A HISTORY OF LUTHER P. JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL: A REPORT OF A CASE STUDY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BLACK HIGH SCHOOL

by

Mathelle K. Lee

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

APPROVED:

Houston Conley, Chairman

Jimmie C. Fortune

Kenneth E. Underwood

Ronald L. McKeen

Thomas Gatewood

April, 1993

Blacksburg, Virginia

A History of Luther P. Jackson High School: A Report of A Case Study on the Development of a Black High School

by

Mathelle K. Lee

Committee Chairman: Houston Conley
Education Administration

(ABSTRACT)

Prior to 1954, blacks in Fairfax County who wanted to receive an education beyond the seventh grade were bussed by the county to Manassas Regional High School in Prince William County or independently attended Dunbar High School, Phelps Vocational Center, Cardoza High School or Armstrong High School in Washington, D.C.

The purpose of this dissertation was to describe, record and analyze the events and actions that led to the establishment, operation, desegregation and eventual demise of Luther P. Jackson High School, the first and only high school for blacks in Fairfax County, Virginia. This study provides useful information to the Fairfax County School System.

The population for the study consisted of representatives from community and civil rights leaders, school administrators, students, teachers and secretaries who were involved with Luther P. Jackson at various stages of its existence.

A systematic document research and structured interviews of key informants were conducted. Analysis of the study revealed that the problems of funding, minimizing of black secondary education problems and delaying of building an in-county facility for black high school students were overcome by community organizational pressure on the board of education and superintendent. Data analysis also reveals that the dynamic leadership of Taylor Moses Williams, the first principal and the outstanding faculty were the two greatest attributes to the success of Luther P. Jackson High School. This school, which was the pride of the black community, opened on September 1, 1954 and operated for eleven years as a mecca and model for black education in Fairfax County. School desegregation laws mandated changes in attendance and boundaries. Luther P. Jackson High School was integrated and transformed into an intermediate school as it still functions today.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my son, Kendrick Jamal Lee as he takes the torch to reach his goals; to my husband, Bobby Charles Lee, who was a constant source of support and encouragement throughout this study; and to the memory of my parents, Mary Lee Cox Kornegay and Jim Kornegay, who instilled in me the value of education and the will to persevere.

Acknowledgements

Completion of this study would not have been possible without the assistance, encouragement and support of many individuals. To the following people, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation:

First, special thanks to Dr. Houston Conley, Chairman of my Dissertation Committee who guided me throughout my doctoral program and kept me on course. Without his invaluable, individual assistance, I could not have possibly completed this study. To my Dissertation Committee members, Dr. Kenneth Underwood, Dr. Ron McKeen, Dr. Jimmie Fortune, and Dr. Thomas Gatewood for the helpful suggestions and recommendations which focused and advanced this study.

To Rosetta Allen, my mother-in-law, for all the support and assistance she gave to me.

To Angelia Allen, my sister-in-law, who understood so well and listened to my frustrations.

To my four sisters, Cheryl, Carolyn, Marquitta, Bertha, and my aunt, Daisy C. Lewis, for always being there for me as my family support structure.

To Jane Trimble, for her efficient typing of the manuscript.

To Betty Chilton and Suzanne Levy, librarians, for their assistance.

To Lois Taylor, Brenda Lamberson-Sias, Carolyn Moyé and Evelyn Russell, Wallecia Gill, Caryl Porte and Monica Newman for their moral support.

To all the wonderful people who were associated with Luther P. Jackson High School and willingly shared information with me.

To Dr. Michael J. Doran, principal; June Monterio, assistant principal; Mickey Ruffner and all the staff at Luther P. Jackson Intermediate School who were a tremendous help to me in obtaining data for this study.

To my husband, Bobby, and my son, Kenny, for their tolerance, encouragement and belief in me.

Most of all, I give thanks to God, my eternal source of inspiration for this accomplishment.

A History of Luther P. Jackson High School: A Report of A Case Study on the Development of a Black High School

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Before the building of Luther P. Jackson High School in 1954, the Fairfax County Public School System did not operate any in-county facility for educating its black students beyond seventh grade. Black students who sought education beyond the seventh grade level prior to 1954 attended Manassas Industrial High School, which later became Manassas Regional High School subsidized by Fairfax County, or attended Dunbar High School, Phelps Vocational Center, Cardoza High School and Armstrong High School in Washington, D.C. (Henderson, 1965).

Three years before the decision of the landmark Brown vs. Board of Education case, yielding to pressure from community groups, Fairfax County Board of Education voted in 1951 to build Luther P. Jackson High School, the first high school for blacks in the county (Fairfax County Board of Education, 1951). The school was founded as an all black high school comprised of all black students, staff and administrators. It continues in operation today although under different functions and principles from the original establishment.

This study described how a conceptual idea for establishing a black high school became the reality of Luther P. Jackson High School.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify, record, analyze and interpret those events and actions which led to the establishment, operation and eventual transformation to other uses of Luther P. Jackson High School, the first and only black high school in the Fairfax County Public School System.

Need of the Study

This study was important to the Fairfax County Public School System and the community of Fairfax County Virginia because presently no systematic study exists to document the local community and county movement to establish a public high school for the education of black high school students in Fairfax County. The records of Fairfax County public schools, local news media and other agencies give limited information concerning education of black high school students or the operation of Luther P. Jackson High School. This study sought to identify, synthesize and record the events and actions of the Fairfax County public school system as it began to recognize the needs of its growing number of black students at the secondary level during a critical transitional and historical period in American public education.

The study focused on a period of time when opinions were divided on the issue of education for blacks. Many believed that only meager funding should be appropriated for black education. According to Henderson (1965), many whites felt that bond issues related to appropriations for white schools only. Another segment felt that the black population deserved a greater budget allotment and even an in-county high school. After the Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) decision, held that separate but equal schools were unconstitutional, feelings were heightened even more as the issue of desegregation became the focus. Again, the Fairfax County School Board had to make firm decisions on educating its black students.

This study was particularly significant at a time when the Fairfax County School System becomes more diverse with minority enrollment steadily increasing. This study provided basic information on a special population group to professionals of the school system, students, parents and the community. It was important that this aspect of education, the role of the black high school student, be permanently chronicled in Fairfax County history.

Finally, it was appropriate to make this study at this time while valuable primary sources, the people involved in the development and operation of a school for black

secondary students in Fairfax County are still living in the area and therefore, available for consultation.

Research Questions

1. What was the educational status of black secondary students in Fairfax County Public Schools before 1954?
2. What policies and events led to the establishment of Luther P. Jackson High School as an institution to educate black secondary students in Fairfax County?
3. What were the major goals, educational principles and accomplishments of Luther P. Jackson High School as a public school for black secondary students in Fairfax County, Virginia?
4. What led to the demise of Luther P. Jackson High School as a black high school?

The Interview Questions

The main focus of this study was: "What were the key elements involved in the development of Luther P. Jackson High School as the first in-county high school for black secondary students?" Answers to the main focus were generated through the following sub-questions:

Category 1 Questions--Addressed to community leaders and county administrators who were involved in the initial stages of the development of Luther P. Jackson High School:

1. How was the decision to build a black high school made?
2. Who was involved in the decision to establish a black high school?
3. What was the role of black community organizations in the early development?
4. What was the role of the NAACP in the early planning and development of the school?
5. What problems arose during the early development? How were these problems resolved?
6. What opposition had to be overcome at the outset? How was the opposition addressed?
7. Who were some of the administrators, teachers or other leaders involved at the planning and initial stages of the school development?

Category 2 Questions--Addressed to teachers:

1. When and how did you become employed at Luther P. Jackson High School?
2. What characteristics describe the students of Luther P. Jackson High School?
3. What have been the notable successes of the school?
4. What were the notable failures/weaknesses of the school?
5. What characteristics describe the principal of Luther P. Jackson High School?
6. What aspects of the school did you like most?

7. What aspects of the school did you like least?
8. What outstanding quality do you attribute the success of the school?

Category 3 Questions--Addressed to Luther P. Jackson students.

1. Where did you attend school prior to enrollment at Luther P. Jackson High School?
2. What aspects of the school are most memorable to you?
3. What aspects of the school did you like the most?
4. What aspects of the school did you like the least?
5. What were your impressions of Taylor Williams, the principal?
6. What one aspect of the school do you think was most responsible for the overall success of the school?

Category 4 Questions--Additional questions asked students who transferred from Luther P. Jackson to all-white schools.

1. What were the major reasons that you decided to transfer from Luther P. Jackson High School?
2. What were some notable differences in Luther P. Jackson High School and the white high school?

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction and related background information.

Chapter Two gives an overview of conditions, educational experiences and policymaking for black students in the Fairfax County Public School System before the building of Luther P. Jackson High School in 1954. Chapter Three presents a study of the founding and early development of Luther P. Jackson High School. Chapter Four presents the operation and school activities. Chapter Five explains the influence desegregation had on Luther P. Jackson High School and its transition to other uses.

Limitations of the Study

1. Some of the key players representing the various stages of the Luther P. Jackson High School existence were inaccessible at the time of this writing. Some have moved from the area, many have retired. Even as this study was conducted, two have died.
2. Luther P. Jackson High School opened with grades one through twelve. This study concentrated on grades nine through twelve.

Definitions of Terms

Black Student--A student who is classified as belonging to the Negro race.

Black School--A school which maintains a separate identity by serving a black population.

Dual School System--An organizational system of schools in which separate schools are used by black and white students.
Secondary School--A school which serves students in grades nine through twelve.
Secondary Student--A student who attends a school designated for grades nine through twelve.

The terms black, negro, and colored are synonymous, but vary according to the time period used. Whenever appropriate, the updated term, black has been used.

Methodology

This was a case history of Luther P. Jackson High School, a black high school that operated in Fairfax County, from 1954 to 1965 to describe its development, implementation, success and demise.

Techniques used in the study included document collection and both informal and structured interviews. An interview protocol was devised and used during the interviewing process. In structured interview situations, research questions were submitted in advance to selected informants.

Material and data used during the progress of this research came from (1) the official records and reports of the Fairfax County School Board; (2) the Superintendent's annual reports; (3) letters of correspondence with federal,

state and local officials and organizations; (4) state and federal legislative enactments; (5) citizen and local organization reports; (6) local documents; (7) local and area newspaper files; (8) historical archival records and personal papers; (9) artifacts of memorabilia; (10) Luther P. Jackson High School Archives; and (11) oral interviews with individuals who were part of the Luther P. Jackson High School program.

Description of the Population

The population for this study consisted of individuals who were involved with Luther P. Jackson High School at different stages of its existence. These individuals played various roles in the operation of Luther P. Jackson High School. Interviews were conducted with (1) a former central office administrator, (2) former local school administrators, (3) former Luther P. Jackson High School teachers, (4) former Luther P. Jackson High School students, (5) former Luther P. Jackson High School secretarial staff, and (6) local community and civil rights leaders.

The researcher compiled a list of people to be interviewed from names that appeared in documents. Key participants were also identified by interviewees as persons who were knowledgeable and part of the Luther P. Jackson High School era.

Interview Protocol

Each selected key interviewee was contacted by telephone and asked to consent to an interview. The time, date and place of the interview was established at that time. A letter confirming the telephone conversation along with the research questions and a brief review of the research project were mailed to the interviewee unless they opted not to receive this information.

Prior to the interview, permission was sought to tape the conversation and to quote the informant in the narrative text whenever necessary. A copy of the researcher's resume also was made available to each informant. As Spratley (1979, p. 60) suggests, the interview was conducted in the form of a friendly dialogue between the informant and the researcher at which time new elements were often introduced. Also guided by Spratley's suggestions (1979, p. 60), the following ethnographic categories of questions were asked during the interview:

- Descriptive Questions--both grand tour and mini tour. E.g., "Let's start with a simple question. I am interested in knowing how the building of Luther P. Jackson High School originated. Could you start at the beginning of the project and describe to me how the project got off the ground?"

- Structural Questions--E.g., "What was the initial reaction to the building of the school? Who supported it? Who were the adversaries? What explained their support or opposition to the school building?
- Contrast Questions--E.g., "Why was the Luther P. Jackson High School project seemingly given full support by the Fairfax County Board of Education after granting of building authorization?

Analysis

The data collected from documents and interviews were analyzed qualitatively, meaning that data in this study appears in words and not in numbers. The following procedure was followed:

- Data collected from documents and interviews was transformed during various stages into narrative-type notes.
- Notes were reduced. According to Miles and Huberman (1984, p. 21), "Data reduction is a form of analysis that sharpens data in such a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified."
- Data was displayed and analyzed.

- Data collected from documents and other archives was displayed in narrative form.
- Authentication was checked by sending interviewees copies of this research containing their quoted material for review and confirmation of accuracy.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION IN FAIRFAX COUNTY FOR BLACKS BEFORE 1954

Because of laws forbidding the teaching of slaves, education for blacks before the Civil War in Fairfax County, as in other parts of the United States was only accomplished by a few slaves or freedmen who managed to be taught by some cooperating whites, by a sympathizing owner as in the well known Frederick Douglass' predicament or by Union soldiers as was reportedly done in some instances during the Civil War. The first known organized schools for blacks in Fairfax County were started after the Civil War by the Freedmen's Bureau, religious groups and landowners who donated land for church and school use.

Establishment of Schools by the Freedmen's Bureau

According to Alderson (1952), the Freedmen's Bureau, or the Bureau for Freedmen, Refugees and Abandoned Lands, was created by Congress in March, 1865. When President Lincoln appointed Captain Orlando Brown as Assistant Commissioner for Virginia, Brown's first responsibility when he opened his headquarters in Richmond was to assist in the establishment of a system of education for blacks who were eager for a formal education which they were denied during their years of slavery. The Bureau had its greatest success

in education, and in general, the funds of the Bureau were devoted to the construction of buildings while the philanthropic agencies were encouraged to support the teachers for the schools that were established (Alderson, 1952).

The Freedmen's Bureau opened offices in Fairfax County in August, 1865. The agent, George Armes, had been directed to protect the former slaves from oppression and imposition and encouraged them to give entry into the nation's industry and economy. In addition, his office was to care for any destitute freedmen, to see that no black was still held as a slave, to settle matters of contention between whites and blacks, to help blacks secure homes and land either by purchase or rent, and to provide schools for black children (Netherton, 1978).

Black people struggling to make a success of their new lives were determined to see that their children attended these schools being operated under bureau auspices (Netherton, 1978). By December 1866, there were eight black schools in Fairfax County, most of them supported and staffed by the Friends' Aid Society of Philadelphia. Though the malicious burning of a school in the vicinity of Frying Pan and the breaking up of one near Lewinsville somewhat discouraged blacks, the number of students in school was steadily increasing (Netherton, 1978). In spite of this, by

March 1867, 440 black adults and children were attending school. The Freedmen's Bureau agent, Orin E. Hine, wrote in a letter that the "scholars progressed with rapidity, showing an eager desire to learn" (Netherton, 1978).

The poorly constructed schools presented many hardships in the struggle for Blacks to obtain a formal education. Freedmen's Bureau Agent Shields wrote in 1867 that "the schoolhouses are totally inadequate. Most of them are very low, built of logs and mud, poorly ventilated, miserably furnished, and so small that half the scholars must remain outside while the other half recites. Some of them, when I came, had neither locks nor hinges on the doors" (Netherton, 1978). The poverty level of the freed blacks took its toll on the education struggle also. In January, 1868, though there was work for all, teachers reported that some children could not attend school for want of shoes and proper clothing (Netherton, 1978).

As blacks settled into a few sections of Fairfax County where they were able to purchase land, they eventually started a school for their education in each enclave. One of the first schools established by individuals for former slaves was the Falls Church Colored School started in 1864 by Betsy Read and her father J. D. Read in Falls Church. The area surrounding the school site was a black settlement, known as The Hill and stretched from Hillwood Avenue to

Jefferson Village. The Reads only operated this school for a short time as Mr. Read was killed for associating with and helping upgrade blacks by Mosely's Men, a group of Confederate ranger soldiers who were known in Fairfax County for capturing Union soldiers. His daughter left town shortly thereafter. The Reads played a major role in the school's establishment as the school continued to operate in this location through the years. For a while the nearby Odd Fellows School was used for the upper grades. In 1922, the son of James Lee, the original landowner deeded the land on which the Falls Church Colored School stood to Fairfax County School System. Eventually, a new school was built and named James Lee Elementary School after the landowner (Black Women United for Action, 1991).

Cartersville Colored School

Because there were no black schools in Vienna, Virginia in 1920, members of the Cartersville Baptist Church decided to educate their children in their homes. Their teacher was Mrs. Esther Honesty. The parents paid her a salary of $5.50 per month (Cartersville Baptist Church Souvenir Program, 1992).

Mrs. Louise Archer, the dedicated teacher and principal for whom Louise Archer Elementary School in Vienna was named, organized a Cartersville Church Committee to raise

money to purchase a school bus. This bus was used to transport black children to school from Vienna and neighboring areas, including Dranesville, Great Falls, and Oakton. Church families paid the bus driver, Pete Wooden (Cartersville Church Program, 1992).

Feeder Pattern for High School

By 1940 Fairfax County School Superintendent W. T. Woodson, had consolidated all one and two room white schools and started consolidation of all Negro schools (Fairfax County School System, Superintendent's Report, 1940).

When Luther P. Jackson High School was built in 1954, its students came from six black elementary schools; James Lee Elementary School, Louise Archer Elementary School, Oak Grove Elementary School, Drew-Smith Elementary School, Eleven Oaks Elementary School and Lillian Carey Elementary School (Fairfax County Facilities Planning, 1992).

James Lee Elementary School was a typical elementary school that fed into Luther P. Jackson High School. Paul Jones attended James Lee as an elementary student. He remembers the excellent health care that the students received at the school. "Dr. Harold Johnson, a black doctor and Dr. Ellison, a black dentist from Arlington would set up office in the school. They would fill our teeth and tend to our health needs in the school." He also remembers the

cleanliness and care that was taken in upkeeping the school. "We were sitting in a firetrap as I think back over it. We would put linseed oil on the floor to clean it and then put coal in the stove to heat the room" (Jones, 1992). Mrs. Margery Robinson, a teacher at James Lee Elementary School, recalls that all students walked to the old Falls Church Elementary School. When the new James Lee School was built in 1948, students were bussed to the school from Bailey's Crossroads, Lincolnia and the Mount Pleasant areas. Students in the neighborhood still walked to school. The new James Lee School exposed students to many new experiences, including using a cafeteria and enjoying an auditorium with slanted seating and a real stage. This was the first time that students were assigned to classes with less than four grades per room. The new school seldom had more than two grades per room. Built as an all-brick building with vastly improved school facilities, James Lee was also the first black Fairfax County Public School to have indoor plumbing (Robinson, 1992).

Attendance at Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth

> Keep your children at home. Don't send them to the cities. I will go out and raise the money to build a school. You do your part here, and I will do mine in the world. (Manassas Museum Permanent Display, 1992)

These were the words spoken by Jennie Dean to the black citizens of Manassas, Virginia circa 1893. Working as a maid in Washington, D.C. after the Civil War, Jane Serepta Dean, known as Jennie, realized that many blacks were consistently moving to the cities with no education or skills. She devoted herself to the education of her people raising enough money by 1894 to open the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth (Manassas Museum Permanent Display, 1992). (See Appendix A).

Philanthropic individuals, groups and organizations provided financial support, inspiration and guidance in the development of secondary education for blacks in the South, both private and public. Some of the County Training, Schools which were established to give students two or three years of education beyond the elementary level and to assist in the training of teachers, eventually became publicly supported four-year high schools (Ryan, Gwynn, & King, 1946). Secondary education for black students in Fairfax County developed in this same pattern. The Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth founded by Jennie Dean in nearby Prince William County became the major provider for black secondary students in Fairfax County.

In its early stages in 1894 to the early 1950's, the students of the Manassas Industrial School came from the State of Virginia, the District of Columbia and other parts

of the United States. Specifically, the geographical distribution included students from Prince William (Manassas), Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Warren, Loudoun counties, and the cities of Alexandria and Washington, D.C. Smaller school units such as Falls Church, Fort Belvoir and Quantico, at one time, were part of the larger attendance area (Bennett, 1967).

Certain historical periods focused on students from particular communities. In 1900, most students came from the local community; in 1930, Middleburg, Virginia represented the highest enrollment; and, in 1950, the largest school district enrollment was from Fairfax County (Bennett, 1967).

In November, 1942, Fairfax County had 161 students attending Manassas Regional High School. The enrollment from the other counties were: Fauquier, 118; Prince William, 121; Rappahannock, 15; Warren, 7; Stafford, 2; Page, 1; out-of-state, 2; total 427 (Minutes of the Fairfax County School Board, November 3, 1942).

The budget for the 1944-1945 session was $26,777. The share for Fairfax County was $6,975, based on 155 students at $45 each (Fairfax County Public Schools, Minutes of the Fairfax County School Board, November 3, 1942).

In order to effect a balanced education for the students' varied geographical backgrounds, the founder stressed the concept: Education of the head, heart and hand. This was a goal that could meet the geographical needs of a variety of student interests. It was a point of view that could provide an educational program for students from the Bull Run Mountains to the Virginia peninsulas and from the Piedmont to the tidal plains. The eventual three-pronged school program, academic, vocational, and general stemmed from these geographical roots (Bennett, 1967).

Paul Jones, who attended Manassas Industrial School before going to the new Luther P. Jackson High School, remembers the broad education he received at Manassas Industrial School. "One half of the day was devoted to vocational programs. Academic courses were held during the other half of the day. We would choose a survey course in such areas as auto mechanics, sheet metal, electricity or brick masonry for the first year. Then we would choose one or two vocational courses to concentrate on the next year. We were taught black history as part of our curriculum. We had good teachers who I remember from English teachers to the vocational instructors" (Jones, 1992). Mary Payne Sultan, another student who attended Manassas Industrial School before going to Luther P. Jackson High School, remembers going to visit with friends at the Manassas School

and falling in love with it. She transferred from Cardoza High School where she attended by boarding with a family friend, to Manassas in the fall of 1953. She also recalled the long, two-hour daily bus ride from Vienna to Manassas to attend school (Sultan, 1992).

A former Gum Springs student, Calvin Ferguson, reflecting on those days, recalled that he caught the bus in the dark of the morning and returned home from school each day in the dark of evening. He confessed that he was only able to attend school for one year because:

> Times were hard and I quit school at 16 and went to work. I'd come home in the dark and still had to do chores and then homework. The bus would be so cold, we'd make a fire in a bucket to keep warm. (Ferguson, 1985)

Ben Holland remembers the difficulty of getting transportation provided to Manassas Industrial School. In 1934, Ben Holland and ministers Carson and Franklin of Gum Springs, along with white women from the Mount Vernon District, chartered a bus to attend the Fairfax County School Board meeting to request that Fairfax County Superintendent W. T. Woodson provide a school bus for black students. Ben Holland, who was a bus driver for Fort Belvoir Army Personnel, was requested as the driver to transport these students on an 80-mile round trip to the Manassas Industrial School for the Training of Colored Youth in Manassas, Virginia. Permission was granted by the school

board, and Ben Holland drove for a year without a salary, picking up students at 7:00 a.m. daily in Fort Belvoir, Gum Springs, Spring Banks, Franconia, Mount Pleasant, Woodlawn and Lincolnia. At the end of the school year, the Reverends Triplett, Carson and Franklin each took up collections in their respective churches and gave the money to Holland (Holland, 1985).

Evelyn Fields, whose teaching career spanned many years at Manassas Industrial School, remembers the many phases that the school endured while Fairfax County students attended there. Before Fairfax County provided bus transportation, most students boarded at the school during the week and went home on weekends. While serving the local community and nearby counties, students came from as far as Chicago and off the coast of Florida boarding students. The regional school concept was tried on an experimental basis in 1937 and adopted in the next year. The school staff felt that a school for black secondary students was long overdue when it was built in 1954 (Fields, 1992).

Enrollment in Neighboring Secondary Schools

Many Fairfax County black students chose the option of attending school in Washington, D.C. instead of being bussed to Manassas. Jean Deskins Minor, who worked at Luther P. Jackson School from its opening in 1954 until her retirement

in 1984 recalls making the choice between Washington, D.C. schools and Manassas Regional High School: "It was closer. There was a rule that if your parents worked for the federal government, you could attend school in the District of Columbia free." Jean's parents worked for the federal government so she attended Cardoza High School in the District of Columbia, graduating in 1950. She rode into the District with a neighbor or rode the AB&W bus system to school (Minor, 1992).

Jean Minor's family was typical of the various strategies a black family would use to obtain a quality high school education. Jean's brother, Carroll Deskins, graduated from Armstrong High School in the District. One of her sisters, Nettie Harris, graduated from the Manassas school. Another sister, Virginia Harris, graduated from Dunbar High School. Still another younger sister, Alma Deskins, graduated from Dunbar High School because the family had moved to Falls Church, Virginia, and the City of Falls Church had a rule that authorized tuition payment to Manassas Regional School or a District of Columbia high school for any black high school student who wanted a secondary education. Jean's husband, Joseph Minor, attended and graduated from Armstrong High School riding in with his father until he was old enough to drive himself. When he started driving, he picked up Jean's brother, Carroll

Deskins, who also graduated from Armstrong High School (Minor, 1992).

J. Sydney Holland's son, J. Sydney Holland, Jr., attended Manassas Regional High School. He was bussed through transportation fees paid by Fairfax County. His daughter, Dorothy Holland, attended Shaw Junior High School and graduated from Cardoza High School both in the District of Columbia. Holland recalled that he had to begin paying tuition for his daughter, who was an excellent student, when a neighbor who also attended District schools informed the District of Columbia authorities of his Fairfax County residence (Holland, 1992).

Mary Payne Sultan attended Shaw Junior High School and then Cardoza High School for three years by living with a friend of the family in Washington, D.C. and returning to her home in Fairfax County on the weekends. Her father was a graduate of Armstrong High School. An aunt, Naomi Pearson, also graduated from Armstrong High School. Mary transferred to Manassas Regional School in the fall of 1953 and graduated from the new Luther P. Jackson High School in the first class of 1955 (Sultan, 1992).

Transition to Regional School Status

A combination of low student enrollment, low faculty morale, dwindling community cooperation, poor plant

facilities and low public image forced the Board of Trustees of Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth to deed all property to the school boards of Prince William, Fauquier and Fairfax Counties leading to the creation of the Manassas Regional School, according to a resolution dated May 27, 1938 (Bennett, 1967). The school opened as a Regional High School of Northern Virginia with the school term beginning in September, 1938. Its student roster immediately increased as bus transportation was provided for students from Fairfax and Fauquier counties (Bennett, 1967).

Fairfax County Exit

Public concern regarding long commutes, inequitable services, and the desire for within-county secondary schools, started the trend for new concepts to cope with social change. As in other counties, the leaders, with the dynamic support of the people in Fairfax County, confronted school and other community officials for a new look at the schools, the construction of a new in-county school plant. The construction issues were apparent in county annual budget considerations, school bond referenda and state and federal aid. The movement in Fairfax, augmented through support of local organizations, was a sample of a broader movement for social improvement (Bennett, 1967).

In keeping with the concept of in-county location of schools, Fairfax would withdraw its more than 350 students in 1954 from Manassas to attend the newly-constructed Luther P. Jackson High School at Merrifield (Bennett, 1967).

Summary

Education for black students in Fairfax County began immediately after the Civil War with benefactors such as Betsy Read and her father who started a small school in Falls Church, Virginia. Other schools began through churches that were addressing educational deficiencies in their congregations. Many of the church-operated schools became public schools when Fairfax County started providing public education for its students. Fairfax County established sufficient schools for its black elementary school population but did not operate any in-county school facility for black students beyond the seventh grade.

Black students on the secondary level had to be very industrious, creative and persevering to obtain their high school diplomas. Many paid their own board and tuition at Manassas Industrial School for Colored in Manassas, Virginia. Others boarded with relatives or friends or commuted daily to Phelps, Dunbar, Cardoza or Armstrong High Schools in Washington, D.C. In September, 1938, Manassas Industrial School became Manassas Regional High School

operated by a board headed with tri-county representatives from Prince William, Fauquier and Fairfax counties. Some Fairfax County black high school students continued to travel to Washington, D.C. schools for proximity of location or free tuition accorded them because their parents were federal government workers. Black high school students maintained this pattern until Fairfax County built its own facility in 1954.

CHAPTER III

ESTABLISHMENT OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR BLACKS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY

Early Efforts of Black Leaders

In the early 1950's, the black community became more vocal in expressing its discontent with the state of black education in Fairfax County, especially with the lack of a facility for black secondary students. The community began organizing. George James remembers this era as "People were disgusted. They had to send their students far away. The poor quality of education propelled many blacks to move from Northern Virginia" (George James, 1992). The NAACP, led by Dr. Edwin B. Henderson, Rev. Milton Sheppard and others, was very active in the movement to build a high school. Dr. Henderson produced a flyer that was distributed by the NAACP detailing the disparities in funding between black and white schools (Henderson, 1965). (See Appendix B).

According to Henderson, the NAACP devoted much of its time toward education issues. Probably the most consistent work of the NAACP was our effort to improve education and educational facilities for our youth. The schools for Negro children were in the most dilapidated condition. All were frame buildings and old, with outbuildings to serve toilet needs. At the Falls Church School, there was no source of drinking water on the grounds; it had to be brought from a

neighbor's well. All of the schools for white children, in contrast, were of brick construction and equipped with plumbing.

There was no high school for colored children in Fairfax County. Those who wanted more than a seventh grade education had to travel to Washington at their own expense or be transported to the Industrial School at Manassas. At first the Negroes who went there had to pay expenses of the bus and driver, and they were always given the cast-off buses of the county. The school had a dormitory for children from more distant counties, and I doubt there was a more hazardous fire trap anywhere in the Nation.

When bond issues were voted to meet the educational needs, only trifling amounts were allotted to the Negro schools. Once, when I approached a superintendent with a request for a larger appropriation for Negro schools, he replied, 'We have to look after our own children first' (Henderson, 1965).

J. Sydney Holland, who was active with both the NAACP and another organization, the Fairfax Countywide Colored Citizens Association, recalled the involvement of this organization. Some of the vocal leaders of this group were Harrison Tinner, President, his brother Ollie W. Tinner, Rev. Wallace E. Costner, Rev. Roger D. Bush, Rev. Milton Sheppard, Rev. Wilson, Rufus Hamilton and Saunders B.

Moon. The group was closely allied with the churches of the various areas in the county as many of its leaders were ministers. The meetings rotated among the different churches including Bethlehem Baptist Church, Woodlawn Baptist Church and Second Baptist Church in Falls Church. Attendance was always high. Holland recounts that people attended meetings of this nature in much greater numbers than they do now (Holland, 1992).

One particular meeting of the group that stands out in Holland's memory was the meeting that was called at Second Baptist Church in Falls Church in the early fifties. This was an organizational meeting to take Superintendent W. T. Woodson to court. According to Holland, Woodson was reluctant in moving to spend the funds allocated by the school board for a black high school. The Countywide Colored Citizen Association and the NAACP worked closely on efforts such as this. Superintendent Woodson did not want to talk to the NAACP, preferring to communicate with the Countywide Colored Citizen Association. The NAACP would take actions that were decided on at such meetings and do the legal court transactions needed. Pressure from community groups eventually forced Woodson and the Board of Education to take appropriate action (Holland, 1992).

George James also remembers this landmark meeting. Rev. Costner's church, Second Baptist Church in Falls Church

was packed on the night of that meeting with people coming from far and near (James, 1992). The Countywide Colored Citizen Association and the NAACP continued to work toward the attainment of a secondary school for blacks until their goal was realized.

This goal of a black high school was shared by the Fairfax County Citizens Association, the League of Women Voters and other organizations and individuals. An interracial committee was formed to work with citizens and the school administration for a black high school within the county. The successful interracial committee was composed of the following members: Mrs. Hannah Keith Rowe, Barrett Pozer, the Rev. Horace Lukens, Lawrence Kiefer, Eleanor K. Morrow, Mark O'Sullivan, Dr. Nelson Podolnick, Stuart DeBell, John A.K. Donovan, the Rev. Wallace E. Costner, the Rev. Milton Sheppard, Clayton Frye, J. Sidney Holland, Ollie Tinner, Allen Saunders, Mrs. Sadie Harris, Eugene Rogers, William A. West and E.B. Henderson (Nan Netherson, et al., 1978).

The Fairfax County Board of Education addressed a letter from the NAACP in one of its meetings in 1951 that showed the correspondence and other action taken by local groups in pushing for the building of a black high school.

A letter dated November 29, 1950 and received in the School Board Office on December 27 was presented from Rev.

Milton Sheppard, President of the Fairfax County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The Executive Committee of this organization questioned the status of plans for the proposed high school for black children and stated that "the conditions of travel, time consumed, and generally unfavorable conditions at the Regional High School are causing numbers of drop-outs." (Fairfax County Board of Education, January 2, 1951).

The Board directed the Superintendent to reply advising that funds were included for the purchase of a site and the erection of a high school for colored pupils in Fairfax County in the bond issue but that litigation had prevented the sale of bonds which would have enabled the Board to carry through this project. The Board had discussed the location of the high school and one Board member had viewed a possible site on the south edge of Fairfax belonging to John S. Barbour, however, funds were not available to purchase this land should it be found suitable. The Superintendent was also advised to respond that many buses in Fairfax County were on the road for a longer period of time each morning and afternoon than are the buses to Manassas and this Board has had no report regarding any larger percentage of drop-outs in the Regional High School than in the high schools in Fairfax County (Fairfax County Board of Education, January 2, 1951).

Acquisition of Land

The February, 1951 Fairfax County School Board meeting was a very active meeting. The Board considered several sites for the location of the new colored high school. The Board looked at approximately 12 acres owned by John S. Barbour. The superintendent advised that at least 15 acres should be acquired for the school site, but agreed to view the property with Haight. The board started negotiations to purchase the Barbour site at $1200.00 per acre but dropped these plans because Mrs. Barbour wasn't interested in the sale (Fairfax County Board of Education, Feb. 6, 1951). The board discussed finding a suitable site at Ilda and decided to contact the officers of the Colored Citizens Association and ask for assistance in locating a suitable site for the Negro high school site (Fairfax County Board of Education, February 6, 1951). Another site facing on the Fairfax Station Road owned by Wilson M. Farr was considered but the Board was unable to contact Farr who had gone to Florida (Fairfax County Board of Education, February 6, 1951).

A committee from the Black Citizens Association sent a letter to the Fairfax County Board of Education expressing first preference for the Graham property in the Town of Fairfax and the second choice a site located across the road from Harrison Tinner's residence at Merrifield. This group

was not in favor of a site in Ilda because it was located in a white community (Fairfax County Board of Education, February 27, 1951).

During lunch break of the June, 1951 meeting, the board visited the site of the Ashby Graham property, then directed the superintendent to advise Graham of the Board's interest in acquiring approximately twenty-five acres of his land for a Negro high school site and school bus maintenance shop (Fairfax County Board of Education, June 27, 1951). Graham and his family then visited the superintendent and expressed much opposition to the Board's proposal and explained how they planned to develop their property. The Board decided that the Graham property was not the most suitable in view of Graham's plan for development and the lack of sewer facilities (Fairfax County Board of Education, July 3, 1951).

The board then concentrated on obtaining the fifteen acre site owned by Ottomarius Enid Stone Faison across the road from Harrison Tinner's residence at Merrifield (Fairfax County Board of Education, July 19, 1951). The board adopted the following resolution on purchasing the Stone property:

> WHEREAS, this Board has selected a fifteen acre tract on Gallows Road in the vicinity of Merrifield.

> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this Board have surveyed and proceed to offer $8,000.00 for an approximately fifteen acre tract owned by Ottomarious Enid Stone Faison through her agents, Guy Tinner and Ollie W. Tinner, and
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Board agree to the terms of sale of $800.00 payment on signing of the contract of sale, the balance of $7200.00 to be paid upon delivery of the deed upon approval of the Circuit Court of Fairfax County, the cost of the survey to be paid by the School Board, and
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the School Board attorney be requested to examine this title and should it be found clear to request the approval of Court and should the Court approve that the transaction be consummated immediately, the Chairman and Clerk being hereby authorized to execute warrants on the School Bond Fund in the amounts and at the times as requested by the Board's attorney. Mr. Cockrell moved the adoption of the foregoing resolution. This motion was seconded by Mr. Shands and carried (Fairfax County Board of Education, July 19, 1951).

Mrs. Faison did not respond through her agents, Guy and Ollie W. Tinner, so the school board acted to acquire this site by condemnation through the following resolution:

> WHEREAS, this the Fairfax County School Board in session July 19, 1951 adopted a resolution directing that this Board offer Mrs. Ottomarious Enid Stone Faison $8,000.00 for a tract of approximately 15 acres of land at Merrifield which had been selected by this Board as a site for a high school for Negroes, and
>
> WHEREAS, this offer had been transmitted through Mrs. Faison's agents, Guy Tinner and Ollie W. Tinner, and

> WHEREAS, Mrs. Faison has not expressed her willingness to sell this land to the School Board.
>
> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this, the Fairfax County School Board instruct its attorney to examine title to this property and should it be found possible to secure clear title to undertake to secure approval of Court for its acquisition and should this approval be granted to proceed through condemnation to acquire title in the name of the School Board as soon as possible, and
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chairman and Clerk of this Board be authorized to execute warrants on the School Bond Fund in behalf of the Fairfax County School Board in payment for this property or costs in connection with its acquisition as may be requested by the Board's attorney. Mr. Haight moved the adoption of the foregoing resolution. This motion was seconded by Mr. Shands and carried (Fairfax County Board of Education, July 19, 1951).

School board attorney John C. Wood delivered the deed to 14.415 acres of land from Ottomarious Enid Stone Faison on November 6, 1951, to be used for construction of the colored high school at Merrifield. The deed was recorded in Deed Book No. 910, page 261 (Fairfax County Board of Education, November 6, 1951, p. 498).

Construction of School

The citizens of Fairfax County voted yes on a bond issue May 31, 1950 which included financing of a building program, Project No. VA-52-C-3N, the Merrifield colored high

school, in addition to county bond funding by the United States Office of Education for this project (Fairfax County Board of Education, August 21, 1952).

As early as October, 1951, the Fairfax County Board of Education saw the need to move swiftly with the building of black schools and took the following action at its regular meeting:

> Mr. Middleton expressed the opinion that construction of the proposed Negro schools should be hastened. Mr. Cockrell moved that Mr. Earl B. Bailey be selected as architect and requested to proceed with preparation of plans for the Negro high school to be constructed on the site recently purchased at Merrifield. This motion was seconded by Middleton and carried. (Fairfax County Board of Education, October 2, 1951)

The Board called a special meeting December 18, 1952 to accept bids on the new school. The following information was recorded:

> Mr. Earl Bailey, Architect, was present for the opening of bids on the construction of the new Merrifield Colored School. The following bids were received:
>
> Eugene Simpson & Brother, Alexandria, Virginia
>
> E.L. Daniels, Arlington, Virginia
>
> J. W. Daniel & Company, Inc.
>
> The Board accepted the bid of Eugene Simpson & Brothers.

Base bid	778,835.00
Cafeteria	106,703.00
Aluminum windows	1,228.00
Total	$887,066.00

Subject to approval by appropriate federal agencies.

Seconded by Mr. Buckley and carried. (Fairfax County Board of Education December 18, 1952, 8th Meeting, p. 351)

The Board authorized Eugene Simpson and Brother, the builder, to begin clearing the property on the Merrifield colored high school site without waiting for a contract to be signed. This agreement was on condition that if the federal government failed to approve this contract. Simpson would be reimbursed for his work (Fairfax County Board of Education, December 18, 1952).

At a special meeting on January 15, 1953, the Board voted to revise its contract with Eugene Simpson and Brother by accepting Simpson's alternate bid. Addition of an elementary wing had required a revised estimate. The following resolution was submitted to the United States Office of Education of the Federal Security Agency concerning a revised estimate on costs:

> WHEREAS, the Merrifield High School, Project No. Va-52-C-3N, was set forth in the building program to be financed through the sale of bonds and which bond issue was duly passed by a vote of the qualified voters of Fairfax County, Virginia on May 31, 1950; and

WHEREAS, it was later determined that the County School Board of Fairfax County, Virginia, was Public Law No. 815 in the amount of $570,000.00 to assist with the construction of this school plant; and

WHEREAS, the County School Board on December 18, 1952, received bids for the construction of this plan and accepted the base bid together with Alternates 3 and 5 submitted by Eugene Simpson and Brother totalling $887,066.00 on that date, leaving for further consideration by the Board the acceptance of Alternate 2, this being the Elementary Wing planned also in connection with this plant; and

WHEREAS, on January 6, 1953 the County School Board after further consideration accepted the bid of Alternate No. 2 submitted by Eugene Simpson and Brother on this project totaling $94,292.00 thereby making a total cost for the construction of this school plant of $981,358.00; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Earl B. Bailey was retained as architect for the preparation of plans and supervision of this construction at the rate of five percent (5%) of the total cost of construction, making an approximate cost of $50,000.00 for architect's fees; and

WHEREAS, it is deemed advisable to include in the estimate of cost on this plant an item of $20,000.00 for contingencies, it would appear, therefore, that the total estimated cost of this construction would be $1,050,000.00, including architect's fees, and it is understood to be advisable to file such a revision of the estimated cost with the U.S. Office of Education of the Federal Security Agency.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the County School Board of Fairfax County, Virginia, hereby instructs W.T. Woodson, the Board's authorized representative, to file a revised estimate of cost of the Merrifield High

School with the Office of Education as follows:

Plan preparation	37,500.00
Construction	1,000,000.00
Supervision of construction	12,500.00
Total	$1,050,000.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County School Board hereby assures the U.S. Office of Education that the difference of $480,000.00 between the total estimated cost of this project and the amount of Federal Aid approved; therefore is hereby reserved for the completion of this project as outlined in the revised application, such local funds to be placed in the special fund established in the accounts of the Director of Finance of Fairfax County if and when such local funds are needed during the course of construction (Fairfax County Board of Education Meeting, January 15, 1953).

The contract time awarded Eugene Simpson and Brother Contractors was extended by fifty-seven days due to unavoidable delays in deliveries of steel, glazed tile and a lather's strike. This action was subject to the approval of the Federal Housing Agency (Fairfax County Board of Education, July 6, 1954).

At this same board meeting the Board approved the purchase of 1,000 portable steel bleacher seats for installation at Annandale High School and 500 at Luther P. Jackson. These were estimated at a cost of $5.10 each payable from bond issue funds (Fairfax County Board of Education, July 6, 1954, p. 339).

The Board showed that it was interested in quality over expense in at least one situation. The Flowers School Equipment Company presented the lowest bid of $14.41 per unit on lockers for the corridors and gymnasium. The school board decided to accept the higher bid of $14.72 per unit by the J. H. Pence Company since the Medart locker by the Flowers Company had proven unsatisfactory in the past (Fairfax County Board of Education, January 5, 1954).

The Board recessed for lunch at the Floris School at 12:40 p.m. on June 1, 1954 and went to the Luther P. Jackson High School for an inspection of the building. All board members had only favorable comments on the school (June 1, 1954, p. 301).

The Fairfax County Board of Education accepted and approved the Luther P. Jackson High School from the builder on September 7, 1954 by the following action taken at its regular meeting:

> WHEREAS, the Fairfax County Board entered into an agreement with Eugene Simpson and Brother on January 6, 1953, for the construction of the Merrifield High School; and
>
> WHEREAS, this building has been inspected by the representatives of this Board and is reported to be built in accordance with the agreement, specifications, and plans therefore.
>
> BE IT RESOLVED that the County School Board of Fairfax County, Virginia, hereby approves and accepts this construction and waives all

> liquidated damages for incompletion of project by date specified in contract having received satisfactory evidence for such delay; and
>
> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board instructs W.T. Woodson, Division Superintendent, its previously appointed authorized representative, to make all necessary final reports to the Federal Government in connection with the Federal grant received on the construction and send certified copies of this resolution to the proper agencies.
>
> Mr. Dorr moved adoption of resolution.
>
> Seconded by Mrs. Crowther and carried. (Fairfax County Board of Education, September 7, 1954, p. 395). (See Appendix C.)

Naming of Luther Porter Jackson High School

Fairfax County School Board minutes confirm that the black community was consulted in selecting the name for the new black high school. According to J. Sydney Holland, the Fairfax County Colored Citizens, which acted as a consultant to the Fairfax County Board of Education, suggested the name of Luther Porter Jackson as the name of the new Merrifield high school for colored (Holland, 1992). On behalf of the Fairfax Federation of Colored Parent-Teacher Associations, Mrs. Virginia M. Harris submitted the following suggestions for the naming of the school; Merrifield High School, Liberty High School and Luther P. Jackson High School (Fairfax County Board of Education, June 2, 1953).

A community representative, Mrs. Krum, presented letters and testimonials in a petition to name the school the William A. West High School. Dr. E. B. Henderson also submitted a letter favoring the name William A. West, a well-known Fairfax County civic worker, for the high school. The School Board responded that it was a policy of the Board that no school be named for a living person and that the Board wished the opinions of a more representative group of the colored people be considered before any definite decision could be reached in the naming of the school (Fairfax County School Board, July 7, 1953).

At a later school board meeting, Virginia M. Harris also submitted a historical sketch of the life of Luther P. Jackson (Fairfax County School Board, December 1, 1953). In an act of unity with other black citizens of Fairfax County, William A. West sent notice to the School Board that he heartily endorsed the name Luther P. Jackson for the colored high school (Fairfax County School Board, January 5, 1954).

Background of Luther Porter Jackson

Luther Porter Jackson was Professor of History at Virginia State College from 1922 until his death in 1950. He was born July 11, 1892 in Lexington, Kentucky. His father, Edward Jackson, was a dairyman. His mother, Delilah Culverson Jackson, was one of the earliest school teachers

of Kentucky. He finished elementary and high school in the public school in his hometown and the Chandler Normal School, an institution sponsored by the American Missionary Association at Lexington. At the Chandler School, there were white teachers from the North who had been willing to come south and teach black boys and girls (The Negro History Bulletin, Nov. 1942). Following the completion of high school, he entered Fisk University earning Bachelor of Arts and Masters degrees. Later he attended Columbia University where he received a Master's degree with a major in history. He was awarded the Ph.D. degree from the University of Chicago. (See Appendix D).

His publications include Negro Office Holders In Virginia, History of Virginia State Teacher's Association, and Free Negro Labor and Property Holder in Virginia. He was a promoter of political, civil and human rights for all people regardless of race. Much of his time was given freely to encouraging active citizenship among people of his race throughout the State of Virginia. He was the first president of the Negro Voter's League in the city of Petersburg.

Dr. Jackson served as principal of the secondary training school on the campus of Virginia State College. He directed a community choir in the city of Petersburg.

Dr. Jackson married Johnella Frazier who was a teacher of music at Virginia State College upon his arrival. They had four children: Luther Porter Jackson, special writer with IBM, formerly feature writer with the Newark Evening News and The Washington Post; Edward Frazier Jackson, teacher, Passaic, New Jersey; John Tavis Jackson, flutist, Metropolitan Opera and private teacher of the flute; and, a daughter, Laura Frances Fulcher, an accomplished pianist.

Before coming to Virginia State, Dr. Jackson taught at a boarding school in Topeka, Kansas and at Voorhee's College in Denmark, South Carolina.

Other schools named for Dr. Jackson are: Luther P. Jackson School, Dendron, Virginia and Luther P. Jackson School in Cumberland, Virginia (J. Sydney Holland, Personal Papers, 1992).

Principal Selection Process

The Fairfax County School Board proposed the appointment of Taylor Williams as principal of Luther P. Jackson High School at a special school board meeting on December 10, 1953. (See Appendix E.) This proposal was offered with the provision that Williams obtain his Master's Degree. Action on Williams' appointment was postponed until some board members had an opportunity to get a better sense of the community affected by the appointment (Fairfax County

School Board Meeting, December 10, 1953). On January 19, 1954, the Board appointed Williams, who was then principal at James Lee Elementary School, principal of Luther P. Jackson High School. The appointment was to become effective when the new school building was ready for occupancy, or earlier at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools (Fairfax County School Board Meeting, January 19, 1954).

Taylor Moses Williams: The First Principal

> Taylor Williams was the man in charge. He was Mr. Williams who knew what to do. Everybody knew who he was. He had a deep, bass voice that demanded respect. He established rapport with the parents and was a community confidant. (Jones, 1992)

These were the reminiscences of Paul Jones who knew Williams first when Williams was his principal at James Lee Elementary School and later when Williams was principal at Luther P. Jackson High School. Williams emerges as a driving force in the establishment of Luther P. Jackson High School even in the initial stages. According to George James, who was a personal friend of Williams, "Taylor was a consultant with the Luther P. Jackson High School early community leaders, including Rev. Milton Sheppard, Rev. Roger D. Bush, Rev. Wallace E. Costner, and J. Sydney Holland in pushing for the school. This work was done out of the view of the public because during this era, people

who worked for the school system were not vocal on school issues" (James, 1992).

J. Sydney Holland, one of the early community leaders, acknowledged this close association and noted that the Fairfax County Colored Citizens Committee recommended Taylor Williams to the school board for the first principal (Holland, 1992).

Rogia Teal Braxton refers to Williams as "like a surrogate father. He was a kind, understanding person who knew the ins and outs of everything" (Braxton, 1992). Her husband, Nathaniel Braxton recalls that "Taylor Williams had rapport with all students. There was not a student who didn't like him. I remember his dog, Duke, a sort of school mascot who would catch kids" (Braxton, 1992).

Background of Taylor Moses Williams

Taylor Moses Williams was born in Carlyle, Pennsylvania in 1917. The family moved to Millwood, Virginia. W. T. B. Williams, Taylor's uncle, who was a professor at Tuskegee Institute, took Taylor to live with him at an early age. Taylor fulfilled his promise to his uncle to return and do something for Millwood by later becoming principal at Johnson and Williams High School (Carter, 1992).

Taylor Williams graduated from Tuskegee Institute with a Bachelor of Science degree in 1940. He also graduated

from the Shieff Executive School, Mendon, New Jersey in 1942. A versatile man, Taylor Williams had several professions. He was involved in a managerial position with Boy Scouts of America and served as principal of Johnson and Williams High School in Clarke County, Virginia, which was named for his descendant W. T. B. Williams, a professor with Tuskegee Institute. He also managed theaters in Washington, D.C. before beginning his illustrious career in Fairfax County Public Schools. Taylor Williams married Helen Harper who he met while at Tuskegee Institute. They had two sons, Paul Harper Williams and Taylor Alexander Williams (Carter, 1992).

Williams came to Fairfax County in 1950 as a teacher/principal at the all-black James Lee Elementary School. He became principal of Luther P. Jackson High School when it opened in 1954. He was instrumental in the smooth desegregation of the school system. He served as principal of Luther P. Jackson until his appointment as principal of Madison High School in 1970, a position he left after one year to become the first area superintendent of Area I. Williams remained Area I Superintendent until his 1975 retirement which was prompted by health problems (Office of Community Relations, 1989).

Williams' lifetime of involvement with young people did not end with his retirement in 1975 after a 33-year career

in education, 25 of them with Fairfax County Public Schools. He remained active in both the segregated and nonsegregated educational organizations, including the National Education Association, the Virginia Teacher's Association, the American Teacher's Association, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. He also was a member of the Northern Virginia Family Service Board of Directors, the Board of Directors of the YMCA, and Alpha Phi Alpha and Alpha Phi Omega Fraternities. His life was dedicated to youth, education, and community service (Office of Community Relations, 1989).

Williams became the 1981 recipient of "excellential gratia," the highest commendation given by the Fairfax County School Board (Luther P. Jackson Archives). At this Fairfax County School Board Award Ceremony, Williams said, "the thing that kept me going was dedication. You have to be loyal and dedicated. Fairfax County has one of the best school systems in the country. Loyalty and dedication are what made it that way" (The Reston Times, April 12, 1981).

On desegregation, Williams said, "Morale in the school was very high. I didn't think there would be any problems, but then, I'm color blind" (The Reston Times, April 12, 1981). On the students, he said, "What I missed more than anything when becoming superintendent was daily contact with the students. Getting to work with the kids directly. When

you work with kids, every day is different" (The Reston Times, April 12, 1981).

Selection of Staff

Taylor Williams, principal of Luther P. Jackson High School, assembled one of the most highly qualified, dedicated and effective teaching staffs available in that era. Students and staff members vividly recall the faculty as "tremendously qualified, cream of the crop. Most had their Master's degrees. Teachers pushed and demanded the best and took no excuses" (Jones, 1992). "We had excellent teachers. Each teacher was a good role model for us" (Johnson, 1992). "Taylor started working on choosing staff members in February or March, 1954. He handpicked his staff, interviewed each one and then called personnel to sign them up. From this select faculty, Taylor Williams probably had more staff members to later become administrators than any other school in the county" (James, 1992). W. Harold Ford, who served as Assistant Superintendent for Instruction during this period, recalls the distinguished faculty: "One reason Luther P. Jackson High School was considered a good school was its choice faculty. It drew the best people from Manassas, within the county and even from Washington, D.C. Probably more than an average number of teachers had their Master's degree. They

may have thought higher degrees added to their employment potential" (Ford, 1992).

The high credentials and experience of the selected staff attest to the standards Taylor Williams used in selecting his faculty. Williams hired three teachers from Manassas Regional High School: Dorothy H. Hall, B.S., Virginia State College, M.A., University of Pennsylvania in Home Economics; Donald L. Witten, B.A., Bluefield State College, M.A., University of Pennsylvania in Physical Education; and, Richard Jackson in Industrial Arts. Several teachers who were already employed by the Fairfax County School System were selected. Margery Robinson, B.A., Virginia Union College, M.A., New York University, who had taught on the staff at James Lee Elementary School with Williams was selected as visiting teacher. Cecil Robinson, Principal of Merrifield Elementary School, B.A., Virginia State College, M.A., New York University, was brought from Merrifield Elementary School, which closed at the end of the 1953-1954 school term, to serve as head of grades one through seven. Lutie Coates, B.S., Virginia State, M. A., New York University, was hired in mathematics and Harold L. Lawson, B.S., M.A. was hired as a social studies teacher. Other teachers selected to work with Robinson on the elementary level were: Margaret Murrell from James Lee Elementary School; Sylvia Alexander, B.A. from Eleven Oaks

Elementary School; and Arthenia Trail, B.S., M.A., from James Lee Elementary School (Cecil Robinson, 1992). Claudia Hammond, who had just moved to the Washington, D.C. area with her husband on his military assignment remembers being interviewed by Taylor Williams during the summer while the school was being readied for opening. She was hired as Guidance Director (Hammond, 1992). Johnny J. Smith was hired as physical education teacher and head basketball coach. Smith was replaced by George Felton in November, 1954 (Felton, 1992). Dean Harris, who had worked in Berryville under Taylor Williams was recruited and hired as a science teacher and later became the renown choir director (Harris, 1992). Carrie James was hired as a physical education teacher and head girls basketball coach. Also hired were Troy R. Bartlett as band instructor; Gwendolyn Fauntroy, B.S. in French; Mabel R. Jolly, B.A. as librarian; Mildred R. Martin, B.S., typing and art; Lucille E. Murray, B.S., M.S. in general science and chemistry; Lorraine G. Simms, B.A. in English; Tempie Vest, B.S., Shaw University as eighth grade teacher; Beatrice Harrington, B.A., M.Ed., M.A. in mathematics; Dorothy K. Mullings, B.A., M.A. in Spanish. Annie Fortune, B.S., M.S., Virginia State College, in typing and art, and, Harriet Hemby, B.A., Bennett College in English and sponsor of the Dramatics Club (The Tiger, 1955). Completing the school staff were Robert Tate, B.S.,

M.S., Virginia State College, who was hired as assistant principal; Jean E. Minor, B.S., West Virginia State College, who was appointed as secretary and remained at the school until her retirement; Clarence Jones and Mrs. Etta Richards who were appointed custodians (Fairfax County Board of Education, September 7, 1954).

Summary

The movement for a black high school in Fairfax County heightened as parents and the community became more disillusioned with the disregard given to their educational situation. The transportation and subsidies paid to Manassas Regional High School for Fairfax County black secondary students became unacceptable. Travel time was too long. Students were not attending school inside their county. Not unlike the Civil Rights Movement of the Sixties, this movement gained force in the black churches. Meetings held at various local black churches were filled to capacity. Organizations such as the Fairfax Countywide Colored Citizens Association, working alongside the NAACP, led the community effort for building the school. Outstanding leaders from this movement, including Rev. Wallace E. Costner, Rev. Roger D. Bush, Rev. Milton Sheppard, Rev. Wilson and J. Sydney Holland are often referred to reverently as the founders of Luther P. Jackson

High School. The community was involved throughout the various stages in building the school from organizing the building movement, suggesting a site, naming the school to recommending the principal.

The school was appropriately named for Dr. Luther Porter Jackson, a black professor of history at Virginia State University, who was well known to black Virginians for his efforts to encourage black voters. Taylor Moses Williams, selected as the first principal, emerged as the centrifugal force with the select faculty he chose for the school. This highly respected faculty started the decade of existence of a school that was well appreciated and considered very important to the community.

CHAPTER IV

OPERATION OF LUTHER P. JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL

Major Goals

The idea of patriotism, good citizenship and the democratic concept is reflected in the philosophy and objectives of Luther P. Jackson High School. These guiding principles were stated by the faculty and students in the first Luther P. Jackson High School Handbook.

> We believe that our democracy is dependent upon the fullest development of each individual to his capacity, thus it becomes mandatory that as our first duty, we face the responsibility of helping pupils to develop such fundamental concepts as will lead to a successful life in this democracy.
>
> We believe the curriculum should meet the needs of the child spiritually, emotionally, physically, mentally and socially. Recognizing the importance of the total environment of the child in this curriculum, we believe the child should be inspired to assume his responsibility as a member of a changing society.
>
> We believe that it is our responsibility to promote our pupil's understanding of himself, his man-to-man relationships and man to nature relationships.
>
> We believe that the school should develop on the part of pupils both directly and indirectly a national and international understanding.
>
> We believe that the basic objective of education is not only to pass on the

heritage but to make a worthy contribution to that heritage.

OBJECTIVES SET FORTH IN SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY

1. To develop each individual to his fullest capacity.

2. To develop fundamental concepts.

3. To meet the needs of every child:
   a. Spiritually
   b. Emotionally
   c. Physically
   d. Mentally
   e. Socially

4. To inspire every child to assume his responsibility.

5. To promote our pupils understanding of:
   a. Himself
   b. His man to man relationships
   c. His man to nature relationships

6. To develop on the part of pupils a national and international understanding. (Luther P. Jackson High School Handbook, 1958)

Opening of School

Luther Porter Jackson High School opened on Wednesday, September 1, 1954 with only blurbs in the local news coverage. The Sun Echo reported "All except two of Fairfax County's 42 elementary schools are expected to be over capacity when the county's 48 schools open next Wednesday, September 1. Only Eleven Oaks and Luther P. Jackson, both for Negro pupils, are to be below capacity. Wednesday will

be the opening of three new schools for the county: Sleepy Hollow Elementary, Annandale High, and Luther P. Jackson, the county's first high school for Negro pupils. One wing of the Luther P. Jackson building will be used as an elementary school" (The Sun Echo, August 27, 1954). The enrollment was given for Fairfax, Falls Church, Herndon and Mount Vernon but no figure was given for Luther P. Jackson.

The Washington Post and The Times Herald ran a small section on Luther P. Jackson in its article entitled "Relief for Fairfax Is in Sight." "New schools available for the term are the Annandale High School, the Luther P. Jackson High School, and the Sleepy Hollow Elementary School. The 14-room Luther P. Jackson School at Merrifield is the county's first high school for Negroes, who in past years have either been required to travel by bus to a regional high school at Manassas or attend Washington schools at their own expense" (The Washington Post and The Times Herald, August 29, 1954).

The Alexandria Gazette ran a short coverage of Luther P. Jackson in its article on Fairfax County's high enrollment of 28,700 students. "Three new schools opened today: Sleepy Hollow Elementary, Annandale High and Luther P. Jackson. The latter is the county's first Negro high school. Of these, it is estimated Sleepy Hollow enrolled 600 pupils, Annandale High, 1,000 and Luther P. Jackson,

which has an elementary school wing, a total of 568" (The Alexandria Gazette, September 1, 1954). The Alexandria Gazette also ran a large front page article the following day on the opening of Annandale High School "$1.4 Million High School Opened." This article was printed with large pictures of the new school and the principal, Ralph E. Buckley. A short statement on Luther P. Jackson was included on page 16 toward the end of the article. "The new school is the sixth high school in the county. Others are: Fairfax, Falls Church, Herndon, Mount Vernon High Schools and the Luther P. Jackson High School for Negroes, which is also opening for the first time this year" (The Alexandria Gazette, September 2, 1954).

Regardless of the insignificant status given Luther P. Jackson in local news coverage, the community, students and Luther P. Jackson staff were overjoyed with their new school. Lillian Blackwell, a parent and active community worker recalled that her oldest son attended Manassas Regional High School and then went to Luther P. Jackson when it opened. "We were so glad to have a school. If there were any weaknesses in the school, we didn't notice them" (Blackwell, 1993). Mary Payne Sultan remembers the first day:

> We went into the auditorium for orientation and room assignments. Taylor Williams gave a speech and

> introduced teachers. Seniors had a front center section. That was exciting. Williams said we were making history today. We felt proud. It was like God's gift to the black people of Fairfax. (Sultan, 1992)

Paul Jones, another former student also remembers the excitement of the first school opening. "The parents got to see it before opening day. This was our first new structure except for James Lee Elementary School. This was something we respected, revered and appreciated. The school was a source of pride for everyone" (Paul Jones, 1992).

Dedication of School

Although the Luther P. Jackson High School building had been in use since September 1, 1954, the building was formally dedicated on Sunday afternoon, April 17, 1955 in the school auditorium. At this time, the building was described as a modern rambler type school located on a Gallows Road. The building had 113 rooms and was constructed at a cost of $1,500,000. The enrollment was 712 students (Afro-American, May 3, 1955, p. 9).

Principal speakers for the occasion were C. N. Bennett, Principal, Manassas Regional High School; Richard E. Shands, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Education; W. T. Woodson, Superintendent of Schools, and Dr. A. G. Richardson,

Associate Supervisor, Elementary and Secondary Education, State of Virginia, who was the key speaker.

Other platform guests included Reverend Milton Sheppard, Robert A. Tate, Cecil Robinson, Emma O. Moore, and Reverend Wallace Costner and J. Sydney Holland of the Countywide Colored Citizen Association (The Jackson Tattler, 1955). Holland thanked the people of Fairfax County for their role in building the school (Holland, 1992).

Harry Taylor, president of the Student Council gave a biographical sketch of Dr. Luther P. Jackson, for whom the school was named.

Mrs. Johnella Jackson, widow of Dr. Luther P. Jackson, presented Dr. Jackson's portrait to the principal, Taylor M. Williams. This was the most touching moment of the service. Dr. Jackson's children also were in attendance.

Music was provided by the Luther P. Jackson High School choir and band under the direction of Dean C. Harris and Troy Bartlett. Featured student soloists were Katherine Terry and Elizabeth Lockett.

Following the service, the audience greeted platform guest and friends at a reception in the cafeteria (The Jackson Tattler, 1955).

In the main dedication address, Dr. A. G. Richardson, Associate Supervisor of Elementary and Secondary Education for the State of Virginia told the audience that "public

school education is the handmaiden of freedom. One serves the other. Neither goes forward by itself" (The Jackson Tattler, 1955).

Richardson declared that the responsibility of developing citizens who should carry such concepts of freedom into action, rests with the free public school system and should not be surrendered to private or special group interests.

As an example, Dr. Richardson stated that the force of public school education is more powerful than the hydrogen bomb. If we are to escape from ignorance, hunger, crime and hatred of man by man; then we will not only maintain the force of public education among the masses of our people in Virginia, but we will extend it to the masses of the people all over America and throughout the world.

As his talk progressed, Richardson suggested that it is time for us to put away self pity, to acknowledge that we have gone through and are still going through severe ordeals, but their meaning for us depends upon our attitude toward them.

Richardson explained that we stand on the threshold of a magnificent period in our lives. Today, more than ever before, men are striving and reaching for freedom. During the last 300 years, this nation has developed a new force

which will set us free. This force is universal public education.

In his closing speech, Richardson said, "No matter how bewildered and confused the times in which we live may be, with public schools like this one, all of the lights of intelligence cannot possibly go out. And now we beseech our God to open our hearts that we might see, open our ears that we might hear, open our mouths that we might speak, open our minds and give us wisdom that all men may live in peace and justice, liberty and freedom for all. To this end, today we dedicate this beautiful building" (The Jackson Tattler, Vol. I, No. 2).

Taylor Williams, the principal, gave the following appreciative address:

> "No person was ever honored for what he received.
> Honor was the reward for what he gave.
> Great has been your effort
> Greatness is your reward."
>
> Today we are dedicating a building which stands as a monument and expression of the American Idea. Throughout this country citizens are developing communities in which men may have pride, grateful for the priceless privileges which he has dedicated himself in a spirit of humility to those responsibilities.
>
> In dedicating this building the message that comes first from our hearts to yours is a great hope for the future of our Institution. This service means more to us than a mere beautiful

> ceremony. It is an assimilation of your endeavor, your community service, your sacrifice and your vision. You have given abundantly to the youth of this community through service, interest, sacrifice and patriotism. This building would not have been dedicated today if it were not for your cooperation, the spirit of appreciation and the hope for the future generation. (The Jackson Tattler, 1955)

Students and Activities

Luther P. Jackson High School students experienced a special bonding because it was a county-wide school for all black students. Regardless of the section that a black high school student lived, he was assigned and bussed to Luther P. Jackson High School. Claudia Hammond remembers that "There were pockets where blacks lived. Some areas were better than others. These areas included Centreville, Springfield, Mt. Vernon, Ft. Belvoir, McLean/Chesterbrook, Falls Church, Fairfax" (Hammond, 1992).

Rogia Teal Braxton, who lived in the Centreville, Chantilly, Herndon, Bull Run bus pickup area, remembers the experience at Luther P. Jackson as an extended family. "Everybody cared. There were no fights in the halls. No graffiti. We did not deface the property. Students respected teachers. We didn't have students being expelled. When you graduated you could fill out applications. You could also read and write. We had a bank in the school that

was run by the students" (Braxton, 1992). Nathanial Braxton, who lived in the Gum Springs area drove the bus and picked up students in the Belvoir, Gunston area. "We went twenty-five miles one way to get a separate but equal education at Luther P. Jackson High School in Merrifield (Braxton, 1992).

Jean Minor described the camaraderie of the students as "It was like a neighborhood school that took in the county. Students from Gum Springs, Herndon, Centreville, McLean, Bailey's Crossroads, and Fairfax came. Some students who had a Manassas mailing address, but lived in Fairfax County came. Black students living in the city limits of Falls Church came through subsidies paid by Falls Church. Black students living at Ft. Belvoir military base also attended Luther P. Jackson through subsidization of the federal government" (Minor, 1992).

Mary Payne Sultan remembers the commitment, drive to excel, and the pride that came from the family type atmosphere. "We were like a family. Close. There was a lot of compassion. We tried to make the school special. It was a gift to us. We were proud to be there. We did everything to give it a good name. We tried to make everyone proud of us. We wanted to outdo ourselves in everything we did. To work a little extra harder. Therefore we came in first in many areas. The first time we were in a choir competition

we came in first. We had a good music department, good science department, great vocational courses including shop classes by Jackson, mechanical drawing, auto body shop, and cosmetology. In her home economics courses, Mrs. Dorothy Hall taught etiquette, table manners and poise" (Sultan, 1992).

Dean Harris, who was a science teacher and choir director remembers the competitive spirit and expectations of Taylor Williams concerning activities. "Taylor Williams expected you to bring first prize for any competition you entered. If your group came back with anything less than first place, he would jokingly ask you where you were going to teach next year" (Harris, 1992).

W. Harold Ford, who as Assistant Superintendent of Instruction during this period, remembers the pride that Taylor Williams had in showcasing the school and the positive feelings that permeated the building. "Taylor often had things he wanted you to see. The school was conveniently located, so you could easily go to see a band concert, choir or some school activity that Taylor wanted you to see. Here was a school, long needed. People responded in the most positive way. It was an attractive building. The school filled a need but the people came together and worked so well. When you walked in you saw the shining halls. What was going on was what was supposed to

be happening. I don't know if he had to suspend students. I never saw better support of education" (Ford, 1992).

The closeness and family feelings that were developed during these years of operation still exist today. Mabel Mosby commented, "The students were eager to learn and proud of their school. The faculty was very dedicated. To this day, we have a family feeling toward everyone who was there" (Mosby, 1992).

Guidance Services

The state Superintendent's Report for 1946-1947 stated that "beginning with the 1949-1950 school term, all Virginia high schools must have a satisfactory program of guidance in order to be accredited" (Virginia State Board of Education Bulletin, 1947).

Luther P. Jackson High School opened with guidance services in operation. Claudia Hammond, Guidance Director, remembers that she worked closely with the Guidance Director at Herndon High School. "Everything that Herndon had, we had. We had similar, small student populations. About half of our students went to college. We had academic and vocational programs" (Hammond, 1993).

The student yearbook of 1965 summarizes the focus of guidance services:

> The student's ability to learn depends on his adjustment to school and society, and his general physical and mental well being. The student who has the best opportunity for learning, is one who is provided with more than textbooks and teachers.
>
> Guidance is the non-instructional school service which helps the student solve problems and assists him in making good educational and vocational choices. In addition, the Guidance Department offers the student an opportunity to direct himself realistically and to understand himself in relation to the obligations and requirements of a democratic society. (The Tiger, 1965)

Science and Mathematics

The science and math departments were considered strong areas of the school. Loretta Berry recalls that Taylor Williams would seek assistance from the parents who had careers with strong backgrounds in science or math to assist the students in the science fairs. The science fairs were big productions with strong student participation (Berry, 1992).

Taylor Williams filed a report in the school archives of the awards received by Luther P. Jackson at the 1959 12th Annual Science Mathematics Congress of Virginia Conference of Science and Mathematics Teachers, which was a division of the Virginia Teachers Association. This Congress was held at St. Paul's College, Lawrenceville, Virginia. Manuelita

Morris won $800 for her project, "The Transistor". Benjamin Hall received honorable mention for his project, "The Electrolysis of Water" which made him an alternate for a scholarship. One student placed third in the mathematics demonstration and another received third place in the Physics Quiz Section which consisted of written and oral tests (Luther P. Jackson Archives, 1959).

Music Department

The Music Department of Luther P. Jackson was a source of pride to the school. This choir under the direction of Dean Harris always took top honors in the District and State choral competitions (Harris, 1992).

Taylor Williams included a handwritten note in the school files concerning the performance of the choir and band for 1959.

> The Luther P. Jackson Choir at its annual Northern Region Choir Festival received a one rating (superior). Fourteen high schools participated in this festival. The choir rendered two selections, 'All In the April' by Robertson and 'Listen to the Lambs' by Dett. The Northern Region Instrumental Music Festival was held at Luther P. Jackson High School, Merrifield, Virginia on March 14, 1959. Ten high schools participated in this festival. The Luther P. Jackson Band received a one rating (superior) for the second consecutive year. Selections played by the band were 'Prelude in C# minor' by Rachmanenoff and 'Waltzing Winds' by

> Osterling. (Luther P. Jackson Archives, 1959)
>
> The band set the pace for many activities throughout the school. Under the direction of Robert Griffin, the band appeared extensively throughout the metropolitan area adding color to parades and assemblies. (The Tiger, 1960)

Sports Activities

George Felton had just gotten out of the Army when he joined the staff at Luther P. Jackson High School as the new civics and physical education teacher. Taylor Williams recommended Felton, whose wife Jean, had worked with Williams at James Lee Elementary School. Felton started on November 8, 1954 and went on to build a respected sports program coaching basketball, football, and baseball. He was joined by Charles Price five years later. Price combined his coaching talents with Felton, Eugene Skinner, Major Wells and Dean Harris to produce competitive teams in major sports against all black school teams in Virginia, the District of Columbia and surrounding areas (Felton, 1992).

For the first time in the history of the school, the football team of 1964-1965 won the District Title beating their arch rival, Parker Gray High School of Alexandria, Virginia 13-0. This team went on to win the title of co-champions at the state level with East Suffolk County. The

title co-champions was determined by a new rating system used for high schools. Four juniors on this final Luther B. Jackson football team were named to All-Metropolitan Squad status (The Tiger, 1965).

The basketball team finished the season with an overall record of 20-1 and a 13-1 league record to claim the title of District Champions. The only loss was to rival team Parker Gray High School of Alexandria, Virginia (The Tiger, 1965).

Teams were fielded in football, baseball, basketball, track and golf. Girls basketball was sponsored under the direction of physical education teachers, Frances Williams and Carrie James (James, 1992).

George Felton remembers travelling to Richmond, Petersburg and other Virginia cities to play teams at night and returning late at night to get up early the next morning for school (Felton, 1992). Jackson played such teams as its arch rival Parker Gray of Alexandria, Virginia, Fairmount Heights in Maryland, Douglas in Leesburg, Manassas, Maggie Walker of Richmond, Virginia. Randolph of Henrico County, and Dunbar of Washington, D.C. (The Tiger, 1960).

Parent-Teacher Association

The Parent-Teacher Association was an important aspect of the school program from the beginning. The same unity

that enabled the parents and community to work harmoniously in building the school continued during the years of operation as a black high school. Loretta Berry remembers the grand scale PTA meetings. The long commute by many teachers as far away as Washington, D.C. was not a problem. "All faculty members attended the meetings. We would stay at school until time for the meetings. We prepared dinner at the school or sent out for food. We entertained ourselves with card playing or other games until time for the meeting. Many of us brought a change of clothes and changed from our school attire to dressier outfits. The meetings were well attended with parents and interested community people" (Berry, 1992).

During the first school year, 1954-1955, the P.T.A. organized and elected Julia Sheppard as president. Following the advice of their leader that "no person should pass up the opportunity to join the P.T.A. because of its benefits to the child," the Membership Committee was successful in its efforts to increase the number of parents participating. Several fundraising projects including a bake sale, Tom Thumb Wedding sponsored by the Merrifield Garden Club, and dinner sales profited enough money to purchase furniture for the teachers' lounge and begin plans for purchasing an organ for the auditorium (The Jackson Tattler, 1955).

Summary

Luther Porter Jackson High School was finally completed and readied for opening on September 1, 1954. The school was given very little news coverage. Instead, it was overshadowed by the coverage of Annandale High School, a new 1.4 million dollar structure being opened on the same day. Noteworthy in the little publicity that Luther P. Jackson received was its status as the first black high school in Fairfax County.

Lack of recognition did not lessen the excitement and pride of the black community, students, parents and staff of Luther P. Jackson. The same spirit and drive that was manifested in the move to build a high school for black high school students continued in expressions to bring awards and honors to their school. Encouraged by their principal, Taylor Moses Williams, and teachers, the Luther P. Jackson High School students, pushed to excel in all areas.

From the beginning year, 1954-1955, Luther P. Jackson was a vibrant school with many activities and organizations. The P.T.A. united the parents through well-attended parent-teacher meetings. By coming from all sections of Fairfax County a family atmosphere existed among the students and staff. Together, everyone was committed to achievement.

CHAPTER V

DEMISE AND TRANSFORMATION OF LUTHER P. JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL

Freedom of Choice School Plan

Even as Luther P. Jackson High School was in the beginning stages of operation, the community was aware of the oncoming desegregation of schools movement and voiced this opinion to the school board. The Women's Club of Franklin Park wrote a letter to the school board which was read at the November Board Meeting. This group urged the school board to consider the appointment of a local committee to study the effect of desegregation on Fairfax County school children. Robinson, school board president, moved that this group be advised that the board was not ready at this time to consider such a request, but would appreciate assistance when ready to do so. At this same meeting, a second letter concerning desegregation was read. This letter was a signed petition by 80 individuals in the county, who urged the board to consider a 'smooth changeover from segregated to non-segregated schools.' This letter was passed around for board members to read (Fairfax County Board of Education November 2, 1954, 16th Meeting).

As a high school for blacks in the county, the population at Luther P. Jackson was heavily impacted when the shift to previous all-white schools began.

According to the Status of Integration Report, since 1959, the Fairfax County School Board had proceeded in a gradual manner to desegregate the county schools. The school board had stated in court proceedings and in public announcements that it intended to establish school attendance areas strictly on a geographical basis with a goal of assigning pupils to the schools nearest their residence (Status of Integration Report, 1965).

The NAACP played a leading role in bringing about desegregation of the school in Fairfax County. As a result of efforts of the county branch, 26 Negro children applied in June 1959 to be admitted the following fall for the first time to schools with all white enrollments. At this time there were five all black elementary schools and Luther P. Jackson was the only black high school. As a result of Virginia's massive resistance policy, which was then in force, the first applications in 1959 were all denied, thus necessitating the institution of a suit in Federal District Court. This case, which was conducted under the direction of the NAACP Education and Legal Defense Fund, was not heard by the court until over a year later. On September 22, 1960, Judge Albert V. Bryan issued a decision ordering the county school board to admit some but not all of the Negro children to the schools for which they had applied (Henderson, 1965).

In 1960-1961, the first year of desegregation in the county, 27 Negro children attended formerly all-white schools. Throughout the period from 1960 to 1965, the county functioned in effect under a freedom of choice arrangement which placed the burden on Negro families to seek transfers for their children to integrated schools. (See Appendix F.) Many administrative technicalities and obstacles were imposed on the Negro families, and in a substantial number of instances, applications for transfers were arbitrarily denied by school authorities (Henderson, 1965).

Lillian Blackwell, parent of the first two black students to attend James Madison High School, remembered the frustrations felt by the black parents. "We had to measure the distance between the schools on our own to make sure the white school was closer. At first we had to transport our children to school at a later time of day on our own. There was such anxiety. I would take my children to the school and then hold my breath all day not knowing what would happen. My children had attended the summer youth camps offered by the Fairfax County Human Relations Committee to learn how to interact in mixed racial groups. Still, you worried about your children trying to adapt. My son and daughter were the only two blacks in James Madison High School. The first day, it seemed as if every policeman in

Fairfax County was at the school. I guess it was for protection but nothing happened" (Blackwell, 1993).

Preston Blackwell, one of the students who transferred from Luther P. Jackson High School to previously all-white Madison High School recalled this period.

> The parents of the black students who transferred to all-white schools were active in the community and belonged to the NAACP. The Barber, Lee and Blackwell families were in the first group to send their children. A lot of people wanted integration but many parents didn't want to put their kids through it. The first year at Madison, my sister and I were the only two black students there. There were more, maybe nine, black students there the second year. Once the first furrow was broken, everybody could plow. (Blackwell, 1992)

Blackwell also talked about his experience and his feelings on going from all-black Luther P. Jackson High School to an all-white school.

> The major difference was that you lost a sense of family and belonging. I had gone to elementary school and partial high school with the students at Luther P. Jackson. I went from a school population of 500 to one of approximately 1500 students. From knowing all of the students to knowing only two or three casually. I never saw a black face at lunch time. My sister was there, but after we got off the bus, that was it. I didn't see her any more during the day. The teachers were handpicked. Some didn't want to teach black students. I went from a family-type situation where everybody looked out for you to being alone. The school board placed you at different times. I

was placed at Madison in October, 1960. Before being transferred, I had played football at Luther P. Jackson, but was not allowed to join the team at Madison. I belonged to the Youth Human Relations Committee and during the winter, we petitioned the school board to participate in activities. As a result I was able to participate in track during the spring. Playing sports made it easier for me than for my sister. Sports became an outlet. The coaches were nice to me and I became a part of the group. I became established in sports. The racial slurs from other teams were there, but kids soon forget there was that much difference. When there were only two of us attending, my sister and me, there was no threat, but the following year, the attitudes changed. They were not as tolerant. It was probably worse each year after that but you insulate yourself with friends. There was an incident where Osbourn High School in Manassas did not want to play Madison because I was on the team. I was injured with a kidney bruise from an earlier game and couldn't play so that solved that issue. The teachers didn't take the same interest in you as the black teachers had. After graduating from high school, my contacts were kept with the Luther P. Jackson coaches. There was a situation with my math classes. At Luther P. Jackson, I was taking two math classes because these two classes were offered every other year. It may have been geometry and calculus. You were put in accelerated courses at Madison. This may have been done because the teachers would accept you or it could have been designed for you to fail. In one of my math classes, there was one other junior. The other math class had all freshman in it. Since I had come in October, they were about 15 lessons ahead of me. I couldn't get caught up. I dropped one

> class and repeated the other class in summer school. (Blackwell, 1993)

In 1962-1963, the number of black students attending all-white schools increased to 214. In 1963-1964 this number doubled, and in the 1964-1965 school year approximately one-third of the county's black children attended integrated schools (Henderson, 1965).

Desegregation of Luther P. Jackson High School

As more Luther P. Jackson students transferred to previous all-white schools the enrollment at Luther P. Jackson steadily decreased. According to a Special Report of the Fairfax County Board of Education on November 16, 1964, the following number of black students were enrolled at each high school in Fairfax County: Annandale, none; Edison, 1; Fairfax, 2; Falls Church, 14; Fort Hunt, 32; Groveton, 26; Herndon, none; Jackson (grades 8-12), 524; Jefferson (grades 8-12), 10; Lee, none; Madison, 22; Marshall, 12; McLean, 5; Mt. Vernon, 42; Stuart, 9; and Woodson, 15 (Special Report, Fairfax County Board of Education, November 16, 1964).

In the spring of 1963 the court litigation was reactivated, and an effort was made by NAACP lawyers representing black families to force the school board to abandon the transfer procedures and the dual system

entirely, and to convert to a single integrated system with boundaries for schools determined by geographical considerations alone (Henderson, 1965).

The school board took the following actions as integration became eminent:

> On March 24, 1964, the board announced the revision of its pupil-assignment policy statement to assure that the procedure for initial school assignments and pupil transfers would apply to all pupils without regard to race.
>
> On April 9, 1964, the school board announced its decision to close the Oak Grove Negro Elementary School beginning with the 1964-1965 school session and to assign its pupils to schools in their respective areas of residence.
>
> On April 9, 1964, the board directed a phasing-out of the all-Negro character of the Luther P. Jackson High School by removing the seventh grade from that school and directing that beginning with the 1964-1965 school year all Negro seventh grade pupils be assigned to the intermediate school serving the attendance area of their residence.
>
> On January 14, 1965, the school board directed that Luther P. Jackson High School be terminated as an all-Negro intermediate and high school effective June 1965; and be reopened in September 1965 as an integrated intermediate school." (Status of Integration in Fairfax)

Full integration of the system meant the end of Luther P. Jackson High School as a black high school. In September 1965, this school was converted to an intermediate school.

Under the plan adopted, the change took place over a two-year period with the greater part accomplished in the first year. By the fall of 1966, there were no more black schools in the county (Henderson, 1965).

Staff Transfers

The school board took its first step toward integrating its professional staff for the school year 1963-1964 by placing a black librarian in a predominantly white elementary school on a part-time basis. In 1964-1965, four black teachers were assigned to elementary schools, one to an intermediate school, three to high schools and two assigned to special areas as helping teachers. Plans were made for total integration of all existing teachers and administrative personnel by the school year 1966-1967 (Status of Integration in Fairfax, 1978).

With the phasing out of Luther P. Jackson as a high school, came the dismantling of the highly respected and dedicated teaching staff as a cadre committed to Luther P. Jackson students. Mamye Holt was assigned to Jeb Stuart High School, George Felton to Woodson, Don Witten to Fairfax High School, Carrie James to Frost Intermediate, Dean Harris to Irving Intermediate, Richard Jackson and Claudia Hammond to Foster Intermediate, George Felton to Woodson, and

Charles Price to Langley. Mabel Mosby and Lillian Bellamy remained at Luther P. Jackson (James, 1992). Taylor M. Williams remained as principal of Luther P. Jackson Intermediate School. Succeeding Taylor Williams in this position were: Col. Robert S. Fairweather, Dr. Roy Brooks, E. Wayne Harris, William E. Trussell, Earl Wilson, Leslie Kent and Dr. Michael J. Doran, the current principal.

Placement on County Historic Registry Status

In 1988, rumors concerning closing Luther P. Jackson Intermediate School and selling the land sparked a protest rally by approximately 60 former students, teachers and other residents interested in preserving the school. The protest prompted assurances from school officials that although the 20-acre plot in Merrifield on which Jackson sits is growing increasingly valuable and the surrounding area is becoming less residential, there were no plans to close the school, much less, sell it. In addition, school board members began discussion of including $7.5 million as part of the school bond referendum in November 1988 to renovate the building (The Fairfax Connection, April 21, 1988).

The protesters and Jackson supporters then started a movement to have Jackson placed on the county historic register (The Fairfax Connection, April 21, 1988). The

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted July 18, 1988 to place Luther P. Jackson High School on the County Historic Registry. Fairfax County History Committee approved this placement at the September, 1988 meeting. It was declared historically significant as the first school for Fairfax County black secondary students (The Washington Post, October 27, 1988).

Summary

As the Fairfax County Board of Education endorsed the Freedom of Choice Plan for the county students, Luther P. Jackson High School was destined for closing. Luther P. Jackson students began applying for schools closer to their homes. Separate but equal schools had been declared unconstitutional in the 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court case. As the NAACP, Interracial Council and Human Relations group urged a smooth integration of schools, the school board moved to integrate all schools in 1965-1966. Luther P. Jackson High School would convert to an integrated junior high school. Luther P. Jackson students would be assigned to their neighborhood schools. Staff members were also transferred to various schools across the county. Taylor M. Williams would remain at Luther P. Jackson as its principal.

EPILOGUE

Luther P. Jackson High School opened its doors as a black high school four months after the Supreme Court held in the Brown vs Board of Education case that the separate but equal doctrine of educating students was inherently unconstitutional (Brown vs Board of Education, 1954). Foreseeing the trend toward desegregation of schools could have been a determining factor in the Fairfax County School Board's decision to build Luther P. Jackson after years of complacency toward the education of black secondary level students.

A core group of black civic minded men including Rev. W. E. Costner, Rev. Roger Bush, Rev. Milton Sheppard, Rev. Wilson, J. Sydney Holland, Dr. E.B. Henderson, Ollie Tinner, and Harrison Tinner were the leaders in keeping the movement for the high school alive. Many of these leaders belonged to several organizations, including the NAACP and the Fairfax Countywide Colored Citizens Association, which had the building of the black high school as one of their priorities.

Other groups (non-black) such as the Fairfax County Citizens Association, the League of Women Voters and an interracial committee worked for building a black high school. My review of Fairfax County school board records revealed that in most cases, the black groups communicated with the board through correspondence. The board records

reflect only a few situations of black groups appearing before the board to present petitions or requests. Very little was even shown in school board records concerning black schools until the building of Luther P. Jackson. Information that was recorded in board records before the Luther P. Jackson project was usually placed at the end of the minutes under a section labeled 'colored schools' with little details given.

In retrospect, the accomplishment of getting an all-white board to comply with building a school for black high school students even after the county had voted on a bond issue to fund it, was an even greater feat than it first seems.

The school became a reality and black high school students from across the county were bussed to a school that most considered an extension of their families. Students who attended Luther P. Jackson credit the leadership of principal Taylor M. Williams and his dedicated staff for the success of the school. The high expectations and concern shown for the students pushed them to excel and win many honors and awards for the school.

After graduating, Luther P. Jackson students continued the tradition of excelling in their selected careers. Some of the successful ones were: Juan Lawson received his Ph.D. degree from Howard University and retired from Dean of

Science Department, University of Texas, El Paso; Alvin Thomas (1959) received his Ph.D. degree, employed with Federal Aviation Administration; Charles Grimes, Attorney in California; Paul Jones, Assistant Principal at McLean High School; Houston Somers, Louvenia Johnson, Roger Wood (Retired), Barbara Thomas Carrington, Daniel Richards, Wayne Willson, Gloria Thomas Runyon, and Jimmy Jukes are teachers with Fairfax County Schools; Robert Wright, Harvard, 1965 is a Fairfax attorney, Rebecca McDaniel Wright, Assistant Principal at Robinson High School; Norman Sultan owns a bus company; Henry Martin, 1962, and Ronald Martin, high-level jobs in the federal government; George Carter, 1965, received his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins University and is a professor; Gerald Byrd, assistant principal in Washington, D.C.; Eugurtha Morris owns Eugurtha's Restaurant in Washington, D.C.; George Lincoln Wilks, 1962, electrician at the White House; Reba Lee, 1962, librarian, Fairfax County; Ronald Marshall, barber in Arlington; Addison Wells, owns a barber service business; Theresa Wells, 1965, minister; Thomas Dotson, 1963, owns an exterminating business in Silver Spring, Md., George Bailey, 1965, owns Herndon-Reston Automotive Body Shop; James Jarris owns a trash company in Fairfax County, Richard Sampson, 1955, retired federal postman, Cordell Banks Eunice Banks, Banks Foreign Cars; Janice Robinson Bragg, librarian in D.C. public schools;

Janice Payne Cromwell, 1961, art teacher in Baltimore; Tracy Newman, 1959, teacher-coach in D.C. public schools; Diane Braxton, 1964, computer programmer; Nathaniel Braxton, 1960, Metro supervisor; Albert Brown, MBA, banker in California; Guy Collins, 1957, employed CIA, U.S. government; Robert Duncan, 1959, restaurant manager; Martin Ellis, 1964, design engineer at AT&T; Ernestine Williams Greene, 1959, retired elementary teacher; Lydia Lewis Griffin, 1959, teacher in Baltimore; Roland Holland, 1965, management analyst; Alfred Lacy, 1965, police officer, Fairfax County; Bertha Brooks Lansdown, 1959, owner of typing service; Elaina Taylor Lyes, 1961, science and technology editor, U.S. Department of Interior; Virginia Marshall, 1961, bank manager; Eunice Wheeler Martin, 1955, Headstart teacher, Fairfax County Schools; Stephen Parks, supervisor, Safeway stores; Harvey Pearson, economist at Department of Labor; Violet Pearson, 1961, management analyst, Department of Labor; and Donna Brown Sharp, R.N., Arlington Hospital.

If desegregation was a factor that determined the establishment of Luther P. Jackson, then it had a common beginning and ending. The loss of students gradually through transfers to previous white schools that were much closer to their homes and the decision of the school board to discontinue operation of all-black schools in the county closed Luther P. Jackson as a high school for the 1965-1966

school term. This was the end of an era in the movement to gain a quality education for black high school students within the county and within close proximity to their homes. The uniqueness of this school in its closeness and familial nature was lost as students were assigned to neighborhood schools and became minority populations in separate high schools with few if any of the Luther P. Jackson teachers on staff. However, that camaraderie, the drive to excel, the friendships and supportive roles still exist today among the Luther P. Jackson graduates and former staff members. Through interviews with various persons concerning their roles and perceptions of Luther P. Jackson and attended their annual social affair, one can distinguish the values, pride and emotional attachments that were part of the first and only black high school for black students in Fairfax County.

The community, Luther P. Jackson alumni and interested persons were able to prevent demolition of the school building and placed it on the county historic registry. The school was renovated to accommodate school board meetings in the auditorium.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Afro-American. (May 3, 1955). p. 9.

Alderson, W. T. (1952). The Freedmen's Bureau and Negro Education in Virginia. North Carolina's Historical Review, 29, 64-90.

The Alexandria Gazette. (Sept. 1, 1954). Vol. CLXXI, No. 179).

The Alexandria Gazette. (Sept. 2, 1954). Vol. CLXXI, No. 180, p. 16).

Bennett, C. (1967). View of the Mountain. Unpublished dissertation: Vanderbilt University.

Black Women United for Action. (1991). Fairfax County School System. The Quilt Project: An Afro-American Experience.

Brown vs. Board of Education. 347 U.S. 483, 745 Ct. 686 (1954).

Cartersville Church Souvenir Program. (1992). A Tribute to Esther Honesty.

The Fairfax Connection. (April 21, 1988).

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Nov.. 3, 1942). Minutes, p. 160.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Oct. 19, 1950). Minutes, p. 160.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Nov. 7, 1950). Minutes, p. 190.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Jan. 2, 1951). Minutes, p. 219.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Feb. 6, 1951). Minutes, p. 250.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Feb. 27, 1951). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (June 27, 1951). Minutes, p. 394.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (July 3, 1951). Minutes, p. 402.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (July 19, 1951). Minutes, p. 415.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Aug. 7, 1951). Minutes, p. 429.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Oct. 2, 1951). Minutes, p. 498.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Nov. 6, 1951). Minutes, p. 498.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Dec. 18, 1952). Minutes, p. 350.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Jan. 15, 1953). Minutes, p. 350.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (June 2, 1953). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (July 7, 1953). Minutes, p. 402.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Dec. 1, 1953). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Dec. 10, 1953). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Dec. 16, 1953). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Jan. 5, 1954). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Jan. 19, 1954). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (June 1, 1954). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (July 6, 1954). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Sept. 7, 1954). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (Nov. 2, 1954). Minutes.

Fairfax County Board of Education. (1940). Superintendent's Report.

Fairfax County Facilities Planning. (1992). Report on Luther P. Jackson Intermediate School.

Henderson, E.B. (1965). History of the Fairfax County Branch of the NAACR. pp. 7-10.

Holland, J. S. (1992). Personal papers.

Interview with Loretta Berry. (July 17, 1992). Ft. Washington, MD.

Interview with Lillian Blackwell. (February 9, 1993). Vienna, VA.

Interview with Preston Blackwell. (March 15, 1993). Alexandria, VA.

Interview with Nathaniel Braxton. (July 7, 1992). Alexandria, VA.

Interview with Rogia Teal Braxton. (July 7, 1992). Alexandria, VA.

Interview with Margaret Carter. (August 7, 1992). Falls Church, VA.

Interview with George Felton. (June 17, 1992). Centreville, VA.

Interview with Calvin Ferguson by Judy Burton. (1985).

Interview with with Evelyn Fields. (July 7, 1992). Manassas, VA.

Interview with W. Harold Ford, Former Assistant Superintendent for Instruction. (July 17, 1992). Fairfax, VA.

Interview with Claudia Hammond. (August 17, 1992). Oxon Hill, MD.

Interview with Dean Harris. (August 7, 1992). Centreville, VA.

Interview with Ben Holland by Judy Burton. (1985).

Interview with J. Sydney Holland. (July 10, 1992). Falls Church, VA.

Interview with Carrie James. (July 13, 1992). Alexandria, VA.

Interview with George James. (July 13, 1992). Alexandria, VA.

Interview with Louvenia Johnson. (July 8, 1992). Centreville, VA.

Interview with Paul Jones. (July 15, 1992). Tyson's Corner, VA.

Interview with Jean Minor. (July 1, 1992). Vienna, VA.

Interview with Mabel Jolly Mosby. (July 30, 1992). Washington, D.C.

Interview with Cecil Robinson. (September 8, 1992). Woodbridge, VA.

Interview with Margery Robinson. (September 8, 1992). Woodbridge, VA.

Interview with Mary Payne Sultan. (July 16, 1992). Vienna, VA.

The Jackson Tattler. (1955). Falls Church, Va: Luther P. Jackson High School, Vol. 1, No. 2.

The Luther P. Jackson Handbook. (1958). Falls Church, Va: Luther P. Jackson High School.

Manassas Museum Permanent Display. (1992). Manassas, VA.

Miles, M., & Huberman, M. A. (1984). Qualitative Data Analysis. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

The Negro History Bulletin. (Nov., 1942). Luther Porter Jackson.

Netherton, N., et al. (1978). Fairfax County, Virginia: A history. Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, 383. Status of Integration Report: Fairfax County Public Schools.

Office of Community Relations. (1989). Luther P. Jackson File, Fairfax County Public School System.

The Reston Times. (April 12, 1988).

Ryan, N. C. Gwynn, & King, A. K. (Eds.). (1984). Secondary education in the south. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Special Report. (1965). Fairfax County Board of Education.

Spradley, J. P. (1979). The Ethnographic Interview. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

The Sun Echo, (Aug. 27, 1954). Vol. XIV, No. 46.

The Tiger. (1955). Falls Church, VA: Luther P. Jackson High School.

The Tiger. (1960). Falls Church, VA: Luther P. Jackson High School.

The Tiger. (1965). Falls Church, VA: Luther P. Jackson High School.

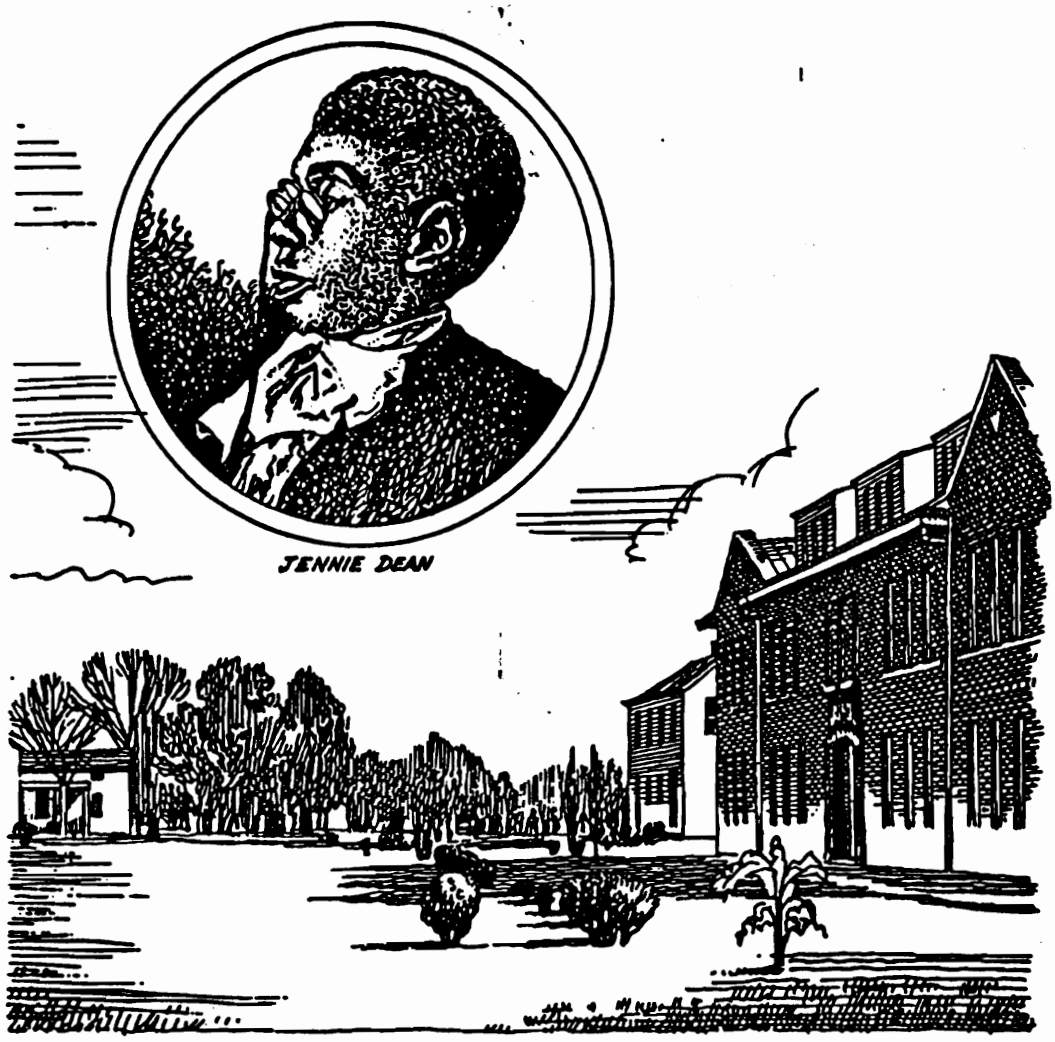
The Times Herald. (Aug. 29, 1954).

The Washington Post. (Aug. 29, 1954).

The Washington Post. (Oct. 27, 1988).

Virginia State Board of Education Bulletin, Vol. XXX, (September 1947). No. 3, p. 37.

APPENDIX A



Manassas Industrial School, CAMPUS
MANASSAS, VIRGINIA

APPENDIX B

Our Disgrace and Shame
School Facilities for Negro Children in Fairfax County

WHITE SCHOOLS	NEGRO SCHOOLS
1. All brick or stone, except 4 wooden buildings	1. One to three room wooden buildings
2. Have running water, janitorial service, inside toilets, central heating	2. All have outside "pit" toilets for teachers and children, no running water; all stoves in the rooms
3. Children ride in heated busses.	3. No janitorial service—Teachers do all cleaning, haul water, make fires
	4. Three schools have no water on premises
	5. Some children walk from 4 to 6 miles to school
	6. Buses are old and rickety and are not heated.

HOW SCHOOL FUNDS ARE SHARED

In 1935 the School Board sought a grant of $153,022.50 from PWA and a bond issue (which was defeated) to raise $187,027.50. Of this total of $340,050.00 it was proposed to spend for:

White Schools ..... $330,750—97.4 per cent
Colored Schools ..... 9,000— 2.6 percent

In 1935 this county owed the State Literary Fund $188,739.32 (all of which had been spent on white schools). In that year the colored population of the country was 19 percent.

The 1945-46 PROPOSED budget provided among other items:

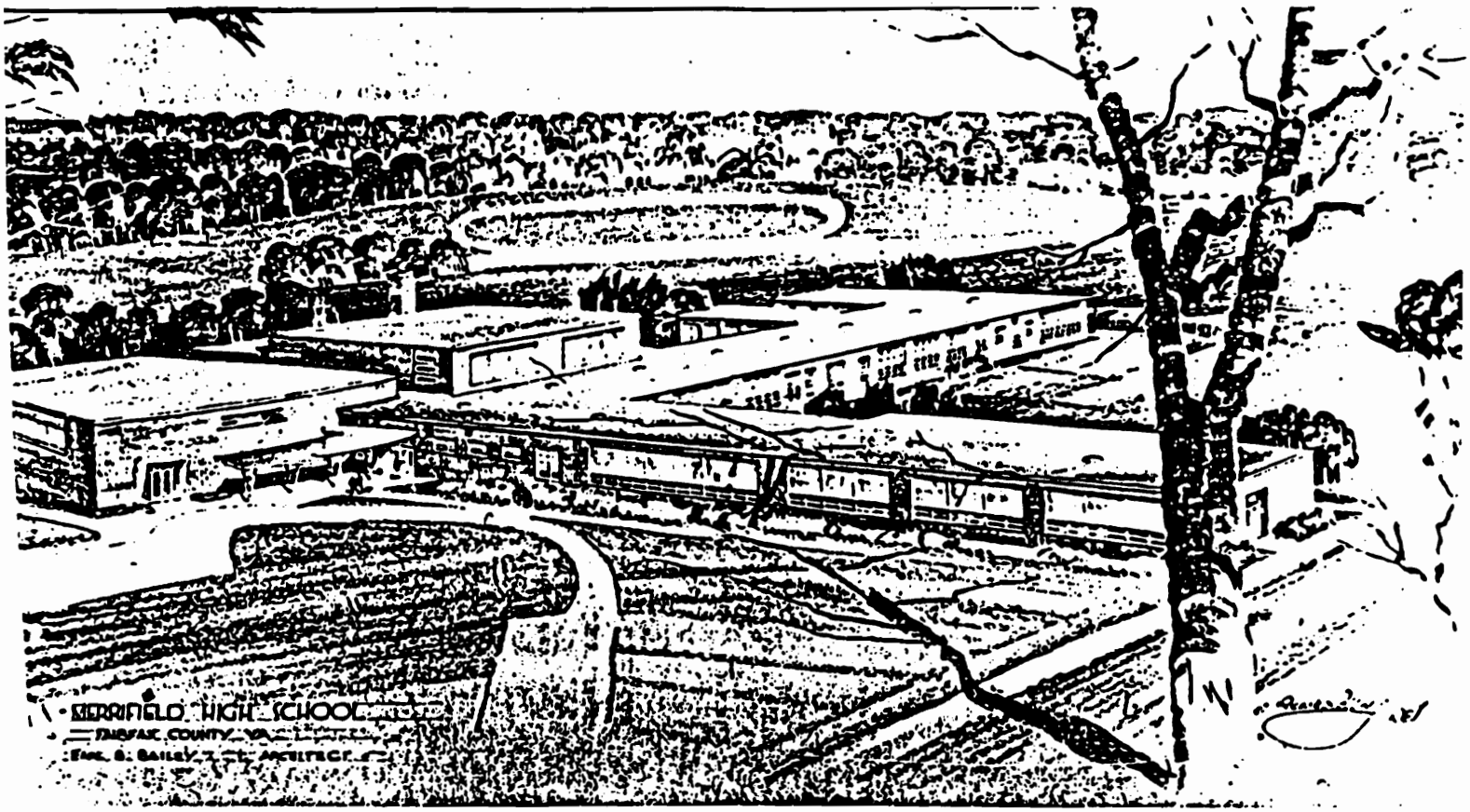
	FOR WHITE SCHOOLS	FOR COLORED SCHOOLS
Administration	$18,380	0
Operation of School Plant (Salary of janitor, light, telephone and fuel)	80,350	?
Capital Outlay	$745,000	$45,000

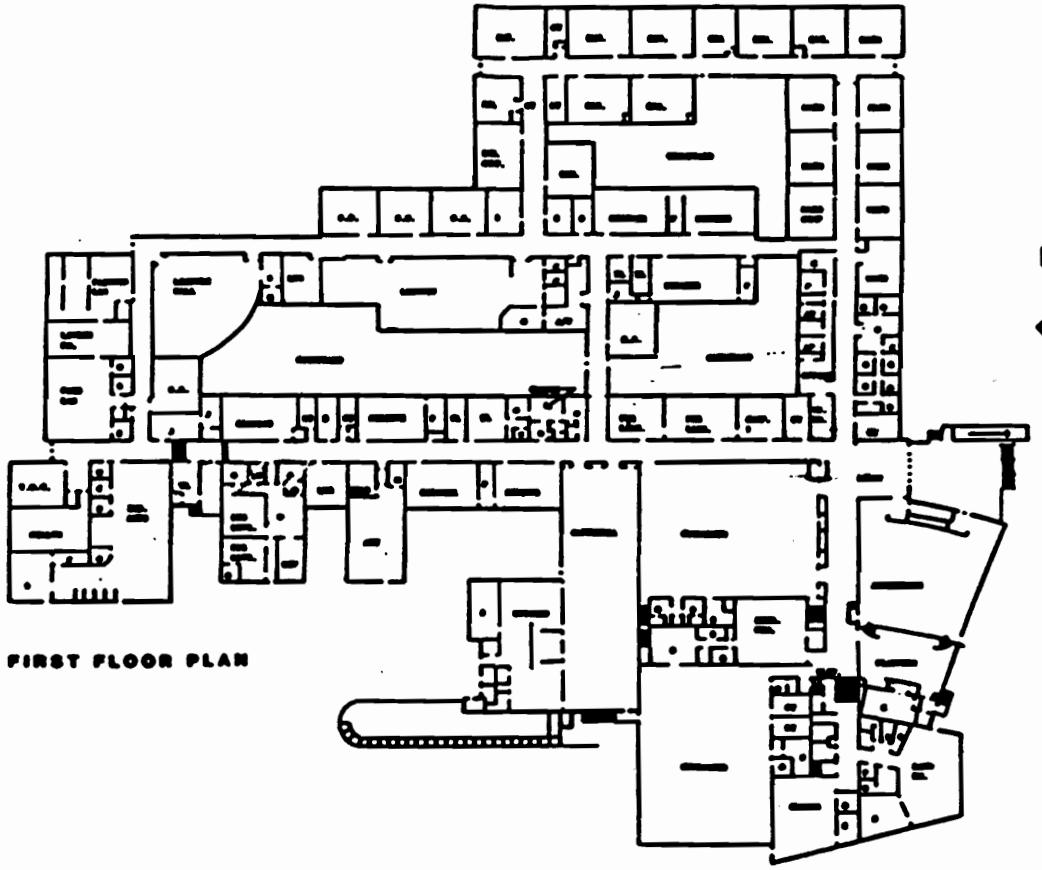
The following proposed expenditures of a proposed loan from the State Literary Fund were approved:

WHITE SCHOOLS	COLORED SCHOOLS
$50,000 for Herndon High School	0
$40,000 for 2 classrooms, wash room and cafeteria at Vienna	0
$20,000 for 2 classrooms at Lincolnia	0
$10,000 to complete 2 classrooms at Groveton	0
$40,000 additional was secured to add elementary rooms to Madison School	

(Excerpt from E.B. Henderson, NAACP)

APPENDIX C





FIRST FLOOR PLAN

LUTHER JACKSON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

SITE ACRES: 20.4
TOTAL AREA: 132,000 S.F.
BUILT: 1954
ADDITIONS: 1962, 1966

BASEMENT LEVEL PLAN

APPENDIX D

L. P. JACKSON

APPENDIX E

TAYLOR MOSES WILLIAMS

LUTHER JACKSON HIGH SCHOOL
A FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOL
GALLOWS ROAD
MERRIFIELD, VIRGINIA 22116

TAYLOR M. WILLIAMS

EDUCATION: B.S. Tuskegee Institute 1940
M.A. American University 1953
Graduated from the Shieff Executive School- Mendon, N.J. 1942
Post Graduate Work - American University

MARITAL STATUS: Married - Mrs. Helen B. Williams
1 - Son - Taylor Alexis Williams, II

ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES:

Member of the Saint Mary's Episcopal Church
Member of the N. E. A.
Member of the Fairfax Education Association
Member of the Virginia Teachers Association
Member of the America Teachers Association
Member of the Eight District Teachers Association
Member of the National Association of Secondary School Principals
Member of the Board of Directors for the Fairfax County Chapter American National Red Cross
Member of the Board of Directors for the Potomac Tuberculosis and Respiratory Disease Association
Member of the Board of Family Service of Northern Virginia
Member of the Regional Committee of the National Capital Area Health and Welfare Council
Member of the Human Relation Employment Committee of Fairfax County
Member of the Executive Committee of the Virginia Interscholastic Association
Member of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
Member of Alpha Phi Omega Fraternity

For Your Information

ROBERT R. SPILLANE, Superintendent
DOLORES BOHEN, Assistant Superintendent
Office of Community Relations

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
10700 Page Avenue Fairfax, Virginia
Phone 246-2991

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 12, 1989

JACKSON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL TO HONOR FIRST PRINCIPAL, TAYLOR WILLIAMS

Luther Jackson Intermediate School will hold a ceremony to honor the school's first principal, the late Taylor Moses Williams, on Tuesday, May 16, at 1:30 p.m. At the ceremony, family, friends, school officials, and former Jackson students, principals, and staff will participate in the dedication of the school's auditorium, which has been officially named the Taylor M. Williams Auditorium by the Fairfax County School Board.

Williams became principal at Jackson when it opened in 1954 as the only high school for Black students in Fairfax County. Prior to 1954, Black students from the six Black elementary schools in the county were bused to schools in Washington, D.C., or to the Manassas Regional High School. Williams was instrumental in the smooth desegregation of the school in the mid-1960s. He served as principal of Jackson until his appointment as principal of Madison High School in 1970. In 1971, Williams became the first area superintendent of Administrative Area I, a position he held until his retirement in 1975.

William's involvement with young people did not end with his retirement. He remained active in educational organizations such as the National Education Association, the Virginia Teachers' Association, the American Teachers' Association, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. He was also a member of the Northern Virginia Family Service Board of Directors, the YMCA Board of Directors, and Alpha Phi Alpha and Alpha Phi Omega fraternities.

# # #

APPENDIX F

Agenda Item No. II.E.
May 11, 1989

RESOLUTION

NAMING THE AUDITORIUM AT LUTHER JACKSON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

THE TAYLOR M. WILLIAMS AUDITORIUM

WHEREAS, Taylor Moses Williams first came to Fairfax County in 1950 as a lead teacher at James Lee Elementary School; and

WHEREAS, he was named the principal of Luther Jackson School when it opened in 1954 as the first secondary school for Black students in the county; and

WHEREAS, he was instrumental in the smooth integration of the Fairfax County Public Schools, serving as the first Black principal of a predominantly white school at Madison High School and then being appointed Area I Superintendent, a position he held until his retirement in 1975; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career, he was an exemplary model and mentor for other educators, working effectively to integrate school staffs and teacher associations and participating actively in professional organizations at state and national levels; and

WHEREAS, he is remembered fondly in Fairfax County by all who knew him for his professional commitment, his quiet leadership, his high expectations, his irrepressible good humor, and his abiding love of children;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this auditorium at Luther Jackson Intermediate School, which is the meeting room for the Fairfax County School Board, be named "The Taylor M. Williams Auditorium" in lasting tribute and grateful recognition to a man whose lifelong devotion to youth, to education, and to community service enriched this school system and this community.

FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA

September 11, 1963

DESEGREGATED SCHOOLS

ELEMENTARY:

Bailey's	5
Bren Mar Park	1
Bucknell	17
Cedar Lane	10
Centreville	3
Chesterbrook	14
Churchill Road	14
Flint Hill	13
Floris	2
Freedom Hill	2
Glen Forest	8
Green Acres	9
Herndon Elem.	3
Hollin Hall	3
Hollin Hills	6
Lemon Road	1
Mantua	7
Mount Eagle	2
Oakton	6
Parklawn	31
Pine Spring	15
Stratford Landing	3
Wakefield Forest	1
Weyanoke	5
Woodburn	18
Jermantown	1

INTERMEDIATE:

Bryant	35
Cooper	8
Glasgow	16
Lanier	5
Longfellow	1
Thoreau	11
Whitman	24
Whittier	26

SECONDARY:

Fairfax High	2
Falls Church	7
Fort Hunt	11
Groveton High	27
Madison	17
Marshall	3
McLean	2
Mount Vernon	18
Stuart	7
Woodson	8

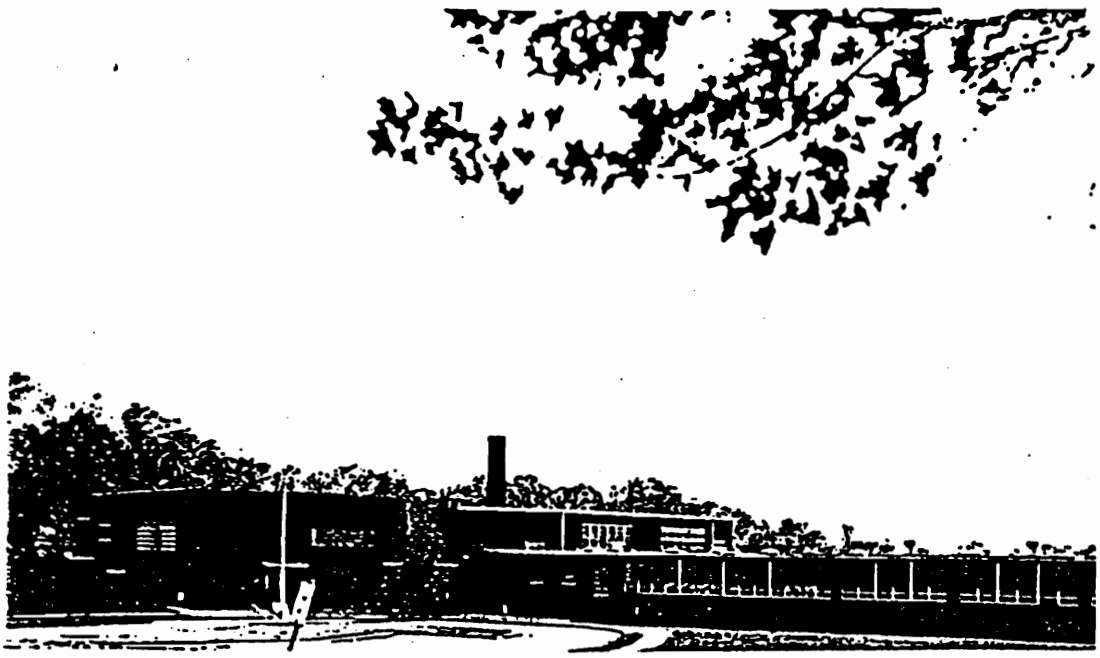
Total Schools Desegregated - 43
Total Negro Pupils in Desegregated Schools - 428

APPENDIX F (continued)

March 17, 1965

NUMBER STUDENTS ASSIGNED TO OTHER HIGH SCHOOLS 1965-1966

Edison High School	6
Fairfax High School	44
Falls Church High School	20
Fort Hunt High School	39
Groveton High School	9
Herndon High School	15
Jeb Stuart High School	30
Jefferson High School	6
Langley High School	28
Madison High School	29
Marshall High School	109
McLean High School	1
Mount Vernon High School	3
Woodson High School	74



FRIENDS OF LUTHER P. JACKSON

Luther P. Jackson School should remain open as an educational institution. Historically, this school was the first Black high school in Fairfax County and was built in 1954 on land owned by Blacks. The person for whom the school was named was a prominent Black educator: Dr. Luther Porter Jackson. Luther Jackson High School opened its doors in September 1954. It was dedicated on Sunday afternoon, April 17, 1955.

The alumnae, and all the friends of Luther P. Jackson must keep vigilant or this symbol of history in Fairfax County will be lost. A history forgotten is forever lost.

The Republican candidate for supervisor in the Providence District supports selling Luther P. Jackson. On the other hand, Kate Hanley, the Democratic candidate for the Providence District, supports keeping Luther P. Jackson open as an educational institution.

Join the friends of Luther P. Jackson and vote for Kate Hanley in the special election in the Providence District on July 15, 1986.

Lillian Blackwell
George Felton
Ernestine Heastie
Garland Hicks
Viola Hudson
Yvonne Jackson
John Sturdivant
Audrey Williams

VITA

Mathelle Kornegay Lee

Centreville High School
6001 Union Mill Road
Clifton, VA 22024
(703) 968-7444

7839 Roundabout Way
Springfield, VA 22153
(703) 866-0443

EDUCATION BACKGROUND

Ed.D.	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, May, 1993, Educational Administration
M.A.	Trinity College, May 1978, Guidance and Counseling
M.A.	Trinity College, May 1971, English
B.A.	Livingstone College, May, 1965, English

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sept. 1991	Guidance Counselor. Centreville High School, Fairfax County Public Schools
1989-1991	Guidance Counselor, Fairfax High School, Fairfax County Public Schools
1988-1989	Guidance Counselor, Head Teacher, J.F. Cooke Elementary School, District of Columbia Public Schools
1986-1988	Guidance Department Chair, Lincoln Junior High School, District of Columbia Public Schools
1971-1986	English Teacher, Department Chair, Woodrow Wilson High School, District of Columbia Public Schools
1970-1971	English Teacher, Langley Junior High School, District of Columbia Public Schools
1968-1970	English Teacher, Coolidge High School, District of Columbia Public Schools
1966-1968	English Teacher, Norwayne High School, Wayne County Public School System, Fremont, North Carolina
1965-1966	English Teacher, Union High School, Caroline County Public School System, Bowling Green, Virginia

Mathelle K. Lee