislation passed which would prevent African-Americans and Caucasians from participating in scholastic sports together.<sup>182</sup>

April 1 through April 30 was the registration period for returning Freedom of Choice forms which no longer had to be mailed to each household, but could be given to pupils at school and mailed to the parents of students entering pre-school or early childhood programs. This allowed the forms to go to only those students who attended or would attend public schools rather than each county household.

During the 1968-69 school year, there had been 60 Negro students attending all White schools. The 1969-70 school year's applications were for 71 Negroes to attend previously all White schools.<sup>183</sup>

At the regular monthly meeting of the school board on June 10, 1968, Superintendent Trice shared information from a letter he had received from the Director of the Department of Civil Rights which was addressed to "certain superintendents in those divisions in the state where the Negro population is predominant. An invitation was extended to attend a Desegregation Institute at Atlanta, Georgia on June 17th. All

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<sup>182</sup>Personal interview with former Governor Mills Godwin on January 3, 1997.

<sup>183</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated May 13, 1968.

expenses were to be paid."<sup>184</sup> Mr. Trice then explained that "recent decisions strengthened HEW regulations."<sup>185</sup> He referred "to the two recent diametrically opposed decisions affecting New Kent County (reference to the Green decision), to the ruling of the Judicial Court of Appeals relative to private housing restrictions in Norfolk that prevented appropriate integration of the schools there and a recent order sent to the Virginia State Department of Education to withhold approval of new building construction unless such complied with integration requirements."<sup>186</sup>

Harold C. McGrath, Chairman of the Southampton County School Board, recommended at the regular July meeting of the school board that pupils be placed in the schools according to the April Freedom of Choice registration applications. After this was approved by the School Board, Superintendent Trice reported on the Desegregation Conference that he had attended in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Trice said that the conference had centered around the idea that "of the two hundred forty-two school districts in the South which have a majority of Negroes, only six have desegregated; that desegregation is the responsibility of the local school board, that efforts should be made to improve the condition of the culturally disadvantaged, the total desegregation of the faculty and

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<sup>184</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated June 10, 1968.

<sup>185</sup>Ibid.

<sup>186</sup>Ibid.

student body is projected by September, 1969 - with the deadline 9% even in extreme cases; that all kinds of assistance will be made available; that meetings are scheduled at the University of Georgia this summer and in Virginia next year; that the Charlottesville Conference, scheduled from July 8th - July 14th has been called off because of insufficient interest; that another conference has been scheduled from August 19th through August 23rd."<sup>187</sup>

At the October 14, 1968 Southampton School Board Meeting, the September 30 student enrollment was provided for the Board by Mr. Trice. He noted that 487 students had enrolled in Franklin City Schools from Southampton County Schools. This "cost was to be \$127,000.00 (year plus increases in A.D.A. appropriations from the state). This cost exceed the amount allotted in the budget by \$3,000.00 or \$4,000.00 despite the fact that there are 35 pupils from Franklin (an increase over past years) enrolled in Southampton County Schools for which the County will collect \$9,000.00 plus increase in A.D.A. from the state."<sup>188</sup> The enrollment total for the county schools was 4,815 students, of which there were 3,315 Negroes and 1,500 White students. Mr. Trice gave a further breakdown to the Board on the number of Negro students in formerly all White schools:

Southampton High School - 26

Boykins - 30

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<sup>187</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated July 8, 1968.

<sup>188</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated October 14, 1968.



Ivor - 16

Drewryville - 3

Courtland - 2

Newsoms - 1

Hunterdale - 1

Following this information, the Superintendent announced that the U. S. Justice Department had notified him that Southampton County was not in compliance with the School Desegregation Act. The Board was given the directive to notify the U. S. Justice Department by October 25, as to how it planned to desegregate the schools for the 1969-70 school year.

A lengthy discussion followed Mr. Trice's announcement. The Board's sentiment was to continue with Freedom of Choice and explore opportunities for continuing with the limited desegregation that was occurring as a natural process. The Board instructed Mr. Trice to contact Henry Wickam, Jr. a Richmond attorney, to seek his advice on how to handle the letter from the Justice Department. The Board also recommended that a request be made to the Justice Department for additional time in order to develop an acceptable plan.<sup>189</sup>

The November School Board meeting was the first meeting at which the Board

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<sup>189</sup>Ibid.

was requested to approve Pupil Scholarship Grants for students to attend private academies. Eight students were requesting the funds to attend Brunswick Academy, Tidewater Academy, or Frederick Military Academy rather than to attend integrated schools. The grants were approved.<sup>190</sup>

Mr. Trice then brought the School Board up to date on the U. S. Justice Department's actions concerning the county's plan to desegregate the schools by the 1969-70 school year. Mr. Trice stated that he had met with Henry Wickam, Jr. who felt that in view of the recent New Kent County case (Green v. County School Board of New Kent County, Virginia, 391 U.S. 430, 88 S.Ct. 1689, 20 L.Ed.2d 716 (1968) there was very little hope of a decision being made in favor of the County. He also stated that he would be glad to represent the County in its deliberations with the Justice Department.<sup>191</sup>

By December, the School Board had made its decision to stick by its Freedom of Choice plan as the best method for desegregation of Southampton Schools, but that a Five Point Plan for Desegregation was being recommended for the 1969-70 school year. Mr. Trice was instructed by the Board to write to Mr. Schwelb of the U. S. Justice Department and request that the Justice Department approve the Five Point Plan for Desegregation. The Five Point Plan included the following:

1. Total desegregation of all pupil transportation.

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<sup>190</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated November 11, 1968.

<sup>191</sup>Ibid.

2. The desegregation of the faculties in all schools by assigning full time teachers across the predominantly racial patterns now existing in the schools.
3. The desegregation of all extra-curricular activities.
4. The continuance of the Freedom of Choice plan while actively encouraging pupils to attend schools predominantly different in race from the one which they are now attending.
5. The equalization of the teacher-pupil ratio by the reassigning of some students.<sup>192</sup>

It was necessary for the Southampton School Board to meet again in December of 1968. Mr. Trice had been contacted by Mr. Schwelb, legal Counselor in the Department of Justice and notified that transferring one faculty member across racial lines was an insufficient effort for desegregation. Mr. Schwelb wrote, "the Justice Department will not settle for less than total desegregation, and that the notice placing Southampton County in Court had been made."<sup>193</sup>

Mr. Trice and Chairman Harold C. McGrath of the Southampton School Board had been served a Court Summons on December 16, 1968, by a federal deputy marshall. Mr. Trice shared the summons at that meeting on December 18. The Board was notified that they had twenty days to respond to the charges. Mr. Trice stated that there were possible alternative methods of meeting the desegregation requirements. There was the option of rezoning the county and possibly "the pairing of grades in a unitary system."<sup>194</sup> Mr. Trice told the Board members that he did not know of any intimidation going on in

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<sup>192</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated December 9, 1968.

<sup>193</sup>Southampton County School Board Minutes dated December 12, 1968.

<sup>194</sup>Ibid.

the county that was designed to keep integration of schools from occurring. At this same meeting, the Board voted to retain Henry T. Wickam, Jr. as the legal counsel for the Southampton County School Board in the federal desegregation suit.<sup>195</sup> Gilbert W. Francis, a Boykins attorney and staunch supporter of public education, volunteered his services to assist Wickam in preparing to defend the actions of the Southampton School Board.<sup>196</sup>

By the time school opened in January, word of the county's involvement in a desegregation lawsuit was widespread, with rumors being rampant. Mr. Trice called a meeting of all of the county's teachers on January 9, 1969 at Southampton High School. The purpose of the meeting was to dispel rumors and inform county employees of what was happening. Mr. Trice told the teachers that no plan for desegregation had been decided upon to bring the schools into compliance. There was a strong possibility that the Board would move towards grouping grade assignments in order to desegregate the schools and keep facilities open. He suggested that grades 1 through 3 could be grouped together in a primary school and grades 4 through 7 could be grouped together. The county's two secondary schools could be designated as a junior and senior high school. He did not say which schools would be identified as such. Mr. Trice also recommended

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<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> Personal interview with Gilbert W. Francis.

that the Hayden Elementary School should be closed if the remaining county schools were to be totally desegregated.<sup>197</sup>

In an interview with Mrs. Roberta Naranjo, wife of Boykins' family practitioner, she commented on the meetings that were held by citizens in the community who supported public schools as being the democratic ideal. Mrs. Naranjo told of opening her husband's office at night so that community meetings could be held by those who wanted to support the public schools.<sup>198</sup>

The community meetings that were held in Boykins at the local doctor's office were the beginnings of a very vocal faction of citizens in the southern part of Southampton County. The citizens requested the opportunity to speak at the February 1969 School Board meeting. At the meeting, "a delegation, consisting of Mr. J. W. Pope, Jr., Dr. Jorge Naranjo, and Mr. L. F. Draper, Jr., presented a petition bearing the signatures of approximately 100 people in the Boykins District and requested the employment of teacher's aides in the elementary schools in the County."<sup>199</sup> The group's spokesman was Mr. J. W. Pope, Jr. The group felt that the addition of aides would help to make the transition easier for the children in the event that total desegregation had to occur. Mr. M.

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<sup>197</sup> Meeting held at Southampton High School on January 9, 1969.

<sup>198</sup> Personal interview with Roberta Naranjo, wife of local physician in Southampton County, and member of the Southampton County School Board since 1972.

<sup>199</sup> Southampton County School Board Minutes dated February 10, 1969.

B. (Matt) Drewry, Boykins representative on the School Board agreed that the idea had merit and that securing "volunteer" teachers' aides might help and should be considered.<sup>200</sup>

Another delegation also made a presentation at the February meeting. This group was represented by Mrs. Jorge Naranjo, Mr. and Mrs. Michael Sassik, Mr. Gilbert Francis, Mrs. Josie Lee Taylor, Mr. Thomas Cogsdale, and Mr. Wayne Vick. Their purpose was not to oppose desegregation; but, to ask for careful consideration to some problems that they felt would need to be addressed:

1. School plant facilities
2. Curriculum and teachers (Qualifications and Broader Expansion of the Curriculum)
3. Proposed Vocational Training
4. Aid for Underachievers so they will not deter an entire class
5. Challenge for Brighter Students

Mrs. Naranjo asked that the Board work to develop better communication between the community and those on the Board who would be making the decisions.<sup>201</sup>

Gilbert Francis, a member of the delegation and a local attorney in Boykins, added to Mrs. Naranjo's comments. He stated that he did not feel that Freedom of Choice was a dead issue. He suggested that Judge Walter Haufman of Norfolk be contacted to see if he could determine a way to make Freedom of Choice work. He also again offered his

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

services in support of Henry Wickham, Jr.<sup>202</sup> Wickham was a partner of David Mays and had been one of the original attorneys obtained to provide legal assistance to the Gray Commission during the 1950s.<sup>203</sup>

Mr. Bill Wright, principal of Southampton High School, also addressed the Board at the February meeting. He reminded the Board that a decision had to be made as to whether or not Southampton High School would continue to be a part of the Virginia High School League and play against schools that had integrated athletic teams or schools that were predominantly Negro. Mr. Wright recommended that the Board approve the continued participation and allow the athletic program to continue to move forward. This was approved by the Board.<sup>204</sup>

Mr. Wright stated in an interview on August 21, 1996, that the move to continue building the athletic program in the county and using it as a means of integrating the races was a bold, but positive move. In the early years after Southampton High School was opened in the mid 1950's, there was no football field or uniforms. Civic organizations from within the county, except organizations in the Ivor area which were still upset over the location of the high school, raised money and even borrowed money to support the school and its athletic program. After desegregation, many of the leaders of these

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<sup>202</sup>Ibid.

<sup>203</sup>David John Mays Diary. Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia.

<sup>204</sup>Ibid.

organizations continued to support the athletic program. Men such as Emerson Kitchen (Sebrell), George Scott (Boykins), Junior Clary (Boykins), John Robert Harrup (Courtland), Ben Gillette (Capron), and Russell Schools (Capron) worked hard to see that the school got what it needed to be a contender in athletics. Russell Schools later became Chairman of the Southampton County School Board and has served for over twenty-five years. The other gentlemen have remained active supporters and continue to be seen at football games and other athletic events. Each of these men still get season tickets to the games and attend regularly. Mr. Wright said that finally in 1967, Russell West of Ivor, was the first White person from that area of the county to purchase a season ticket for football games. This was the beginning of gaining support for athletics from the eastern edge of the county<sup>205</sup> where much of the support had gone to the development of Tidewater Academy. West was a vocal community leader. Again, athletics proved to be a common factor. As Southampton High School became a competitor in regional and state championship football games, more support was built from Ivor and the eastern edge of the county which had been the last area to join in support of the central high school.<sup>206</sup>

Forced integration did not lower the quality of the Southampton County Schools according to Roberta Naranjo. Mrs. Naranjo shared her opinion about the court's ruling in the Green decision that ended freedom of choice and mandated an end to segregation.

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<sup>205</sup> Personal interview with Bill Wright at Southampton High School on August 21, 1996.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.



According to Mrs. Naranjo the schools in Southampton County were disgraceful. She went on to describe buildings in need of repairs and filthy school buses. "Education was simply not a priority" prior to forced integration.<sup>207</sup>

Mrs. Naranjo explained that integration, not desegregation, was a stimulus for change. She spoke of the parallels in the development of special education and integration.<sup>208</sup> Parents did not want their children in classrooms with students who were educationally behind or slow. Some process had to be in place to determine special needs. Again, there was a parallel in the development of special education and the ending of segregation.<sup>209</sup>

As desegregation of schools took hold through freedom of choice as an option, some parents chose to send their children to Southampton Academy. Some of these students graduated from Southampton Academy with no options available to them except to return to the family farm to work. They did not have the skills needed for higher education and some had special needs that had not been addressed where the students were assumed to be the best and brightest.<sup>210</sup> Mrs. Naranjo spoke of families that she knew that had faced financial problems because they did whatever was necessary to be

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

able to send their children to the Academy. According to her, were bankruptcies that occurred which can be traced back to farm families who borrowed money to pay for the private education cost at Southampton or even Tidewater Academy. That combined with dropping farm prices resulted in many farmers not being able to pay all of their debts. Mrs. Naranjo stated that in her opinion the decline in the birth rate among white families in the county may have been related to fears about the cost of educating children and the pressures of deciding which school they would attend.<sup>211</sup>

Just as S. W. Rawls, Jr. felt that the problems related to desegregation were social class problems and not racial problems in their entirety,<sup>212</sup> Mrs. Naranjo stated, "The problem was not one of race, it was a class problem."<sup>213</sup> There was the belief that education was not as important as maintaining the superior status of the many white families. Roberta Naranjo elaborated on this by giving an example of Sarah Pope, wife of State Senator Sam Pope, who actively recruited students for Southampton Academy. This was based on the belief that where a child was educated reflected upon the family's social status, which was far more important than the quality of the education the family's children received. This time period was especially difficult with the lower income White

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Rawls, Jr. Interview, 22 November, 1996.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

families. There were great fears about the mixing of the races; but these families had nowhere else to send their children for schooling. This caused some White children to drop out of school before completing their education and increased pressure on those who chose to support public education as linking them with those who couldn't afford to pay for private education.<sup>214</sup>

Earnest Claud, Jr., an African-American administrator in the Southampton County Schools commented in an interview on the fears of the mixing of the races if there was an end to segregated schooling in Southampton. He stated that there was a certain fear of integration and a resistance to the idea. The problems that people were most afraid (violence, interracial dating) never materialized. He also spoke of community leaders who were very much against the idea of integration and supported the growth of a private school system. "Southampton Academy came into being at the time of integration. I don't think that was by accident."<sup>215</sup>

In a discussion of the Freedom of Choice plan used in Southampton prior to court ordered integration, Claud spoke of students being given the option to attend schools other than the one previously attended (Freedom of Choice). Some students did choose to attend previously all White schools. He spoke of the difference in the number of books available to students in the library of the Riverview High School and Southampton High

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<sup>214</sup>Ibid.

<sup>215</sup>Personal interview with Earnest W. Claud, Jr. on 30 October, 1996.

School. He also recalled the difference between health and physical education equipment and science materials. According to Claud, supplies for Riverview were very limited and, in some cases, the old equipment which had been discarded from Southampton High School.

Earnest Claud, Jr. was asked whether he thought court ordered integration or some other cause finally successfully brought about an end to segregated schooling. Mr. Claud smiled and referred to what he called the "gel factor". According to him, the "gel factor" was sports. Southampton High School had played eight consecutive championship football games during the sixties. The successful sports program provided a commonality that brought people together to support the schools. Sports was the key to providing something which everyone in the county could be proud of.<sup>216</sup>

Nancy Sandidge, who had been transferred from Riverview High School to "the school up the hill" (Southampton High School) agreed with Earnest Claud, Jr. that sports was a major factor in helping the schools to make the transition from segregation to integration.<sup>217</sup> During the early years of desegregation, the White cheerleaders traditionally cheered for the football games and the Black cheerleaders cheered for basketball which was a sport with less public support. The only problem she recalled was a rumor that there was to be a confrontation between the two groups of cheerleaders. The

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<sup>216</sup>Ibid.

<sup>217</sup>Nancy Sandidge interview.

incident never took place. Athletics was the key that brought people together according to Sandidge.

The question about whom the leaders were that led the transition from segregation to desegregation within the county schools was readily answered by Claud. He recalled the same names that S. W. Rawls, Lloyd Sykes, Ed Trice, and other key leaders had provided. Mr. Claud spoke of the leadership of Ed Trice, Jack Powell, Captolia Hall, and Viola Peden within the school system's central office.<sup>218</sup> He also spoke of the leadership of P. D. Vann, principal at Riverview High School, Lloyd Sykes, principal of Capron School, and community leaders William Ingram (first Black school board member) and Sam Sykes.<sup>219</sup>

Nancy Sandidge spoke of educators such as Miss Robbie Claud, librarian; Wayne Cosby, head football coach, Mrs. Trimm, Viola Harrison (wife of Franklin physician Dr. A. B. Harrison) an African-American music teacher who later joined Mrs. Sandidge at Southampton; and Bill Wright, principal. "These people made the transition from segregation to desegregation much easier."<sup>220</sup> They saw to it that there were no

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<sup>218</sup>Captolia Hall and Viola Peden were African-American women who served as supervisors for the Black schools in the county prior to integration. Both ladies are considered instrumental in their efforts to improve the educational system and to bring two distinct systems (Black and White) together as one Southampton County School System.

<sup>219</sup>Ibid.

<sup>220</sup>Nancy Sandidge interview.

desegregation problems at the high school.

J. W. Harville, was appointed Superintendent of Schools in 1970 following the retirement of Ed Trice. He had begun his teaching career in Southampton County in 1950 at the Drewryville School where he taught and served as principal until 1955. He left the county and became a teacher and administrator in Nelson County, Virginia where he worked until joining the State Department of Education in 1969. He spoke of coming into a situation where the county had the same problems as many other southside Virginia counties in dealing with forced integration. The problems were the same; the magnitude of the problems was sometimes different.<sup>221</sup>

Mr. Harville recalled that there were two outstanding people in the Central Office to help with bringing together the students and faculties of the schools. They were: Jackson M. Powell, Director of Instruction, and Captolia Hall, Elementary Supervisor. These two shared a common goal of raising academic standards for all children in Southampton County Schools.<sup>222</sup>

After settling the Friends of the Court suit that Henry Wickam Jr. had filed on behalf of those attempting to prevent desegregation by any means other than Freedom of Choice and the unsuccessful desegregation of schools by that method, Harville spoke of

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<sup>221</sup>Personal interview with J. W. Harville, former Superintendent of Southampton County Schools on 19 November, 1996.

<sup>222</sup>Ibid.

the need to develop a plan for ending segregation. He said that he realized many White parents would have problems with the idea of sending their children to formerly all Black schools in their community. The first step necessary was to make cosmetic changes to schools by getting them cleaned, painted, and repaired where necessary. He made reference to the district schools which had been built for Negro children in the 1950s and 1960s using a cheap plan with poorly constructed flat roofs, often on land with poor drainage and sewage problems.<sup>223</sup>

The next step was to basically follow the proposal of Ed Trice to keep all of the schools open and use the formerly all White schools to house primary grades of K through 3. The old district (Negro) schools would house grades 4-7. Riverview, the formerly Negro high school would be renamed Southampton Middle School and have grades 8 and 9. Southampton High School would be used for grades 10 through 12.<sup>224</sup> Harville's plans were accepted by the Courts.<sup>225</sup> The move to end segregated school by implementing full integration was finally to take place.

Harville recalled that many people, mostly white, still opposed integration and had difficulty with the idea of the children sharing buses and facilities. Not being a native of Southampton County was definitely to his advantage. He could be more objective in

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<sup>223</sup>Ibid.

<sup>224</sup>Ibid.

<sup>225</sup>Ibid.

assessing and dealing with situations, and he had no long standing allegiances to the old established, upper class families that had for so long led Southampton County.<sup>226</sup>

This most difficult situation was at the junior high school level. Sending children to Riverview which was renamed Southampton Junior High School was a major problem for many white families. The school was not acceptable as a clean school for White children to attend. The source of most of the complaints dealt with the over aged Negro children and the orange paint used on the trim of the school. Painting the school helped with the appearance and solved one problem, but the mixing of races at this vulnerable age only increased the fears of some citizens of amalgamation. Fears of parents concerning the mixing of students at this age caused many parents to send their children to school in the City of Franklin, Southampton Academy, or other private school.<sup>227</sup>

The City of Franklin provided an option for dissatisfied Southampton County parents. The City provided school buses that would travel out into the county to pick up students. The schools had been integrated satisfactorily for the Courts, but there were students leaving the system and taking advantage of the option of attending the predominantly White Franklin schools.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.



## Summary

Following the decisions of the Supreme Court in Brown I and II, citizens of Southampton County and the Town of Franklin, which later became a city in 1961, dealt with the issue of ending segregation by ignoring the ruling. No efforts were made to end segregation until forced to do so. When desegregation occurred, it was on a limited basis through Freedom of Choice plans made available in both localities. Integrated schooling took place only when forced after the Green decision.

An education foundation was established in Southampton, just as it was in many of the other southside Virginia localities. The foundation helped to determine that there would be alternatives to public education. Eventually private schools offered an additional option for those parents who were willing to support the cost of educating children in the newly established Tidewater or Southampton Academy.

Desegregation based upon Freedom of Choice did not end segregation as required by the courts. A dual school system for African-American and Caucasian schools existed until such time as Southampton County was found to not be in compliance with the meaning of the law as provided in the Green decision. Full implementation of integration was required of the public schools in the 1969-70 school year.

Forced integration brought about change that led to improved facilities for all children. It increased the community support for improving the quality of education

within the county's schools for those who chose to support public education. An awareness of the educational needs of children may have been a result of integrated schooling.

Arrangements were made between the school systems of Southampton and Franklin that allowed students to attend schools in other areas if they wished. The use of school buses which traveled into Southampton County to pick up children who chose to attend school in Franklin made the process easier and allowed Franklin to continue as a predominantly White school system for many years. In many ways the schools remained connected in spite of being in different government localities.

## Chapter Four

### Conclusion and Comments

The years between 1954 and 1970 were difficult years for the citizens of Southampton County as they struggled with the ending of a way of life through segregation, particularly as it impacted upon their children through education. The Courts made decisions and told them they had to change. The Courts, however, could not change perceptions and attitudes. Southampton County citizens proved they could be resistant to changing their attitudes and feelings. Change could be legislated and mandated, but no one could make individuals change attitudes. Behavior can be legislated and often, as in this case, can affect feelings thus resulting in changed attitudes and behaviors.

The writer of this study has chronicled many of the events that took place in Virginia and specifically, the county of Southampton. Events and facts tell a story. As noted throughout the study, individuals had their own perceptions of what happened. For many, these were as varied as the persons telling the stories. The one point upon which each individual agreed was that change was inevitable. Legislation, Court decisions, and intervention by the federal government made change inevitable.

As the writer reflects upon the information and knowledge gained, conclusions are reached. Would Southampton County have integrated their schools without court ordered

full integration? The writer believes that integration would have continued to increase; however, total integration of public schools would probably not have occurred without intervention from the U. S. Justice Department. There were factors that allowed integration to occur without Southampton County having to endure many of the obstacles faced in other localities within Virginia. Factors such as good leadership, strong interest and support of athletics, special education needs, needs of students with special gifts or talents, funding for federal programs, the specter of court intervention and the ending of federal funds made a difference in the desegregation of the schools.

Does segregation still exist? Yes. Some families still choose to send their children to the segregated private schools in the area (Tidewater Academy or Southampton Academy).

There are many instances in which one can relate back to the past and realize that some attitudes and perceptions continue. For instance, there are those who are quick to comment on the quality of education in the public schools and say that integration caused a lowering of educational standards. This is still used occasionally as the rationale for supporting Southampton Academy. The percentage of students completing the requirements for graduation and enrolling in four year colleges is frequently provided in newspaper advertisements and brochures for the Academy.

The families that joined together to support private education and the funding and development of Southampton Academy continue to grow in pride and strength as their

children and grandchildren attend the school. Each year activities for the alumni of Southampton Academy become major social events within the county. The small class sizes of the Academy contribute to a closeness among its students that has carried over into adulthood and produced the social circles which continue today. The same families that were in the upper social classes during the Academy's formation remain its active supporters today. This is evidenced by the continued support of Camp family members and the Camp Foundation. Although, the Union-Camp Corporation and the Camp Foundation do provide financial support to public schools in Franklin and scholarship monies to qualifying students from Southampton as well as Franklin.

Some desegregation of public schools would have occurred naturally as the special needs of some students became apparent. Needs that Southampton Academy could not or would not choose to meet, such as special education. Programs such as special education would have played a role in the integration process.

The sincere goal of wanting to improve education for children would have caused some desegregation to occur. Leaders such as Roberta Naranjo, William Engram, Josie Taylor, and Jackson Powell would have labored endlessly to see that all children could receive an education in the county schools.

Are there unresolved issues relating to the implementation of integration? Yes, even today in 1998, there is still controversy over what elementary schools to consolidate, keep open, and repair. Though the number of schools at the elementary level was finally

consolidated to five through the use of two formerly all White schools and three formerly Black schools, there is still an intense effort to prevent the schools from being further consolidated into two elementary schools, one on each side of the county. This is an issue still being addressed at school board meetings in 1998.

Has the Southampton County School System moved beyond the Black/White issue of integration? Yes. Those who support public education have come together to build a modern state of the art high school which opened in 1993 on land adjacent to the old Southampton High School. The new facility had never belonged to a particular racial group. It was a new beginning. The gutting and modernization of the old Southampton school facility allowed it to change in appearance and connect to the new school through a vocational complex as the middle school concept was implemented and the old Southampton Middle School, formerly Riverview, was closed forever.

Is there one unified school system today? Yes, Southampton County Schools through the instructional leadership of a racially mixed board and the outstanding leadership of a Superintendent with no longstanding roots in the community and no family ties Southampton County Schools have made progress. There is a sense of providing a quality education with common goals and shared commitment.

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Appendix A  
Summary of an  
Interview with Bill J. Wright, Principal of Southampton High School  
August 21, 1996

When Bill Wright came to Southampton High School, integration was just beginning under Freedom of Choice. Mr. Raymond Bodkin decided that he was going to retire in 1966 and the Southampton School Board appointed Mr. Wright, a teacher and coach as the principal of Southampton High School (hereafter referred to as SHS). Paul Vann was the principal of the Black high school down the road that was called Riverview High School (originally Southampton County Training School).

Southampton was much newer than Riverview that had been built in the 1930s. Southampton was built in 1954. Community high schools in Drewryville, Capron, Boykins, Newsoms, Courtland, and Ivor were closed and consolidated to make up the Southampton High School. The white citizens of the county became angry when the school board made the decision to close the small town high schools and build one central high school for the children. The loss of neighborhood school identity and the location of a new high school were major problems faced by the county.

The board had several sites from which to choose to locate SHS. A lot of people wanted the school located on the Babb Farm at the intersections of State Routes 616 and

35. The site was 1.9 miles from the Nottoway River. If that site had been used, the high school would have been closer to Courtland and Ivor communities; but well over twenty miles from the western edge of the county. It took several votes, but the Board finally decided to build across the Nottoway River at the intersection of State Routes 58 and 35.

The final decision to build the school on Route 58 created a major problem in the county. The people of the town of Ivor threatened to secede from the county. During the time of 1954 until 1967, the residents of Ivor refused to support the public schools. They wanted the county to provide transportation for their children to attend school in nearby Sussex County that joins Southampton approximately three miles north of Ivor.<sup>229</sup> When requests were denied, many of these people chose to send their children to Tidewater Academy, a private school that was started in Sussex County at Wakefield that was just a few miles from Ivor.

When Southampton High School opened in 1954, there were many areas that went lacking. There was no football field, no uniforms for athletics, and not even a cafeteria. Civic organizations from the various areas of the county, except Ivor, raised money and even borrowed money when necessary to provide the school with these extras. The Boykins Lions Club and the county's Ruritan Clubs were major supporters of the new high

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<sup>229</sup>This statement was verified by reading the Southampton County School Board Minutes for the period of 1954 through 1967 as numerous parents spoke before the Board and made their requests.

school.

There were some key people who became great supporters of SHS. Emerson Kitchen of Sebrell, George Scott and Junior (L.P.) Clary of Boykins, John Robert Harrup of Courtland, Ben Gillette and Russell Schools of Capron worked hard to get support built within the county for SHS. Russell Schools later became a member of the school board and has served as chairman for many years. These men still support SHS by purchasing season tickets and are seen at all of the football games. No whites from Ivor joined these men in what became the Southampton Booster Club until 1967 when Russell West finally purchased a season ticket to the games. Athletics really brought people together.

## Appendix B

### Summary of an

Interview on September 3, 1996 with Christopher Smith, first African-American student  
to attend Franklin High School and  
Member of the Southampton County School Board

Christopher Smith was the first African-American to attend Franklin High School when Freedom of Choice was implemented. After attending Hayden High School, Chris wanted to attend Franklin High School for his senior year.

At Hayden, Smith had been an athlete as well as honor student. He felt that he was well prepared to attend Franklin High School. Classes were not a problem except for senior English. Mrs. Prudence Thorpe was his English teacher. The assignments were not difficult and turned in on time. Grades were returned at just below the failing level. Senior English proved to be the subject that kept Christopher Smith from graduating with the senior class.

Having a seventy-three average (73), Christopher Smith was required to repeat senior English in summer school. At that time no graduation activities were held in the summer. Smith stated that this is one of the reasons that when he became a member of the

Southampton County School Board. He insisted that graduation ceremonies also be held for those students who graduated in August.

Christopher Smith recalled that the son of S. W. Rawls, Jr. was also a student in his senior class. He said that he remembered being told that the statement had been made by Mr. Rawls, Sr. that no grandchild of his would graduate in a class with Blacks. Smith said that he would always wonder if that was the reason that he did not pass senior English to graduate with his class.

Smith commented that the Southampton and Franklin Schools had come far since the early days of desegregation. He also shared that attitudes for many individuals had also changed as so many of the fears that people had about ending segregation never came to bear.

## Appendix C

### Summary of an

Interview with Lloyd Sykes and Marie Sykes, retired African-American educators

October 12, 1996

Marie Sykes came to Southampton County to teach in 1954. She was assigned to teach at the Pope's Mill School that was located on the land adjoining the farm of Samuel (Sales Tax Sam) Pope, Sr. It was one of many one room schools for Negroes which dotted the landscape of the county. Mr. Floyd Jenkins who was then the Superintendent of Southampton Schools, assigned her to that location so she would not be as far from her parents' home in North Carolina. Her duties as a teacher included arriving early to build a wood fire for the school. She was expected to teach all subjects and all grades in the school. At the end of each day, it was her responsibility to see that the school was cleaned. The county provided her with a new broom each year by way of supplies. Parents and churches would help with the needs of the school whenever they could.

Most of the children walked to school and brought their lunches with them. Students were required to provide their own books. Due to the cost of purchasing books, the number of available was limited. Most families tried to purchase a reader, speller, and an arithmetic book that they would pass through the family.

The Black children usually had to work during the fall harvest on nearby farms. This meant that many of the older children did not come to school until just before Christmas when cotton, the last of the crops, was harvested. School attendance declined again when spring planting needed to begin. There was even a separate school calendar for Blacks and Whites to take the farming needs into account.

When the county began its efforts to consolidate one room schools, Capron District School was the first Negro school built in the county. Lloyd Sykes sold the county the land on which the school was built. The school was built without a cafeteria so the library was used for this purpose.

Lloyd Sykes was a Southampton County native. He had been educated in one of the county's one room schools. After completing school there, he traveled to Hayden High School in Franklin at a cost of \$0.15 per day in order to continue his education. At the time, that was the only way a Black child could get a high school education. The Training School did not open until 1939.

Lloyd Sykes was appointed principal of the Capron School. The teachers who were hired to teach there were from Virginia State College, St. Paul's and Elizabeth City State College. They were very poorly paid and many joined the Virginia Teacher's Association which was the professional organization and lobby group for Black teachers. The organization was led by a Dr. Picot. He argued against the differences in pay for Black teachers and administrators.



There was state aid available to help with paying for graduate education for Blacks if the programs were not available at Virginia State College which was the only Black institution which offered a master's degree in education. Lloyd Sykes took advantage of this opportunity and received his master's degree from Columbia State Teacher's College.

Recalling a conversation with B. T. Watkins, the superintendent who followed Floyd Jenkins, Mr. Sykes stated that Watkins had said, "You and I will never see integration in our life time." Watkins believed that the Negro schools did not need "frills". Mr. Sykes stated that he requested toilet paper for the school and was told by Mr. Watkins to "save your Sears catalogues for toilet paper."

Paul Camp Marks served as Capron's representative on the county school board during the time prior to forced integration. He was at the same time supporting the efforts of Southampton Academy to get organized and served on their Board of Directors. His show of support for the Academy eventually cost him his seat on the school board.

Bazaars were held to raise money for the Negro schools. Many of the churches helped to support the schools and to provide the teachers and students with needed materials. According to Lloyd Sykes, after the Civil Rights legislation was passed in 1964, the county began to supply them with toilet tissue, erasers, and chalk.

Mr. and Mrs. Sykes agreed that prior to integration there was a great deal of pride in getting an education. Mrs. Sykes stated, "School was considered to be a pleasure. They (the students) thought of it as an honor." There was a great deal of respect for the

teachers. This changed with integration. Discipline also changed with integration.

"Before integration, there was much more pride in the schools and much better discipline."

Freedom of Choice allowed parents to choose for their children to attend previously all white schools. Sam Sykes, a relative of Lloyd Syke's, chose to send his daughter to Southampton High School. She was the first Black student to attend Southampton High School.

In 1970, the schools had to integrate because of the court order. There were some teachers who were reassigned to what had previously been all Black schools such as Capron. Some of the teachers chose to retire at this time, some went on to Southampton Academy to teach, and some relocated. Mr. Sykes recalled that there were many workshops and staff development activities to help bring the faculty members together. The Parent Teacher Organization of the schools even invited speakers in to help make the transition.

In looking back, Mr. Sykes said that the time of integration was a very difficult time and public schools could have been abandoned in the county. The children did not have the problems with integration that the adults had. There were White people and Black people who supported the idea of integration, but did not want their names used as being supportive of public education. If the adults had stayed out of the situation, the children could have handled it easier.

There was some very strong leadership in the county. Captolia Hall, an African-

American woman, served as Elementary Supervisor. Her standards were very high and her interest in educating children was sincere. She won the respect of teachers, both Black and White, for her role in bringing the system together.

Another person who had a formidable role in improving education before and after integration was Viola Peden. Ms. Peden started the Head Start program in Southampton, after having served as Supervisor for Black Children for many years. Ms. Peden was responsible for obtaining federal grants for improving education in Southampton.

After integration, there were more extra curricular activities available for students. Supplies and materials for the students and teachers were made available to all. In some ways, the schools were better, but in other ways, such as discipline, they were not as good.

When Lloyd Sykes was asked about Freedom of Choice, he said that he did not have any Whites choosing to attend the all Black school. He commented that his memory included reporting efforts to aid integration and the reasons why people left the schools from reports required by the U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

## Appendix D

### Summary of an

Interview with Eppa Prince, former Southampton County School Board Member

October 29, 1996

Eppa Prince, a white male, served on the Southampton County School Board for two four year terms during the 1960s. This came about because of the retirement of R. B. Story who had represented Newsoms District for many years. R. B. Story asked Eppa Prince to run for the Newsoms seat on the school board and encouraged local residents to support his choice for his replacement.

When asked about school board decisions made during his time on the board, Prince stated that Ed Trice, Superintendent, and Jack Powell, Director of Instruction, did a fine job of running the system. Basically, all the board had to do was follow their recommendations. He stated that he did not know of any differences in the way that Negro teachers and administrators were treated differently than Whites. He also said he did not know of any real differences in facilities or equipment because the Negro students had all of the newest schools with the exception of the high school.

While serving on the school board, Prince placed his only child's name on the waiting list to attend the new private school that was opening in Courtland, Southampton Academy. In order to get his son into the Academy, he had to pay a full year's tuition to hold his son's name on the waiting list until a vacancy occurred the following year.

In Prince's discussion of his eight years on the school board, Prince said that integration was slowly coaxed in through Freedom of Choice that made the transition

easier and smoother. Sol Rawls, Sr. and S. W. Rawls, Jr. had strong political power along with Sam "Sales Tax Sam" Pope of Drewryville. They kept the county outside of Harry Byrd's massive resistance movement. "There were conscientious people on both sides and certainly no racial incidents to speak of." "All the colored folks wanted it (integration) and the white ones didn't."

Integration was the only significant happening that he could recall during his tenure on the board. "Ed (Trice) and Jack (Powell) did a fine job and made sure things went smoothly. When Ed retired, we tried to get Jack to take the superintendent's position, but he wouldn't. The way things turned out, I'm glad he didn't."

When Prince was asked about others with whom he had served with on the board, he recalled that William Howell represented Courtland, M. B. Drewry (Prince's brother-in-law) represented Boykins, "Buck" Purvis was the representative for Drewryville, and L. A. "Ashley" Brantley represented Ivor. He recalled that Brantley saved Southampton County from spending many dollars by not allowing the school board to waste any money. "He kept a tight rein on the finance of the county, unlike some on the board today."

When Prince was asked about some of the positive aspects of integration, he commented on the sports program that developed and grew when the schools consolidated. Riverview and Southampton High Schools had never played each other in sports, but when the teams came together, they made a good team. SHS still needed athletic facilities to handle its sports program. Many members of the Ruritan Clubs helped

to meet this need. He remembered that the Newsoms Ruritan Club raised money to help pay for the lights at the football field and the controversy which this move caused within the organization. The older club members, including Mr. Leroy Dail, did not support the efforts to raise the money for the integrated high school's improved athletic facilities. According to Prince, every town in the county tried to help raise money for grandstands, lights, equipment, etc.

Tidewater Academy in Sussex County started before Southampton Academy. This private school was attended by "lots of folks" from over on the Ivor side of the county. Mr. Leroy Dail stopped coaching at Southampton High School and drove over to Tidewater Academy at Wakefield each day. He even took Leigh Ann Vick from Newsoms to school there so that she would not have to attend public school.

Eppa Prince noted that he and Paul Camp Marks worked hard to try to get a merit system approved in the county so that teacher salaries would be based on performance. There were many teachers in the county with two year certificates and Ed Trice had told them if the schools ever consolidated, those with two year certificates would be the first to go. The merit system would also weed out some of the teachers who did not meet the expected level of performance when integration occurred.

Only one person even stood out significantly in Prince's mind who questions his serving on the board while supporting the Academy by sending his money and his son there. That was the time when "a colored man, named Charlie Williams", came to me and

asked me why my son, Doug, was going to the Academy." Prince told him, "I think my son will get a better education." After that event, Prince went to a meeting of the Newsom Elementary PTA and offered to resign from the school board. The PTA agreed that he should finish out his term and then resign.

Prince reminisced about the founding of Southampton Academy. Dr. E. F. Reese and his wife, Virginia along with "Hap" Pillow were the backbone of establishing Southampton Academy in the Shands area of Courtland. Bobby Marks, brother of Paul Camp Marks and son of Texie Camp Marks was on the founding board.

Camp Manufacturing was growing rapidly and Narrow Fabrics was a new industry in the county. As people moved in, they brought new ideas with them. Some of these people influenced change. For example, Jack Martino, the head of Narrow Fabrics, had children enrolled at the Academy and his wife served on the board. He sent his children to the Academy and the folks that he brought in to work with him in management did the same thing.

As the Academy grew, the Camp family and the Camp Foundation provided a financial basis upon which to build. The Camps took over and provided classrooms, a gym, and a library. With their help, Prince said the Academy was able to grow and attract more students.

## Appendix E

### Summary of an

Interview with Earnest Claud, Jr., an African-American administrator in the Southampton

County Public Schools

October 30, 1996

Earnest Claud stated that he had been employed by Southampton County Public Schools for over thirty years. He had begun his educational career as a vocational education teacher at Riverview High School, prior to integration. He had been a student of the Southampton Schools, so he was familiar with what had taken place in the county.

Mr. Claud had started to school at the Pope's Mill School through grade seven. He entered eighth grade at the Southampton County Training School in 1954.

Mr. Claud stated that he had no real memories of any overt moves to integrate. He recalled that there was some resistance to the idea, but when the decision was made by the Court, the predicted problems never materialized.

In a discussion about Freedom of Choice, Claud said that for two years before the Court ordered integration, students could choose to attend the previously all white as some of the parents and community members. There was a selection process for faculty members who were willing to choose to integrate.



In 1970, Claud was appointed as Assistant Principal of Riverview. Mr. Trice told Claud that he needed to be in this position because he was a local person who had the confidence of the local people. At an open house, the library of Riverview was viewed by parents who asked where the books were located. The library was not nearly as well equipped as the one at Southampton High School. The same kind of inequality was obvious in the health and physical education equipment and the science equipment. There appeared to be little or no difference in the vocational equipment.

During the first year or two of forced integration, Mr. Claud stated that there was a considerable turnover in teachers. After that, the faculty stabilized. He attributed this to integration; the push for all teachers to have a four year collegiate professional teaching certificate; and, the fact that some people were just resistant to change.

When asked why Claud thought the transition to integrated schools occurred without major problems, Claud said that there were some good community leaders on both sides who helped. He named Ed Trice, Jack Powell, William Engram (first African-American school board member in Southampton), P. D. Vann (principal at Riverview), Lloyd Sykes, and Sam Sykes. He also spoke of Reverend Brown, pastor at Shiloh Baptist Church, who did an awful lot to build support for a smooth integration process.

Claud said that there were some community leaders who were very much against the idea of integration. Those people supported the growth of private education, rather

than integrated public education. "Southampton Academy came into being at the same time as integration. I don't think that was by accident," said Earnest Claud, Jr.

Mr. Claud referred to sports as the "gel factor" that helped to bring people together. When integration occurred in 1970, it was two years after the Southampton High School football team had played eight consecutive championship ball games. The success of the sports program provided a commonality that drew in people's support for the schools. Sports provided everyone with something they could be proud of.

The teachers in the county came together through their professional organizations during the time frame of integration without problems. The Virginia Teachers' Association and the Virginia Education Association appointed a committee of four from each organization to bring the groups together. Levi Galloway was chosen as president of the merged group and Bill Wright, who had been president of the VEA's local chapter, became the vice-president.

## Appendix F

### Summary of an

#### Interview with Roberta J. Naranjo

Southampton County School Board Member 1972 to Present

November 12, 1996

Mrs. Roberta J. (Bobbi) Naranjo moved to Boykins, Virginia when her husband, Dr. Jorge Naranjo decided to begin his medical practice. The move to a small town in Southside Virginia was a culture shock for the young couple after being educated in schools in the East and Mid-west, as well as having traveled and pursued educational experiences in other countries.

Mrs. Naranjo said that she still has vivid memories of going to enroll her children in the local public school that was formerly the old Boykins High School. She spoke of an unnamed local citizen yelling at her, "Are you putting your children in school with the muskrats?" Bobbi Naranjo spoke openly about the community pressures that were brought to bear on those who chose to remain a part of the public school system. There was a social stigma attached to any family that chose to send their children to public schools. The families were harassed and referred to as being "pro black, not pro education." The family considered moving back to Missouri because of the problems with

education in this area; but they were happy here and decided they would stay and do whatever they could to improve public education for their children.

There were rumors and myths spreading throughout the county about the poor state of the public schools with their overaged children, lack of discipline, and filthy conditions. Many of the rumors were perpetuated by older adults in the community who had no children in the school system. Sadly though, some of the rumors were true.

Boykins was only one area of the county that was resistant to the changes. The nearby town of Newsoms and the surrounding Sands area became a stronghold for segregation. Josie Lee Taylor, who later joined Mrs. Naranjo on the school board, sent her child to the public schools even though her daughter was often the only white child in the class at Newsoms School. This area showed its strength in supporting private education. The families sent their children to the newly opened Southampton Academy. When the students graduated from the Academy, many of the young men had no option but to return to their family farms and work. They simply did not have the skills to continue on into higher education, and some had special learning needs that had not been addressed at the Academy where the students were assumed to be the best and the brightest.

In a discussion of the pressures to educate children outside of the public schools, Bobbi Naranjo spoke of the many families that faced severe financial problems as they did whatever was necessary to pay the high costs associated with sending their children to the

Southampton Academy. There were a number of bankruptcies that were recorded in the tax records of the county. Mrs. Naranjo stated that she was sure that many of these could be traced back to farmers who borrowed money to farm and money to pay for private education. As prices dropped on many of the crops in the area, they were unable to repay their loans. Mrs. Naranjo said that she believes this may have impacted on the birth rate as it declined during this time period. People had fears about the costs of education and concerns about where their children should be educated.

"The problem was not one of race; it was a class problem," according to Mrs. Naranjo. There was a great belief that the education of children was not as important as the maintaining of the superior white status of many families. Senator Sam Pope's wife, Sarah, actively recruited students for the private academy. "Where a child was educated reflected upon the family's social status, and this was far more important than the quality of the education."

This time period in education was especially difficult for the lower income white families. There were social difficulties because of the great fear of the mixing of the races. These people had no where to go when the schools integrated.

M. B. "Matt" Drewry served on the school board for over thirty years as the Boykins representative. When he resigned from the board, Robert "Bobby" Poland, the local pharmacist was appointed. Bobby Poland only served for two years. Mrs. Naranjo said that she believed he had resigned because of the pressure he was getting for taking his

son out of the public school in the third grade and enrolling him in the Southampton Academy.

It was at this time that the pressure on individual families became very intense in Boykins as to making a choice in favor of private education or public schools. Mrs. Naranjo recalled that H. T. "Snappy" Smith was in charge of raising funds for a private school and asked that each family contribute \$5000.

There were some families that chose to stick together and not support private education. These families believed that public education was a very important component of a democratic society. This group held meetings in the newly opened offices of Mrs. Naranjo's husband, Dr. Jorge Naranjo. They met to discuss their support for each other and for public education. Bill Cutchins, a local agri-businessman, told Mrs. Naranjo that they would support her for the available seat on the school board. In 1972, she was appointed to the Southampton School Board.

When Roberta Naranjo joined the School Board, so did William Engram, a Black businessman from Courtland. Mrs. Naranjo described her presence on the board as that of the token woman, and Mr. Engram was the token Black. Little did the citizens of Southampton County realize what strong advocates for public education these two individuals would prove to be.

Mrs. Naranjo describes the early years of integration by saying that, "Every myth and cultural bias came true." Everyone had fears as to how integration of facilities could

take place. The schools were below par, and towns such as Boykins, had the primary grades housed in the old White school and the upper elementary grades in the old district school.

Education was below par in the county and had never been a priority; therefore, "integration didn't lower anything," according to Naranjo. The buses were filthy and the schools needed repairs. Many of the schools that had been built during the 50s and 60s had flat roofs needing repairs and courtyards that were inaccessible. There were many needs in the school system, including identifying and meeting the needs of those children who required special services for handicapping conditions. Mrs. Naranjo noted that the development of special education and gifted education in the county closely paralleled the integration of Southampton County schools.

When Roberta Naranjo joined the school board, there were still a number of school board members who had served for many years. Education had always been short-changed in the county. Recognizing that perhaps the education offered in the public schools was not as good as it could be, L. A. Brantley and Harold Atkinson wanted the seniors to be allowed to attend Franklin High School if they chose to do so because Franklin spent more money on education. The costs associated with sending students to Franklin were to be covered by the school board for eight years.

According to Mrs. Naranjo, the county continues to fight the myth that Franklin schools are better than Southampton County schools. She spoke of the county passing the

first bond issue that was to be used for making necessary improvements and repairs to bring the schools into compliance with state and federal regulations. According to her, the Justice Department gave the county three years to make the changes. Federal grants were used to provide library facilities, pay librarians, add remedial programs, and pay three-fourths of the costs of funding salaries for those employed in programs using federal monies.

In speaking of the very early years of forced integration and the fears and adjustments that had to be addressed by both Blacks and Whites, Mrs. Naranjo said that no one knew what to expect. People were fearful. Some of the old Black teachers who had spend the better parts of their careers in the old one room schools would bring food to feed the children just as they had done many years before. Discipline and education suffered as no one knew what to do. Black teachers could not be fired no matter what they did. There were children eating on the buses and no sense of order or safety. White males found it very difficult to get promoted, while Black males were getting the promotions and jobs as quickly as they became available.

Jack Powell, the Director of Instruction for the county, was a well-educated individual who wanted education to work and to be improved. He was torn between his belief in public schools and the pressure that was put upon him as his family members and others in the community pledged their support for the Academy. He became fearful of the vandalism that he experienced and the hate phone calls he received.



In discussing the athletic program during the beginning of desegregation and then during the forced integration period, Roberta Naranjo said that the football and sports programs were difficult because of the physical contact involved. Many children had difficulty because of outside pressures and prejudices in trying to decide whether or not to play. The school board provided some money for athletics, but did not spend the money that was needed on facilities until forced to do so. "There was just not a focus on education.. Education was offered because you had to, not because education was a base upon which the county could develop," said Mrs. Naranjo. She gave the example of the then county administrator, George Bryant, who had the facilities of the county surveyed. Missing from the survey were the school buildings of the county.

As with the early years of consolidating and integrating the schools, it took outside leadership to come in and raise the level of accountability for education. Under the leadership of Dr. Howard Wainwright, who was appointed in 1985 to succeed J. W. Harville, the principals were required to work towards excellence in education. If all of the elementary schools were going to feed into the middle and high schools, then all of the children had to have an opportunity for the same quality of education. The focus changed from being caretakers of the schools to being educators of children.

When asked if there were any people that stood out in Mrs. Naranjo's mind as supporters of public education, Mrs. Naranjo mentioned the late William V. Rawlings of Capron. William Rawlings had served in the Virginia General Assembly as a state senator.

He worked diligently to raise the standards for education and to bring those state standards to his own county. Another gentleman that she felt showed strong support for public education was Delegate J. Paul Council, who had formerly represented the Hunterdale district on the school board, and who continues to serve in the Virginia General Assembly. Mrs. Naranjo said that Delegate Council's commitment to improving education had led the county to purchasing school buses for the county. In his continuing commitment to education, Paul Council has pushed for raising the standards for education for education, including the standards for education which academies must meet. According to Naranjo, this has helped to raise education standards for all schools.

## Appendix G

### Summary of an

Interview with J. W. Harville, former Superintendent of Southampton County Schools

1970 - 1985

November 19, 1996

Mr. J. W. "Bill" Harville was appointed as Superintendent of Southampton County Schools in 1970 after the retirement of Edward Trice. Coming to Southampton was a return to the school system where he had started his career in 1950. He had taught in Ivor from 1950 to 1952, then in Drewryville from 1952 until 1955. After leaving the county in 1955, Bill Harville worked in Nelson County as a teacher and administrator. In 1969, Harville had joined the Virginia Department of Education. His job involved helping school systems evaluate their facilities and then recommending which should be closed, consolidated, or remain open. He stated that wherever he went, people had the same problems. The only difference was the magnitude of the problems. Little did he know how useful this knowledge and experience would be when he became Southampton's superintendent.

When Mr. Harville came to the county, he found he had several strong experienced co-workers in the School Board office. These people would prove to be valuable assets in

sharing their knowledge of the people and area, as well as their desire to provide the children with the best education possible. Mr. Harville spoke of Jackson "Jack" M. Powell, the Director of Instruction, who had a diplomatic way of listening and encouraging teachers to do their best. Along with Mr. Powell, he had a very able Black woman named Captolia Hall as the Elementary Supervisor. Both supported Mr. Harville's goals of improving the academic standards for all children.

1970 was the year that the integration was fully implemented in the public schools. Freedom of Choice had not provided the integration of staff and students that was necessary. After four years, the 1965 case that had been filed by the Friends of the Court on behalf of those who opposed integration by Henry Wickam, Jr. had finally been settled. Integration had to occur. Based on his problem solving ability as demonstrated in Nelson County and at the state department and his familiarity to the area, J. W. Harville was appointed to bring the schools into compliance.

The level headed, confident gentleman approached court ordered desegregation by developing a plan. This was in accordance with his belief that it was better to act and plan, than to react. In evaluating the situation in which he was to take charge, Harville had district schools for the Black children in each of the towns of Ivor, Courtland, Capron, Drewryville, and Boykins. There were also White elementary schools in each of these towns. There were two high schools located within a mile of each other, one for Whites and the other for Blacks.

Realizing that many of the White parents were going to have problems with sending their children to what was known as the Negro school in their community, Harville set out to make cosmetic changes and divide the schools into primary and elementary schools. This would ease the transition and would prevent many overaged children from being housed with younger students. The first order of business was to get the schools cleaned, painted, and where necessary, repaired. The district schools that had been built in the 1950s and 1960s in the county for the black children were built with a cheap plan using poorly constructed flat roofs that were often in need of repair. The schools had been built in black neighborhoods, often on land with poor drainage and sewage problems.

Harville's plan of action called for the old white schools to remain open in the neighborhoods or towns. These schools were established as primary schools for grades K-3. The district schools were to house grades 4 through 7. Riverview, the formerly black high school, was to become Southampton Junior High School for grades 8 and 9. Southampton High School would remain as the county's high school. The Health, Education, and Welfare Department's main concern with this plan was how the children would be grouped at each grade level.

The Court accepted this plan for the schools. The white parents of the county had more difficulty with the idea. Many still opposed the idea of integration of schools, particularly the idea of sharing school buses or facilities that had once been used for just

Blacks. Not being a county native helped in this situation. As an outsider, Harville could be more objective in assessing and dealing with situations. He had no long-standing allegiance to the old established, upper class families that had for so long led the county.

The most difficult problem that had to be faced was the establishment of bus zones. Members of the county's school board did not want this task because they had to live here and deal with their neighbors, friends, and the pressures of making the necessary decisions to accomplish the integration of schools. The U. S. Justice Department took over the task of drawing attendance zones after the job was not done by the board. The Justice Department had no difficulty in carving the county into neat little sections, even when it meant the children on one side of the road attended school in a different zone from children on the other side of the road. Mr. Harville gave the example of Story Station Road. Children on the eastern side of the road attended Hunterdale School. This school was considered to be the best elementary school in the county because of its location in an all White neighborhood that was being developed outside of Franklin. On the western side of the road, the children had to attend Courtland schools. The Courtland schools were predominantly Black, older, and the upper elementary school was located at the back of a Black neighborhood. This caused many parents to refuse to send their children to the public schools, choosing instead to send them to Franklin City Schools or to Southampton Academy.

When J. W. Harville became Superintendent, there were more students in the system than at any other time. The enrollment was 4, 500 students. Faced with the monumental task of handling the court ordered integration, he set about making the system accountable for educating all children. Many of the teachers working in the system had only two year teaching certificates, many had not taken any courses to aid in professional growth, and staff development was not a priority, nor was it a county wide effort.

Calling upon acquaintances from the University of Virginia, Harville began a major push for requiring teachers to continue their own education. He wanted all teachers to work towards strengthening academics, especially towards the development of reading. In order to accomplish this, reading courses, along with other graduate level courses were provided for teachers at no charge.

A team that came from the University of Virginia to help with the staff development of bringing the mixed faculties together was not as successful. Harville stated that this team did not make much difference because they tried to change attitudes. This was a mistake according to Harville. He said, "You don't change attitudes. You try to change perceptions." This point was brought out with examples of teacher assignments. Many parents had strong attitudes about the ability of black teachers to teach their white children. They were afraid that their children would receive an inferior

education. Discipline was also an area of great concern. Mr. Harville dealt with these perceptions by stressing fairness in the treatment of all children.

Sending children out of the neighborhood to attend Riverview Junior High School (formerly Riverview High School) for grades 8 and 9, was a major concern for the white parents. Riverview had originally been built as the Southampton County Training School for Black children. It was not acceptable as a clean school for White children to attend. Its orange paint and overaged student population were major complaints. Painting the exterior of the building helped with the cosmetic changes and made the appearance more acceptable. Fears of parents concerning the mixing of children at this crucial age caused many parents to send their children to the predominantly White schools of Franklin or to Southampton Academy.

The next major goal of Harville's superintendency was to consolidate the county's elementary schools. The decrease in enrollment which occurred after court ordered integration and the consolidation of the Black and White schools provided the needed impetus to begin closing schools that were old and did not meet the needs of elementary children. The consolidation of schools was not done without many vocal complaints being made. The schools in Newsoms were closed along with the primary school in Boykins that had been the old White school. All of the children from the Newsoms and Boykins area were sent to Boykins Elementary School. The same was done in the Capron area with Drewryville School and the old Capron School being closed and the children sent to



the Capron Elementary School. The procedure was repeated in Ivor and Courtland. This brought the number of elementary schools to five (Ivor, Courtland, Boykins, Capron, and Hunterdale). The schools were to house students in grades K - 5. Students in grades 6 through 8 were to attend the Southampton Junior High School and grades 9 through 12 were to be housed at Southampton High School. By now, the problem of overaged students had been eliminated, school repairs made, and the county was in compliance with the law.

There was a still a major problem facing the county school system. The City of Franklin ran buses into the county to pick up students to attend the city schools. The schools had been integrated to the satisfaction of the courts, but there were students and teachers leaving the system. The problem of Franklin busing students to schools in the city was not resolved until the Justice Department got involved in the 1980s.

As an aside to the interview, Mr. Harville commented that feelings about the integration process remain strong among some of the county's older citizens.

## Appendix H

### Summary of an

Interview with S. W. Rawls, Jr. on November 22, 1996

S. W. Rawls, Jr. was interviewed in his office at the S. W. Rawls Inc. Oil Company in Franklin. At that time he shared his personal scrapbook and reflections about his involvement in education with the researcher.

S. W. Rawls, Jr. had been educated in the schools in Franklin during the time that they were a part of the Southampton County Schools. His high school principal was B. T. Watkins who later became Superintendent of Southampton County Public Schools. After returning to Franklin to work with the family business after his graduation from Virginia Military Institute, Mr. Rawls was encouraged by B. T. Watkins and Floyd Jenkins, another local educator, to get involved with supporting education.

Mr. Rawls stated that he had four children, all of whom had been educated in the public schools in Franklin. Two of his children graduated as valedictorians of their classes and the other two graduated with the recognition of salutatorians.

Prior to the Supreme Court's decision in 1954, there was not any real feeling that integrated schools would ever happen. After the 1954 decision, a group of leading citizens, especially the attorneys in this area, worked very quietly to look at alternatives to

public education in case the schools closed or integration was ever forced. John C. Parker, an attorney for Camp Manufacturing (later Union-Camp Corporation) quietly contacted all of the attorneys in the area and key community leaders to develop a plan. The group was organized as the Southampton Education Foundation and was chartered in January of 1959. The purpose of the group was to provide an alternative to public education if the schools closed and to give the people a choice. G. Vaughan Beale, a Franklin attorney, was the director. R. N. Darden from Newsoms, Paul Camp Marks from Capron, Harvey Pope from Courtland, Homer Saunders from Ivor, Sam E. Pope from Capron (also a Virginia state senator), H. T. "Snappy" Smith from Boykins, H. B. McLemore from Courtland (also Clerk of the Southampton County Court), and S. W. Rawls, Jr. were the directors of this organization.

This group was very serious about its concerns for education. According to Mr. Rawls, the group went house to house to get the reaction of the White citizens to find out if they would send their children to a private school system if the public schools were integrated. "Ninety to ninety-one percent of the houses that we went to signed saying that they would. The signatures were put in a locked box at the bank and kept there until just a few years ago, " according to S. W. Rawls, Jr. He stated that he took the list of signatures and destroyed them at that time.

Mr. Rawls explained that this group did not want to start a private school; instead, they wanted to develop a private school system. The system would be financed through

the tuition grants furnished by the state under massive resistance. Schools would be set up in temporary facilities throughout all parts of the county to wait until such time as the public school system had to sell off the schools as surplus property when they were not needed due to the expected drop in enrollment. Everyone agreed that the schools would be inconvenienced by not having permanent facilities, but that they could wait until the schools became surplus property.

All of the White teachers were surveyed and there was a terrific response from local teachers in support of a private school system that would be established by the Southampton Education Foundation. The plan was that the salaries and benefits would be comparable to those offered by the public school system.

The Southampton Education Foundation finally fell apart when massive resistance came to an end and the tuition grants did not come through as they had planned. "The courts forced integration on all of us, and there was not any way to support a private school system." The members of the group, along with many citizens, supported the Freedom of Choice plan as to what school the children would attend. When integration was forced, the Southampton Academy came about as a way to at least offer people a choice.

John C. Parker and G. E. "Hap" Pillow were the leaders of the movement to organize the Southampton Academy. It opened in the late sixties as a small school. The Camp Foundation, of which S. W. Rawls, Jr., is president has provided a great deal of the

funding for the Academy. The Camp family has also given a lot of financial support to them. The family gave its support to the public schools until the consolidation issue with Franklin. When the effort to consolidate Southampton and Franklin failed, they withdrew their support. The Academy still benefits from the Camp Foundation.

There were no real problems once the integration order came down from the courts. This area fared far better than places such as Prince Edward County or even Norfolk. This area was "blessed with strong Black leadership," according to S. W. Rawls, Jr. Men such as Dr. A. B. Harris and Lloyd Sykes from Capron made it possible.

There was a big push to consolidate Franklin High School with the Southampton County High School. William "Bill" Camp, uncle of S.W. Rawls, Jr., was highly in favor of building a high school on the Darden farm between Courtland and Franklin. The name was even selected for the school. It would have been named the Colgate Darden High School. When this idea failed, Franklin began its efforts in earnest to break away from the county. This is one of the main reasons that Franklin became a city. People just wanted more say in their schools. His father S. W. Rawls, Sr., used to say that Franklin was appropriately named a second class city.

S. W. Rawls, Jr. said that there were good relations between the Black and White citizens. There was respect shown by individuals from both races. The ones that probably had the most difficulty were the people of the lower socioeconomic classes because of their limited options. "The problem really could have been one of class, not race."

In the discussion of education today and how he wished to be remembered, Mr. Rawls stated that he always supported education. He believed that people should have the opportunity to make choices as to where and how their children were educated. he said that his interest in education has continued and that since integration, Southampton County schools have improved, especially in the more recent years with the new high school and middle school complex. Through the years, Franklin High Schools, by the same token, has not been able to make the progress that it should. This is due in part to the large number of occupants of low rent housing developments that have been built in the city.

## Appendix I

### Summary of an Interview with Gilbert W. Francis, Attorney and Charter Member of the Southampton Historical Society November 25, 1996

In spite of failing health, Gilbert W. Francis shared his thoughts about the time frame from 1954 until 1970 with the researcher by recording. Mr. Francis began by stating that he was in New York City when the decision of the Brown case was announced on May 17, 1954. At the time, he said he had no idea how far reaching the implications of this decision would be. He did recall the efforts of individuals who wanted to impeach Earl Warren and those who adamantly said Virginia schools would never integrate.

Mr. Francis recalled that he became "an outsider" because he refused to support the efforts of local attorneys to develop a private school system. He spoke of calls from fellow attorneys to try to get him to join with them in support of the Education Foundation and later, Southampton Academy.

Mr. Francis spoke of his close friend, Lloyd Sykes and the respect that each had for the other. He attributed the successful integration of Southampton Schools to leaders such as Lloyd Sykes and the efforts of Senator William Rawlings who worked closely with

Sykes.

Gilbert Francis was a strong supporter of the Freedom of Choice plan for desegregating the county schools. He offered his support to Henry Wickam, Jr. in the Friends of the Court lawsuit as they tried to maintain Freedom of Choice as an acceptable method of achieving integration. Francis continued to believe that Judge Hoffman of Norfolk would support their efforts of allowing parents to choose the closest school for their children to attend.

When the county began its efforts to build new schools for Black children during the sixties, Gilbert Francis sold land to the county for the Boykins District School. According to Mr. Francis, he sold the land at half of the price that it was valued so that a consolidated Black school could be built and one and two room schools throughout the area could be closed.

As the father of three children, Gilbert Francis sent all of his children through the public schools of Southampton County. The oldest son completed school during segregation; however, the middle and youngest sons were many times the only white students in their classes during the earliest days of integration. During the time that Francis had children in school, he served as president of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) in Boykins. He also tried to form a PTA at Southampton High School. "Bill Wright killed the idea, because he was against integration."

Francis alledged that Southampton Academy was able to purchase "surplus"



supplies and buses from the public schools at ridiculously low prices because of the efforts of those who privately and quietly supported the private school effort. Mr. Francis said that Ed Trice allowed four buses to be sold to Southampton Academy for \$400 each. He said Trice then went to the school board and asked for four new buses that the state would help to pay for.

There were two individuals that Francis spoke about in greater detail. As Mr. Francis spoke, he stated that at this stage in his life he had nothing to lose. The first individual was the highly respected Colgate Darden. Mr. Francis said that Darden had been an active supporter of the Byrd machine; however, he was a very cautious man. According to Francis, Colgate Darden was used by the Byrd machine. Francis said, "Colgate Darden got honest after he retired from the University of Virginia. He wanted to establish a memorial in Southampton County to General George Thomas and Billy Mahone at the entrance to the new courthouse building. He presented the idea to the Board of Supervisors. He also called John Parker to get his support; but, after talking to John, he decided it was too controversial."

The other individual that Francis referred to was John Camp. According to Francis, John Camp wanted the Franklin and Southampton High Schools to consolidate and build on the Darden land. This was a controversial issue that never came to be and which led to Franklin becoming a city. "Franklin wanted to separate from the county because they wanted more of their money to go for education. Also, there were less

Blacks in the Franklin town limits (only about twenty percent).

The location of Narricott Industries in Boykins impacted on the schools as well, according to Gilbert Francis. Jacob Serbin, the founder of Narricott, questioned the school facilities that were available in Southampton. He wanted to provide equal opportunities for employment and was concerned about the lack of equal opportunity for education. Jack Martino and others were brought in to help manage the plant. When Martino came in and hired people from the South Hill area in Mecklenburg County (another Southside Virginia locality), they chose to send their children to the newly established Southampton Academy.

## Appendix A

### Summary of an

Interview with Mills E. Godwin, Jr., former Governor of Virginia

January 3, 1997

Mills Godwin, Jr., a native of Nansemond County (now city of Suffolk), was serving in the Virginia General Assembly at the time that the Supreme Court decision was announced in the Brown v. Board of Education decision was rendered in May of 1954. According to Godwin, the ruling was expected, though the decision and the enforcement were more severe than anticipated. He felt that the people were unprepared to make the transition from segregated to desegregated schooling. He said that he believed both Blacks and Whites truly wanted good educational opportunities for all children. Because of this, segregation would have eventually ended. Godwin recalled that the years following the Supreme Court decision were traumatic, especially for people in southside Virginia.

When asked about the Gray Commission, Godwin replied that Governor Thomas B. Stanley chose able men to study the concerns and manner in which to end segregated schooling. Garland Gray was chairman and David Mays was the attorney for the Commission. Governor Godwin then shared that David Mays diary had been recently published in the Richmond Times Dispatch. He spoke briefly about the differences of

opinion that existed concerning the Gray Commission and the recommendations of the Commission.

The Defenders of State Rights and Individual Sovereignty was an active organization in Southside Virginia. Mr. Godwin described this involved, conservative group as being started and organized by a strong segregationist leader from Farmville by the name of Crawford. The group wanted legally acceptable alternatives to segregation. They called for immediate action to prevent desegregation of schools from occurring. Their vocal position was a contributor to problems in dealing with ending segregation in public schooling.

Senator William V. Rawlings of Southampton and Delegate Sam Pope of Southampton were very involved in public education. Senator Rawlings had long been noted as a great supporter of public education and Sam Pope for his strong support of segregated public education. Godwin described his relationship with both gentlemen as being longstanding friends and co-workers in the Virginia General Assembly. Godwin spoke of Sam Pope getting a resolution through the Virginia House of Delegates that would have prohibited competition between athletic groups if integration of public schools were to take place.

According to Godwin, the tuition assistance plan that was proposed never took effect. It would have required a change in the Virginia Constitution in order to provide tuition assistance for students to attend private schools instead of desegregated public

schools. The constitutional changes never came about. He further added that the tuition assistance would not have accomplished the goals that many individuals had in mind.

For the next few minutes of the interview, Mills Godwin reflected on the years from 1966 to 1993. He considered 1966 to be the key year therefore, he chose to start there. 1966 was the year that he became governor of Virginia for his first term in office. Education was continuing for all children (Black and White) as desegregation efforts were being made. In some areas, implementation of desegregation was difficult because people were slow to change. Virginia was a leader conscious state that was willing to comply with the law, but at its own pace.

More money was needed for salaries, schools, and education in general. This is when sales tax came into being. There was a solid majority that recognized the need. One percent of all sales tax collected was to be returned to the localities for use with education. This opened the door for agreement in this area. The state was to benefit from the other three percent. This was still not enough money to finance the needs of higher education. Virginia had the lowest percentage of high school graduates going to college. Money was still needed to finance the cost of higher education. The Virginia Constitution of 1926 limited the amount of money that could be borrowed. This was also in line with the Harry Byrd's philosophy of "pay as you go." In 1966, a referendum was passed with a two to one vote that permitted borrowing at one percent of the assessed value of real estate. This allowed for eighty -one million dollars (\$81,000,000) to be borrowed. This amount was

later increased. Sam Pope and Godwin worked closely to get the community college system started in Virginia as a means of allowing students to continue their education beyond high school. The goal was to have the community college feed naturally into the four year colleges and universities. Governor A. Harrison deserves much credit for accomplishing much in the formation of the community college system. He organized the Commission to study higher education in 1964-1965. This report paved the way to get the community college system developed.

When Governor Godwin was asked to comment on several judges who had their names associated with the segregation / desegregation / integration issues, he had the following comments to make:

Judge Robert R. Merhige - very astute and learned gentleman. His views on integration were much more liberal than the majority of Virginians. He forced Virginia localities to comply with the law.

Judge Walter Hoffman - very able gentleman with great legal capacity. He was a stern and highly disciplined individual who found the mixing of the races to be less acceptable.

Judge Segar Gravatt - local judge from Blackstone. He was extremely outspoken in his support of segregation. His views were not consistent with the Supreme Court rulings.

Governor Godwin again spoke of the desire of the people of Virginia to provide

good educational opportunities for all individuals. He said that "the issue was more of class, than race." The people had to make many adjustments to the ending of segregation and it would have happened in its own way and time without the intervention of the courts.

## Appendix J

### Summary of an

Interview with Judge Robert R. Merhige, Federal Judge for the Fourth District Court

January 27, 1997

Judge Robert R. Merhige willingly gave an afternoon to provide background information to the researcher. He began by discussing the similarities and differences of the Plessy v. Ferguson case and the 1954 Brown case. In his brief explanation, he said that the first case said that separate was okay if there was equal opportunity. The 1954 decision stated that separate could not be acceptable because there could not be equal opportunity. The Brown decision was simply not definitive enough. It did not go far enough, that is a major reason why segregation continued for so long.

The discussion then turned to the issue of Freedom of Choice. Judge Merhige said that there was not much change from complete segregation. It "did not work because you still had Black and White schools."

In providing background to the Green v. New Kent County case, Freedom of Choice had been upheld. It was the first case that the NAACP won and it came through the Fourth District Court. S. W. Tucker was "one of the real heroes." S. W. Tucker was a law partner of Oliver Hill. He was a courageous man who fought to end segregation all



across Virginia. "Life changed" when the Supreme Court reversed the decision of Green. It meant that something had to be done about Choice now.

The western division judge had been in the General Assembly during the time of massive resistance therefore, he would not hear the case. Judge Merhige was then designated as the judge to hear the case. Within forty-eight hours of his appointment to the case, there were forty-three cases pending his decision. The NAACP made motion to reopen the case. This was technically not needed. They did not wait twenty days for a mandate. S. W. Tucker immediately moved to reopen the case. This put him in great danger. He had no one protecting him but the local police. Judge Merhige said he was provided with an army of federal marshalls to protect him and his family during the litigation proceedings.

Judge Merhige said he approached the case and asked the question, "Are you in accord with the decision of Green v. New Kent County?" The case was heard in the courthouse in Lynchburg. Lynchburg had a courageous and fair school board with strong leadership. The attorneys for the school board were John and Bill Battle (representative to General Assembly from Charlottesville). The school board was not operating in compliance with the Green decision. When asked about the appeal, Merhige said, "Don't apologize for appealing." People are not always conscious of inequalities. He concluded "Blacks have been treated in a dehumanizing way. I carried out the law, not only the law, but it was the right thing."

Following this controversial decision, Judge Merhige said that he and his family lived with federal marshalls for eleven years as he received many death threats and threats upon the safety of his family. The marshalls went to school with his son and the grocery store with his wife. In spite of this, his dog was shot and left for him to find, along with having his guest house where his mother-in-law lived burned to the ground. Judge Merhige said that he received as many as 1500 letters of hate mail per week after his decision.

The cases that Merhige heard were affirmed by the Court of Appeals. During his career, he had only one decision reversed dealing with the schools. That case was the consolidation case involving Richmond, Henrico, and Chesterfield. The Supreme Court had a split decision of four - four.

In reflection, Judge Merhige said he understood the lack of objectivity because the cases were dealing with children. "What good did it do?" "I don't think it helped education. I did it because it was the law, not just the right thing." "It created an atmosphere which set the stage for integration."

The Richmond newspapers were not supportive. James "Kilpatrick tried to get the General Assembly to pass a resolution to say the state did not have to follow federal law."

Judge Walter Hoffman was a pioneer. He closed schools and made them integrate. It was the right thing to do.

## Appendix K

### Summary of an Interview with Julia Tucker, widow of S. W. Tucker March 9, 1997

Following up on a contact provided by Judge Robert R. Merhige, the researcher was able to visit with Mrs. Julia Tucker, widow of Samuel W. (S. W.) Tucker in her home at Imperial Plaza in Richmond. Mrs. Tucker graciously allowed the researcher to have access to the many files of newspaper clippings, programs, and other memorabilia which she had collected through the years concerning the efforts of her husband and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Virginia (NAACP). This was a tremendous help in gathering background information to increase the researcher's understanding.

Mrs. Tucker began by sharing information about what was called the NAACP "Brain Trust." According to her, Thurgood Marshall, Spottswood Robinson, Martin A. Martin, Oliver Hill, and her husband made up the legal defense team of the NAACP. Marshall and Robinson were eventually appointed to federal judgeships and could not be actively involved. Martin, Hill, and Tucker were very active in fighting for the rights of

African-American citizens, often at little or no pay. She said that her husband was often called upon to provide background because his expertise was in the constitutional law.

When asked about threats, retaliation, or danger to S. W. Tucker, Mrs. Tucker said that their lives were often in danger. No protection was provided for them when S. W. Tucker got involved in pursuing an end to limited efforts at desegregation. She said that he was called a communist and even had his license to practice law revoked as a means of trying to still his influence.

Mrs. Tucker said that her husband was involved in school segregation cases involving Giles County, Prince Edward, New Kent, Norfolk, Warren County, and many other areas as he tried to end Freedom of Choice and other efforts to continue segregated schooling. She recalled his efforts in the case involving Greensville County and the City of Emporia. This case was especially meaningful to him as he had practiced law in the City of Emporia and owned property in the area.

The NAACP had provided help to end segregation in means other than through the courts. NAACP chapters had encouraged and help sponsor individuals who were willing to choose to attend previously all White schools. The chapters were also involved in sponsoring individuals from school divisions such as Prince Edward so that they could travel to other areas to receive an education. The concern was to see that children had a chance to get a good education and to have the same opportunities.

## Appendix A

### Summary of an

Interview with Dorothula Knox, NAACP Leader for Greenville County and Rose Allen, NAACP Leader for Greenville County, and Thelma Atkins-Riley, first African-American student to attend Greenville County High School

May 21, 1997

Dorothula Knox and Rose Allen have both served as leaders of the Greenville County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Both are retired educators from the Greenville County School System. This county adjoins Southhampton County on the western end.

Rose Allen began the interview by explaining that the NAACP chapters in the Sussex, Greenville, Southhampton area have always been able to work well together. When it came to working to end segregation and provide educational opportunities, this certainly held true.

Mrs. Knox shared that her god-daughter, Thelma Atkins, was the first Black student to enroll in the all White Greenville County High School. She said that she encouraged her to do so because she knew the young lady needed the opportunity to work with up to date materials and equipment. She elaborated by saying that when White

schools got electric typewriters, the Black schools got the discarded manual typewriters. The same held true with textbooks and other equipment for the school.

Mrs. Knox then spoke about the problems that Thelma Atkins had as she entered the previously all White school. Thelma was not allowed to sit with White children on the school bus. She was assigned a seat by herself at the front of the bus and if the bus were too crowded, she was told she had to stand. In gym classes at the high school, Thelma was never allowed to participate. Each day she would be told to sit on the bench or the bleachers. It was assumed that this was to avoid physical contact with White girls. Thelma Atkins was not required to "dress out" for physical education nor was she allowed to shower with the other girls after gym.

Thelma Atkins-Riley spoke of the loneliness of attending the high school. She said that no one wanted to be seen talking with her because of the pressure that would be put upon them by their friends and family. In spite of this, she said she did not regret going to Greenville County High School. Mrs. Knox encouraged her and told her repeatedly that she deserved the opportunity of getting the best education Greenville County had to offer. She believed that the experience prepared her for college in a way that the all black Wyatt High School could not have done. She said the teachers at Wyatt were excellent but lacked materials and equipment that the students needed exposure to.

Mrs. Knox shared that she had repeatedly requested transfer from an all Black school to one of the White schools. Her request was denied each year because she was

considered a radical and too outspoken.

Rose Allen was chosen to integrate the faculty at Greenville County High School (GCHS). She was reassigned from Hicksford Elementary School to GCHS in the English Department. She said that during the years she was there, she began teaching English to ninth graders and eventually was given the opportunity to teach senior English after she had proven herself.

Mrs. Allen said that during Freedom of Choice in the sixties, she chose to have her children attend the previously all White schools. In reflection, she said that for all of her children except one, it was probably the best choice. She said that one of her daughters needed the nurturing that she would have received in an all Black school instead of the pressure of attending school where she was different.

Rose Allen shared the scrapbooks and albums that she and Dorothula Knox had prepared during the years of 1954 to the present. Mrs. Allen then provided the researcher with a copy of the "S. W. Tucker Civil Rights Pioneer Handbook on The Civil Rights Journey During the Sixties in Virginia" that had been organized and recorded by Mrs. Julia (S. W.) Tucker in February, 1995.

## Appendix L

### Summary of an

Interview with Nancy Sandidge, first African-American teacher assigned to teach as a part

of the previously all white faculty of Southampton High School and

Current member of the Franklin City School Board School

March 27, 1998

Mrs. Nancy Sandidge grew up in the town of Franklin. As the daughter of a minister, her childhood had been very sheltered by her parents. She recalled that she had been brought up in a very segregated society and somewhat protected by her father.

After beginning her teaching career in Surry County, Nancy Sandidge left her teaching position when she was pregnant with her daughter. When she was ready to return to work, she was hired to teach in Capron at the Capron District School. In 1963, she was transferred to Riverview High School where she taught through the 1966-67 school year.

Mrs. Sandidge recalled being summonsed to the office. When she walked in, the principal of the school "on the hill" (Southampton High School), Bill Wright was sitting there waiting to talk to her. Mr. Wright told her that he understood she was a good English teacher and he wanted her to come and teach summer school at Southampton.



Having never worked during the summers, she at first declined. Her father encouraged her to give the job a chance.

Mrs. Sandidge spoke of a particular lesson on Shakespeare that she was teaching to her summer school students. She said that Mr. Ed Trice came into the room and took a seat at the back. He encouraged her to go ahead with the lesson. At the end of the class, Mr. Trice asked her to stay on and continue teaching English at Southampton.

Nancy Sandidge taught at Southampton High School from the summer of 1967 until her retirement in 1991. As she recalled, there were really no desegregation problems. Some parents were naturally curious and after they came and talked with her or observed her classes, they seemed quite satisfied. The transition for her and other African-Americans was made much easier by people such as: Miss Robbie Claud, school librarian, Mrs. Trimm, guidance counselor, Wayne Cosby, football coach, and Vi Harrison, choral music teacher, and Bill Wright, principal.

Only one incident came to mind when there was a rumor that there might be a confrontation between the white cheerleaders who usually cheered for football and the black cheerleaders who cheered for basketball. That incident never came to pass because of the efforts of some of the people mentioned above.

When asked what brought people together in the schools, Nancy Sandidge quickly said athletics. People came together to support a common interest.

Nancy Sandidge commented on the schools of Franklin and stated that there are still links from the past with the school system today. Union-Camp is the largest taxpayer and employer in the City of Franklin. As such, the corporation and its employees maintain an active interest in the schools, both public and private. The Camp Foundation and Union-Camp Corporation are major contributors and supporters of education.

## Appendix M

### Summary of an

Interview with Bob Sandidge, retired African-American principal of the Hayden School  
and Franklin High School

March 27, 1998

Mr. Bob Sandidge came to Franklin from Pennsylvania to coach and teach physical education at Hayden High School. He then became principal of the Hayden High School. When Hayden was closed in 1967 as a high school, it became a junior high school. Mr. Sandidge remained as the principal. He was later made principal of Franklin High School. He spoke of the differences in the pay scales for White and Black administrators.

Bob Sandidge recalled adjusting to segregated schooling in Franklin and then token efforts at desegregation. His son, Ron, attended school at the "white" elementary school. Ron was suspended in first grade for kissing a little white girl. He also recalled that Christopher Smith and Larry Blount chose to leave Hayden and attend Franklin High School when Freedom of Choice became an option. Christopher Smith graduated from Franklin and later returned to the area to become a member of the Southampton County School Board.

## Appendix A

Summary of an  
Interview with Mrs. Pauline Morton, Retired Supervisor of Virginia Department of  
Education and Resident of Franklin, Virginia

April 2, 1998

As the researcher tried to gather information during the past years, there were numerous times that Mrs. Pauline (S. P.) Morton's name arose as someone who was knowledgeable about the school systems of Southside Virginia. The researcher requested that Mrs. Morton verify some information and provide clarification. Both of which she was very willing to do.

Mrs. Morton moved to Franklin in 1935. She described the city as being very conservative. The White people stayed to themselves and the Blacks had their own community. Some of the Blacks went into the White community to work in the homes of the Whites. Others worked at the Camp Manufacturing Company or for one of the logging companies that supplied logs for Camp.

Mrs. Morton's husband was known throughout the community as S. P. and was highly respected by both Blacks and Whites. Mr. Morton was hired by the Southampton County Schools to serve as principal of the Hayden Schools (elementary and high school). According to Mrs. Morton, during Mr. Morton's entire educational career, he was always

paid less than White administrators with smaller schools. This was due to Blacks being paid by a different pay scale than Whites. This held true when Mr. Morton was a Southampton County School Board employee, as well as when he was employed by the City of Franklin after Hayden became a Franklin school.

Mrs. Morton recalled that E. E. Brickell, former superintendent in Franklin, was an excellent and fair man. He was responsible for seeing that when the new elementary school was built it would be named for her husband.

As a state supervisor for home economics education and the school lunch program, Pauline Morton was responsible for all of the schools in the southeastern portion of Virginia. Mrs. Morton recalled the poor conditions of the Black schools that she visited and the disparity that became all too familiar.

When asked if Mrs. Morton believed that integration of schools had truly taken place, she said, "No, there are still classes, particularly higher level classes that are still all White. There are still some classes that are all Black."

## VITA

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### Educational Background

M. S.	Virginia State University	1987	Diagnostic and Remedial Reading
B. S.	Radford College	1972	Home Economics

### Professional Experience

1997 -	Principal,	Hicksford Elementary School Greensville County School Division
1991- 1997	Assistant Principal,	Belfield Elementary School Greensville County School Division
1985 - 1991	Teacher,	Greensville County School Division
1980 - 1982	Teacher,	Northampton County, North Carolina Northampton County Schools
1973 - 1977	Teacher,	Southampton County Public Schools