

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Mount Vernon High School

Other names/site number: Original Mount Vernon High School

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 8333 Richmond Highway

City or town: Alexandria State: VA County: Fairfax

Not For Publication:  N/A Vicinity:  X

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this  nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property  meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <p>_____<br/> <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b><br/> <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u><br/> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p> | <p>_____<br/> <b>Date</b></p> |
|--|-------------------------------|

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|--|--|
| <p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> |  |
| <p>_____<br/> <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>                                     | <p>_____<br/> <b>Date</b></p>  |
| <p>_____<br/> <b>Title :</b></p>   | <p>_____<br/> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p> |



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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| <u>3</u>     | <u>2</u>        | buildings  |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | sites      |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | structures |
| <u>0</u>     | <u>0</u>        | objects    |
| <u>3</u>     | <u>2</u>        | Total      |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

EDUCATION/library

RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

COMMERCE/TRADE/Business: Non-Profit

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Other: Indoor Recreation

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: CONCRETE; BRICK; STONE: Slate;  
SYNTHETIC: Plastic; WOOD

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

The Original Mount Vernon High School consists of five (5) buildings constructed between 1939 and 1963 sitting on a 10.58-acre lot fronting on Richmond Highway (Route 1) in Fairfax County, south of the city of Alexandria, Virginia. The main and most prominent building faces Richmond Highway and was built in 1939 through the Public Works Administration (PWA) program funding. This 235-foot-long rectangular Colonial Revival brick building features large paired twelve-over-twelve double-hung wood sash windows; a slate-covered, hipped roof; a white octagonal wood cupola with a copper roof and spire; and a double-door entryway with transom surrounded by a decorative broken pediment with fluted pilasters as well as dentil details. Other contributing buildings on the property are the 1943 Home Economics Cottage, and 1944 Old Shop. Two (2) non-contributing buildings are the 1954 New Shop and the 1962 Music Building. Overall, the property has good integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, materials, feeling, and association that allow it to convey its historical associations with educational and architectural trends of Fairfax County's mid-twentieth century schools.

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#### Narrative Description

The Original Mount Vernon High School was built during a period when economic conditions were uncertain for both individuals as well as communities. The Public Works Administration (PWA) was established in an era when construction of new schools had virtually ceased due to the Great Depression. Between 1933 and 1937, it is estimated that the PWA helped finance construction of approximately 70 percent of all school-related buildings in the United States. In Virginia alone, the PWA had initiated over

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300 education-related construction projects by 1936, with nearly \$5 million in grants, and over \$3 million in loans to local jurisdictions. Over the life of the program, the PWA helped to provide accommodations for 1,389,655 students through construction of 5,235 new school buildings and the improvement of more than 1,100 existing school buildings.<sup>1</sup> While the architectural style of the schools varied, it was typical for those advertised in PWA booklets before 1937 to be of Art Deco influence and built after 1937 to exhibit a strong Colonial Revival influence.<sup>2</sup> Such is the case with the main building at the Original Mount Vernon High School.

As population demand grew in the area, so did the school. The brick Colonial Revival Home Economics Cottage was constructed in 1943 to the west of the main building. The building has a slate roof on the 1943 section and 1947 addition along with dormer window; chimneys; and wood windows. The “Old” Shop, a one-story square brick building with chimneys, flat roof, and steel awning windows, was added to the campus in 1944. This building has an austere Colonial Revival industrial appearance with the developing influence of Moderne. The two-story west and east wings were added to extend the main building to the south in 1947 and 1951, respectively, and echo the original building with large twelve-over-twelve double hung wood windows and slate roofs.

The brick Gymnasium, Cafeteria, and Library additions to the original main building were constructed between 1952 and 1953. The L-shaped Moderne gymnasium addition extends eastward from the main building connected by a corridor. The two-story structure has fluted columns at a balcony on the main (north) facade, a wood frieze with scroll brackets at a decorative cornice, and steel awning windows throughout. The Moderne influenced Cafeteria and Library is located to the south of the main building’s west wing and is connected by a door at the north facade. The two-story rectangular brick structure has large vertical steel awning windows at the west facade and clerestories at the east of the second story, which provide daylight into the Library space. The contemporary one story square brick “New” Shop was constructed in 1954 to the west of the “Old” Shop and the Music Building constructed to the north in 1962. At some point, the New Shop, Old Shop, and Music Building were connected to the main building through the construction of corridors. Both buildings are considered non-contributing and have simple and utilitarian design with steel awning windows. Building additions were constructed to the north and west of the Home Economics Cottage in 1947 and 1954, respectively, to the south of the Gymnasium in 1963, and to the west of the Cafeteria and Library in 1963. Additions during these time periods are considered non-historic and were constructed with simple architecture and steel awning windows. The school campus is in good condition and retains architectural and historic integrity. The property is currently partially vacant and the County is planning for its adaptive re-use. The exceptions to this are the gym that is currently used by Fairfax County and the Home Economics Cottage, which is occupied by non-profit entities.

### ***Site Description***

The buildings sit on a prominent knoll overlooking Richmond Highway with a wide expanse of turf lawn across the entire front of the building. A curved access road leads into the property from Richmond Highway to a small parking area in front of the building. A concrete walk edged by an allée of flowering cherry trees leads to the main front entrance. A concrete walk also parallels the principal facade of the building, leading to the gymnasium to the east, which is set at a lower grade and down several flights of

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, Harold I. Ickes, Administrator, *PWA: A Four Year Record of the Construction of Permanent and Useful Public Works* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1937), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ickes, *Public Works Administration*, 4, from “George Washington High School” Preliminary Information Form Resource Information Sheet.

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stairs from the main entrance. Parking abuts a wide concrete sidewalk that extends from the northern end of the gymnasium toward Richmond Highway.

### *Building Descriptions*

#### **Main Building (Contributing Building)**

The original building is a two-story U-shaped Colonial Revival building constructed in 1939. The original section of the school is 235 foot-long rectangular multi-wythe brick building with two-stretcher brick Flemish bond, brick quoins, and grapevine tooled mortar joints. The original main building was initially constructed to house twelve classrooms, various administrative offices, and a mechanical space. The main entry is centered at the north façade, includes a double door with a twelve-lite transom surrounded by a decorative broken wood pediment with fluted pilasters and dentil details. The front façade is further defined with fifteen bays of large paired twelve-over-twelve double hung wood windows punctuating the facade. The building also features: a concrete foundation; slate hipped roof; white octagonal wood cupola with dentil molding under a copper roof; and spire. The cupola is located at the center of the roof ridge in line with the main entry doors.



Figure 1. View of the north facade of the main building as viewed from northeast shown in the 1942 Surveyor Yearbook.

The west and east additions, constructed in 1947 and 1951 respectively, are two stories in height and connected to the south façade. The west wing is 40 feet wide by 45 feet long and the east wing is 40 feet wide by 100 feet long. The west wing was constructed to accommodate eight classrooms, an activity room, a home economics kitchen, and an extension to the boiler room. The east wing was constructed to house the “Underclassman” with ten classrooms. These two-story brick additions are sensitive to the original design as they echo the original building’s architectural style at the exterior facades with large twelve-over-twelve double hung wood windows and a continuation of hipped slate roofs. There is a metal expansion joint at the connection points between the original building and extension wings. At the interior facades, facing the courtyards, the two wings have steel awning windows at each bay. The two wing additions and construction of the auditorium in 1952-1953 created two courtyards on the east and west with a partially below grade boiler room located in the east. The three additional bays at the west wing extend south to where there is another set of multi-paneled wood exit doors at the west facade with upper

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lites and 16-lite transom that are set inside a vestibule steps. The bricks around these exit doors are inset three courses towards the opening with rowlock bricks directly above the opening. At the interior, the south end of the west wing connects to the cafeteria at the first floor and library at the second floor. Black grates along the facade near grade feature the letters "VSBE" around the perimeter of the building that appear to be original. The east wing terminates at a stairwell that is bumped out from the facade with two multi-paneled wood exit doors with upper lites that exit to a paved parking lot. The doors are flush with the facade and covered by a square canopy with copper roofing with a large white painted steel awning window above.

The auditorium was another addition to the south façade in 1952-1953 and is two stories, constructed of brick with a concrete masonry unit (CMU) backup wall, and connects to the original building at the center of the south facade. This addition has a T plan footprint with the southern hall of classrooms spanning between the east and west wings (top of the T) with the auditorium and stage directly south of the original building (bottom of the T). The auditorium's south hallway spans between the two wings and creates two courtyards at the east and west.

A stairwell addition at the west end of the original building was constructed by 1944, which bumps westward from the original building. This stairwell has two multi-paneled wood exit doors with upper lites and a multi-lite transom set back into the masonry facade with access by concrete landing and steps with metal handrail. Above the doors is a large white painted steel awning window at the second floor. The brick at the spandrel area between the doors and window is set in rowlock coursing with all header brick with the brick having inset profiling for three courses around the opening. Originally, the exit was through a door opening in the brick masonry facade with windows previously located adjacent to and above the single door.<sup>3</sup> A set of multi-panel exit doors with upper lites and a 6-lite transom at the north facade of the east end of the original building is located at a one-story two-bay passageway east to the gymnasium building. The passageway extends eastward to the gymnasium buildings connecting to the upper portion of the gymnasium as the gymnasium is slightly downhill from the main building.

Dixon and Norman, Architects out of Richmond, Virginia, designed the auditorium addition along with the gymnasium and cafeteria/library additions. Once constructed, the two-story auditorium and south hallway additions added a combination of twelve classrooms and lab spaces and connected to the original building at the south facade. The east and west facades of the auditorium have two bays of large paired awning steel windows at each facade with brick pilasters with cast stone coping caps running vertically up the facade terminating approximately 2 feet below the cornice. Courtyard access is gained through the hallways at the east and west of the auditorium, which also connects to the southern hallway of classrooms. This access hallway extends beyond the auditorium courtyard facade at the first floor and has a flat roof with potentially profiled wood cornice that is partially obscured by a metal perimeter gutter.

As one enters the building through the main entrance, he or she walks into a lobby to the center of the original hallway that runs east to west. At the east of the hallway, is the passageway to the gymnasium. The main entry lobby is highly decorative with tile wainscoting, dentil crown molding, acoustical tile, and two original ceiling mounted brass schoolhouse globe lights with obscured glass. Original terrazzo flooring has been covered by linoleum tiles in all classroom and hallway spaces throughout the main building. Continuing through to the entry lobby, one enters into the center of the first floor original hallway. Featured at the center of the south wall is a large built-in wooden trophy case. The hallways have a compartmentalized plan and include green lockers from Berger Mfg. Division Republic Steel Corp. of

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<sup>3</sup> 1944 Surveyor

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Canton, Ohio. The lockers at the south end of the west wing are stamped "Interior Steel." Throughout the original hallways are tile wainscoting with rectangular tiles and projected bull nosing of varied sand color. The tile wainscoting with squared coping, transitions to lighter tan color tiles at different areas along the hallway such as the auditorium entrances, east and west wings, and stairwells. The tile wainscoting of the south hallway is more uniform tan in color with square coping. Wall mounted clocks are throughout the additions on the first and second floor. Classrooms, offices, restrooms, and storage spaces are located off hallways through single doorways. Double doors are located at the south wall of the north hallway in the original building for access into the auditorium as well as dividing the east and west sections of the north hallway. The separation was constructed in 1988 to create a girl's school (east) and boy's school (west).

Original classroom spaces have original chalkboards and display boards with decorative trim of profiled design. Some have been covered and re-used as foam boards or white boards. The original walls have a 3-1/2" tall chair rail of scotia and rectangular design and a 7" tall baseboard of ovolo bolection design set atop a rectangular piece. Radiators were originally below the windows with evidence of supply lines visible in a couple of classrooms in the original building. During the 1988 renovation work, many interior walls were added dividing the original larger classrooms. The drop ceiling also installed in 1988 partially obscures the heads of the windows. East wing, west wing, and south hallway classrooms have built-in cabinets of two divided lite leafs for shelving and two inset panel wood swinging doors below for extra storage. Restrooms at the first floor original hallway have two entry doors along the south wall. Privacy walls have been added during the 1988 renovation to the restrooms. The original terrazzo flooring is visible in the janitor's closet of the boy's restroom at the first floor.

There is evidence that an exit door was located at the center of the south hallway that was transitioned to a vestibule with the construction of the music building in 1962. At this area, painted brick with grapevine mortar joints is visible just to the south of the three doors. Green painted metal stairs with black marble treads are located at the ends of each hallway between the first and second floors with adjacent sets of exterior exit doors. The tile wainscot from the hallway continues up the stairs and transitions to the modified square coping wainscoting at the landing.

The main entry to the auditorium is through the set of double doors at the center of the first floor original hallway. As one walks into the auditorium, there are curved rows of pressed plywood auditorium seating below the low arched balcony ceiling. The upper auditorium/balcony seating is accessed from the second floor. The auditorium space features wainscoting with expressed paneling, large pendant chandeliers at the ceiling, non-original acoustical tiling, pressed plywood seating with metal sides, large windows at the east and west walls, large arched wood trim around stage opening, crown molding of cavetto and scotia design around the perimeter of the room, and large bronze air grilles. The seating space rounds to the stage focal point. Bronze decorative bars extend from the front of the stage and are currently holding banners. The upper auditorium/balcony also has wood wainscoting and pressed plywood seating. The steps at this area that lead to the rows of seating are alternating between exposed stone and carpet. Corridors on each side of the stage give way to stairs leading to the stage as well as a door which leads to the passageway toward the courtyards and south hallway. The wood wainscoting continues into the corridor of the stage stairs where the ceiling has historic acoustical tile. Modifications to the space include installation of carpet, newer lighting and audio equipment, large ventilation and ducting near the ceiling for updated mechanical systems, replacement acoustical tile, replacement light fixtures, shades at transoms, curtains and flags throughout the space, infill of the lower 4 lites of the steel windows, and previous repairs of some chairs. White painted CMU is exposed along the east, south, and west walls of

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the stage area with areas of wood baseboard. Ghosting in the light hardwood tongue and groove floors indicates that previous walls and equipment were mounted to the floors and walls near the perimeter.

The second floor of the main building is similar to the first floor in compartmentalization and interior finishes but also features laboratory spaces. The lab spaces are located along the north wall of the original hallway and have typical classroom finishes and modifications from the 1988 renovation. The tables that remain appear similar to tables which can be seen in a 1951 yearbook photo. A wood with stone top lab table almost spans the entire length of the room with flush sinks, numerous faucets, and air/gas nozzles. Electrical outlets were added to the top of the tables at one point, but most are no longer used and have been concealed with a cover plate. A smaller teacher's table is typically at the head of the classroom with one sink and set of air/gas nozzles. The exterior and the interior of the building is in moderate condition with some deterioration due to wear and deferred maintenance, most notably at restrooms, windows, and interior walls.

### *Gymnasium Addition*

The Moderne and Contemporary Gymnasium additions are directly to the east of the main building. The main (north) facade faces Richmond Highway and features two fluted square columns, wood-bracketed portico, and a large wood cornice with dentils with copper flashing at the skyward facing surface. The one-story connector to the main building and two-story gymnasium addition were constructed between 1952 and 1953. The gymnasium lower floor level is set at a lower elevation than the school's main building as it follows the area's topography. As the main building transitions to the gymnasium, the one connector travels east from the first floor hallway and connects to the upper level (first floor) of the gymnasium. The gymnasium connector reflects the main building's Colonial Revival architecture with paired twelve-over-twelve double hung wood windows with a flat roof whereas the remaining gymnasium additions are Moderne with large steel awning windows. Dixon and Norman, architects out of Richmond, Virginia designed the original gymnasium addition along with the auditorium addition and cafeteria/library addition. This design included a gymnasium and locker rooms.

The later south additions have simple square forms with minimal ornamentation. The gymnasium connector is constructed of multi-wythe brick while the remaining gymnasium additions are constructed of brick laid in common bond brick coursing with tan grapevine tool finish mortar and a CMU backup wall. The non-historic 1963 addition included a corrective gymnasium, two health classrooms, and lockers.

A set of wood exit doors with divided lites is located at the north facade adjacent to the main building. The exit doors are set flush with the facade and connects to a concrete landing and steps with black painted simple metal rectangular handrails that lead north to the sidewalk in front of the school. A white painted square wood canopy, with scroll dentils and wood corbels, extends over the exit doors at the gymnasium north facade. At the south facade of the passageway, there are two sets of exit doors with a large rectangular white painted wood canopy. A single door connects to a wooden accessible ramp.

Continuing east through the passageway one enters the first floor (upper level) of the original gymnasium addition. The main facade also has a wood-bracketed patio lined with copper sheets along the upper level where the large steel awning windows are set back and in line with the entry doors. The balcony is supported by two white painted wood fluted square columns with capitals below the cornice with wood railings set of diagonal, vertical, and horizontal brackets at each opening below the top rail, which are in the shape of a starburst. Directly above the balcony is a projected cornice with decorative scrolls and copper flashing. The structure's brick parapet and cast stone copings extend approximately 4 feet above

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the cornice. The gymnasium's east and west facades have numerous steel awning ribbon windows that provide daylight into the gym space. Four brick pilasters are located between each of the window bays with a cast stone coping unit and a large brick masonry bump out between bay 3 and 4, which extends vertically from grade to the top of the flat roof.

The gymnasium connector has two classrooms along the north wall with similar classroom finishes as the main building and a built-in wall cabinet. The gymnasium has a lobby at the north of the first floor and the open playing space running north to south with retractable bleachers along the east and west walls. At the center of the south wall in the lobby, there is a built in wood trophy cabinet with four 3-lite door leafs. The lobby is lined with gray tile wainscoting with pink square coping and cove molding. The lobby also has acoustical ceiling tiles and box fluorescent lighting. The main gym has white painted CMU walls and tile wainscoting of similar color as the lobby with 3/4" wood trim along the bottom of the wainscoting tile. The ceiling and ductwork are exposed with open web steel joists running east to west framing into the CMU wall and bridging running north to south.

The lower level lobby has painted CMU walls, concrete floors, and other modified interior finishes dating to the 1988 renovation such as linoleum tile. Men's and women's restrooms are located at this level adjacent to the entry doors. Both restrooms have original fixtures, painted black stone partitions, and privacy walls. The lower level of the gym is separated into the girl's and boy's locker rooms at the east and west, respectively. The smaller locker rooms towards the south end of the original gymnasium have been converted into classrooms. Each locker room has one office located at the north side of the room with an interior window to the locker area. The offices have two doors, one to the south into the locker room and the other to the lower level gym lobby. There is a restroom and closet in the office space with original fixtures and black stone shower walls.

The main locker rooms have floor to ceiling tile walls of tan tile, plaster ceilings with ceiling mounted hurricane light fixtures, wood benches, original fixtures, two large tiled columns, rows of metal "Interior Steel Corp." lockers, "American Playground Device Co." shelving, and showers/restrooms located at the south of this room. There is evidence of previously removed walls or partitions seen in the floor and south wall. Most showers and toilet partitions have black stone doors, but in places there are replacement metal doors.

To the south of the locker rooms, one enters a common lobby space where there are two metal doors on the west and three sets of door openings to the south providing access to the non-historic 1963 gym additions. The lobby has exposed brick masonry along the north and south walls and original fixtures. The 1963 gym addition splits into two sections, east and west, and, according to the 1988 drawings, would have had another locker room, toilet room, shower room, and classrooms. However, the area was most recently used as offices and storage. The plaster ceiling contains original half dome lights in some rooms and original fixtures throughout. The restrooms have the stone partitions and metal stall doors with scattered modifications to the partitions with replacement doors. Many fixtures in the southernmost restrooms and shower rooms have been removed as the spaces were abandoned. Previously used annunciator systems are visible throughout this area; these are still in place in the original west classroom. The classroom has painted CMU walls, tile cove base, and typical interior finishes such as the carpet and drop ceilings. There are original ceiling-mounted pendant lights made of white metal concentric circles. The gymnasium additions are in moderate condition with deterioration due to deferred maintenance and human interaction, most notably with graffiti and wear at the locker rooms.

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### *Cafeteria and Library Addition*

The Moderne influenced cafeteria and library is located to the southwest of the main building, and was constructed between 1952 and 1953. The 90-foot-by-120-foot addition is connected to the south of the main building's west wing by doors at the north wall of the first and second floor. The two-story rectangular structure runs north-to-south with large vertical steel awning windows at the east facade and clerestory windows at the west of the second story that provide daylight into the library space. Part of the final campus addition in 1962/1963 was a non-historic addition to the cafeteria extending the cafeteria/library to the west, doubling its mass as viewed from the south. Most recently, the building was being used as a cafeteria and library keeping consistent with the historic use

The original cafeteria and library is constructed of brick and CMU backup wall with a flat roof. The kitchen addition is one story, also of brick and CMU construction, and extends the length of the structure to the west. The brick is set in common bond featuring tan mortar with a grapevine tool finish. At the north and east facades of the 1953 addition, there is a soldier course located near grade approximately at the 11th course above the paved parking lot. The coursing below the soldier coursing changes to a Flemish bond coursing, similar to the main building. Steel awning windows with cast stone sills line the first floor of the cafeteria and kitchen. At the second floor of the library, there are large awning steel windows with cast stone sills at the east facade and clerestory windows at the west facade. Along the east facade, there are three sets of exit doors covered by square canopies with concrete steps leading down to the paved parking lot area. A loading dock and three single exit doors are located at the south facade of the kitchen addition. A "Joseph Goder" incinerator is located at the northeast corner of the cafeteria, adjacent to the south facade of the southern main building hallway. The incinerator is constructed of brick masonry and topped with concrete at the firebox with the chimney continuing beyond the rooflines terminating adjacent to the mechanical units for the library.

The cafeteria and non-historic 1963 kitchen addition is located at the first floor with the library located at the second floor. A hallway is located along the east wall with a stairwell between the two floors located at the southeast corner. The cafeteria was divided into east and west cafeterias during the 1988 renovation.<sup>4</sup> The library has high ceilings with acoustical tile, original ceiling mounted pendant lights of school house globes, and added recessed lighting. The directly applied acoustical tiles are of similar design as those in the main auditorium space. Large wood crown molding spans the perimeter of the ceiling along with wood wainscoting and baseboard at the plaster walls. Built-in wood enclosed mechanical units are located below the windows on the west wall with bookshelves located along the east. Office and storage spaces are located at the north end of the room and feature wood paneling and doors, wood wainscoting, cabinetry, and shelves. At the south of the library are stairs at the east and west walls that lead up to the balcony with wood shelves and an overlook to the main library space. The balcony has two large square wood columns that are fluted at the ceiling. Under the balcony is a children's reading room with full height wood shelving along the east and west walls and half height shelving at the north and south walls. Wood wainscoting continues around this room at the spaces between the paired windows. This addition is in moderate condition with deterioration due to deferred maintenance and human interaction.

### *Degree of Integrity*

The main building retains a high degree of integrity at the exterior and a moderate degree of integrity at the interior. Impact to the integrity of the interior is primarily due to the renovations completed in 1988, which included installation of interior finishes that obscure original materials, replacement of original

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<sup>4</sup> RTKL Virginia Corp. "Former Walt Whitman Intermediate School". October 28, 1988.

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light fixtures, and where some spaces like offices, classrooms, and laboratories were adapted for new uses.

The gymnasium additions retain a high degree of integrity at the exterior and interior. While the south non-historic 1963 rectangular addition obscures the original south façade, the remaining façades are relatively unaltered. The interior spaces have been minimally impacted by re-use of spaces, such as smaller locker rooms for classrooms.

The cafeteria and library additions retain a high degree of integrity at the exterior. The library retains a high degree of integrity at the interior, whereas the cafeteria retains a low degree of integrity. The non-historic 1963 rectangular kitchen addition obscures the first floor of the original west façade and does not affect the principal façade. The interior spaces have been impacted by the installation of interior finishes such as drop ceilings, linoleum tile, tile wainscoting, and fluorescent lights during the 1988 renovation. The space most impacted is the cafeteria and kitchen, which retains little historic finishes or fixtures.

### Home Economics Cottage (Contributing Building)

The Home Economics Cottage was constructed in 1943 to the west of the main building. Designed with a Colonial Revival influence, the Home Economics Cottage was one of the first additions to the campus as part of the original PWA funding request. The original building was T-shaped with the main entry centered on the 3-bay wide north façade. The building is approximately 42 feet long extending southward.



Figure 2. Historic photo from a 1943 yearbook of the original home economics building main facade, north, view from northeast.

In 1947, the building was extended to the north with a rectangular 80 foot by 25 foot addition that aligned with the east facade of the building intersecting the original north facade at the center. The last addition is 40 feet by 50 feet constructed in 1954 to the west of the 1947 addition further obscuring the original north facade. The original exterior walls of the building are multi-wythe brick set in running bond of varied red brick colors with one original dormer remaining visible at the west. The two additions are set in running bond and all sections of the cottage have tan, recessed mortar joints. The 1943 and 1947 buildings feature intersecting hipped and gable slate roofs whereas the 1954 addition has a flat roof. Two

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end chimneys and some original six-over-six and six-over-nine double hung wood windows remain at the original building.

The building was originally built to house four classrooms for home economics. Throughout its original use, the building was also known as the domestic science building. The building is currently occupied by two businesses that split the space with one entity being in the original section of the building and the other in the 1947 and 1954 additions. The 1954 addition has large twelve-over-twelve wood windows paired along the north and west facades. At the east of the original Home Economics building, two doors have been infilled, one with plywood board and the other retrofitted with windows. The latter also has remaining evidence of stairs and curved metal handrails. It is likely this was the main entryway to the building once the 1947 addition was in place. A small lawn of grass and flowers sits adjacent to the building at the southwest.

A sidewalk runs along the east facade between the adjacent 1963 kitchen addition separating the cottage from the main school building. An accessibility ramp is located at the west to gain access to one of the main entries. The other entry is located at the north facade and set back within a vestibule. At the interior, the southern half of the current footprint has carpeted floors in the entry lobby, baseboard, and chair rail ornamentation. The original main room in the southern section features: hardwood floors; a fireplace; built-in cabinets located along the west wall; dentil crown molding at the plaster ceiling; baseboard of bead and rectangular design; and chair rail of bead and bolection design with a quadrant wood bead. All of these features are original. At the southeast corner of the room, there is a corner cabinet with dentil molding and divided glass lite leafs at the upper half, drawers at the center, and wood doors at the lower half. There is evidence of a previous radiator below the built in cabinet. The kitchen located at the south end of the original building has been modified with linoleum tile, newer cabinetry, and relocation of the sink. The northern section of the building has carpet, vinyl cove base, drop-in ceiling tiles, fluorescent lights, and simple metal doors throughout. In some cases, the plenum space from drop-in ceiling tiles obscure the upper portion of the exterior windows. The building is in good condition and well maintained.

#### *Degree of Integrity*

The home economics cottage retains a low to moderate degree of integrity. The integrity at the exterior is impacted by the insensitively located additions to the north obstructing the main facade and many of the building's original defining features. The integrity to the interior of the original building retains many of the unique features of the original construction such as the wood flooring, fireplace, cabinetry, and other details. The interiors of the 1947 and 1954 additions have been renovated to include drop ceilings, linoleum tile, and carpet.

#### **“Old” Shop (Contributing Building)**

The “Old” Shop, is a contributing building located at the southeast end of the site, just north of the athletic fields. The building is a rectangular one-story utilitarian Colonial Revival and Moderne brick structure added to the campus in 1944. Oriented east to west, the building is approximately 60 feet wide by 90 feet long and constructed of multi-wythe brick in 2-stretcher brick Flemish bond with tan mortar tooled with a concave finish.

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Figure 3. Historic photo of the “old” shop from a 1943 yearbook showing the principal facade and one set of garage doors, view from northeast.

This building originally consisted of an open space with a few existing walls along the northwest of the building, as seen in the 1988 renovation drawings.<sup>5</sup> The design of the building also appears to have been originally planned in the PWA grant funding listed by the School Board. The building was most recently used as administrative office space for the private school. The exterior is in good condition with five chimneys piercing the flat roof and numerous steel awning windows with brick rowlock sills on each facade. The “old” shop is connected to the “new” shop through the corridor at the south of the music building. Garage doors were originally located at the north facade set slightly to the east and surrounded by the large windows. The garage doors were removed and replaced with a set of double doors surrounded by slightly inset brick. This area of inset brick represents the space taken up previously by the garage doors. A set of exit doors are also located at the center of the east facade.

During the 1988 renovation, interior walls were added along the perimeter of the building to create office spaces and partitions added at the center of the building to create cubicles. In some areas along the windows one can view the original brick. This building is in good condition with deterioration due to deferred maintenance, most notably at the windows.

#### *Degree of Integrity*

The old shop retains a low to moderate degree of integrity. The exterior of the building maintains a moderate degree of integrity that is only diminished by the infilling of the original garage doors. The interior has a low degree of integrity as the once open space has been reorganized to accommodate numerous office spaces and desks. This was altered in 1988 along with the installation of interior finishes of drop ceilings, gypsum board applied over brick, carpet, and fluorescent lights. The 1988 alterations are all reversible.

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<sup>5</sup> RTKL Virginia Corp. “Former Walt Whitman Intermediate School”. October 28, 1988.

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### **“New Shop” (Noncontributing Building)**

The “New” Shop is a non-contributing building that was constructed in 1954 to the west of the “Old” Shop and to the south of the music building. The one story rectangular-plan building is set east-to-west approximately 90 feet by 100 feet and has a simple utilitarian design with steel awning windows on the north, east, and south facades. The brick is set in common bond with a CMU backup wall and tan mortar with a concave finish. According to a Fairfax County Public School memorandum dated February 27, 1985, this building was constructed as a wood shop, metal shop, and two additional classrooms.<sup>6</sup> The original classrooms are located along the north with additional classrooms added during the 1988 renovation to divide the once open space. According to the 1988 drawings, the north space was divided with several partitions that created classrooms, but the south area of the building was open.<sup>7</sup> The original classrooms in this space have built in cabinets of similar design as the main building. Most recently, the classrooms in this building were for the elementary aged children. At the south facade, there is evidence of a set of previously infilled personnel doors and garage doors with the concrete drive surface at the garage door, the square canopy above the door, stairs to the door, and metal handrail at the steps left in place. The previous garage openings have been infilled with wood and two windows and the personnel doors infilled with stretcher brick. Brick site walls with rowlock brick coping are connected to the west facade of this building obscuring the mechanical systems.

### **Music Building (Noncontributing building)**

The one story square brick building is a non-contributing building that was constructed in 1962 to the south of the auditorium and north of the “old” and “new” shops. The building is rectangular in plan approximately 120 feet by 60 feet set east-to-west. The music building was part of the last addition to the school to house the band and choral groups, which also included the gymnasium and cafeteria/library additions. Most recently, classrooms were located along the west and the band room and English as Second Language (ESL) rooms at the east. The music building and connecting hallway are one story tall with exit doors on the east and west facades that lead into the paved parking lot just south of the main building. The music building is constructed of brick and CMU and has large steel awning windows along all facades. There are additional exit doors at the southwest corner of the building and a southern corridor that leads to the “old” shop (east) and “new” shop (west). At this corridor, there is a pair of exit doors on the east and west facades that open onto the paved parking lot area. A canopy covers these doors and extends from the south facade of the main music building to the north facades of the “old” and “new” shops. At this juncture between the building and canopy, there is considerable step cracking in the brick emanating from the connection point. An additional canopy is located at the southern end of the corridor that extends between the west facade of the “old” shop and the east facade of the “new” shop. The large aluminum window at this south wall appears to have replaced a doorway as it spans from the floor to the ceiling. The interior finishes were altered in 1988 with the installation of linoleum floor tiles and carpet, drop ceiling tiles, and fluorescent lights.

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<sup>6</sup> Tom Hanton, Fairfax County Public Schools, Memorandum Re: Whitman Intermediate, February 27, 1985

<sup>7</sup> RTKL Virginia Corp. “Former Walt Whitman Intermediate School”. October 28, 1988.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1939 - 1953

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1939

1943

1944

1947

1951

1952/1953

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Public Works Administration (1939)

Nuchols, C.E. (1939)

Dixon and Norman, Architects (1952-1953)

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Original Mount Vernon High School is eligible for listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Education and Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Under Criterion A, Mount Vernon High School is locally significant as a school constructed under the federally funded Public Works Administration. To accommodate the need to update public school facilities, as well as spur the economy, the program was initiated by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt to fulfill the goals of the “New Deal” program and combat further economic decline. The school was constructed during the Jim Crow era of segregation and was built for the locality’s white students. Under Criterion C, the school is a good example of Colonial Revival Institutional design, one of the design options listed under the Public Works Administration program and popular during the time of construction. Early additions to the school reflect the continued growth of the metropolitan area after World War II and the resulting growing student population. Former Governor Charles “Chuck” Robb is one of the notable graduates from Mount Vernon High School. By 1960, the school accommodated a student body of approximately 1,300. The four significant additions were designed to be sensitive to the original main building and echo the Colonial Revival style. Those that were not attached to the main building were designed with a Moderne influence. The period of significance begins in 1939, the date of construction, and ends in 1953 when the gymnasium/cafeteria were added. These were the last two buildings constructed and planned under the PWA funding. The Original Mount Vernon High School did not desegregate until 1965, after the period of significance.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Original Mount Vernon High school sits atop a slight hill prominently overlooking Washington-Richmond Highway within a collective area of land acquired by the Fairfax County School Board in 1938, 1941, and 1948. The school location is within the unincorporated community of Mount Vernon, Virginia, originally part of George Washington’s Mount Vernon estate.<sup>8</sup> The first parcel purchased by the Fairfax County School Board to build the Original Mount Vernon High School was purchased from George P. Beach on December 1, 1938.<sup>9</sup> Beach purchased a 124.478 acre parcel from Margaretta L. Agnew on April 16, 1938 with the school’s tract edging the Washington-Richmond Highway to its south and included 300 feet of frontage along the highway.<sup>10</sup> The school was constructed in 1939 with funding from The Public Works Administration (PWA) to accommodate the ever-growing Fairfax County public school system.

The school is significant under Criterion A in the area of Education because of its association with the PWA and with Fairfax County’s school modernization efforts. Wilbert T. Woodson, Fairfax County School Superintendent, was in his position from 1929 until 1961. During his tenure, he focused on modernizing the school system, which primarily consisted of racially segregated one-, two- and three-room school buildings, by updating and consolidating facilities, and providing a more conducive

<sup>8</sup> Virginia Department of Historic Resources Architectural Survey Form, “Mount Vernon High School,” DHR ID: 029-0230, 1987.

<sup>9</sup> Fairfax County Deed Book G-13, page 207–208.

<sup>10</sup> Fairfax County Deed Book G-13, page 207–208.

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education and learning environment.<sup>11</sup> Woodson was instrumental in replacing small schools with larger facilities with modern conveniences, such as indoor toilets and electricity; although public funds were used, such improvements went first to schools for white children and later, if at all, to schools for African American children. The PWA funding provided opportunities for Woodson to accomplish his goals during the mid-1930s.

During this period in Virginia, the Virginia School Board was heavily involved in the planning of school buildings. In coordination with PWA funding, the State School Architect's office, under the direction of Raymond V. Long, was responsible for administering and managing PWA school projects.<sup>12</sup> The Fairfax County School Board organized a docket of school construction projects for PWA grant funding in 1935 and in June 1938, the School Board received grant funding approval. Recorded in the October 28, 1938 school board meeting minutes the list of schools and related scope of work was updated to reflect work completed without federal aid during the almost 3-year interim. On that list, a \$100,000 request for the land purchase and construction of Mount Vernon High School. The scope described for Mount Vernon High School was to "cover purchase of the site, drilling of a well, construction of a new brick building of 14 classrooms, 2 offices, library, stack room, 2 toilet rooms, combined auditorium/gymnasium, home economics cottage, shop and central heating plant, and water system." Students from the five adjacent area schools were to be redistributed and assigned to the newly constructed Mount Vernon High School to assist in balancing out the student population.

Other buildings on the construction list included schools in Fairfax, Burke, Fairview, Dunn Loring, Gum Spring, East Woodford, and Merrifield.<sup>13</sup> Fairfax High School, currently known as Paul VI Catholic High School located on Fairfax Boulevard, is the only other PWA funded high school in Fairfax County. Listed in December 5, 1939 School Board minutes, Long was involved in the design and construction of the Mount Vernon High School. Long, whose career lasted until 1960, was also involved in designing 35 more public schools within the Commonwealth as the State School Architect.<sup>14</sup> The Mount Vernon High School building, constructed by general contractor C.E. Nuckols, was completed on December 5, 1939 and the school dedicated on January 25, 1940.<sup>15</sup> The school was named after the nearby George Washington estate Mount Vernon.

Additional land parcels were acquired by the Fairfax County School Board in 1941 and 1948 for inclusion with the original school parcel, supporting the school's continuous growth over the next twenty-five years with the construction of additions in the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s.

A wood building, known as the frame shop, was constructed by 1943 to the southwest of the main building approximately where the "New" Shop currently stands. The frame shop was converted to the Custodian's house in 1947, also called the Caretaker's Cottage. The frame shop was one of the earliest additions and only known permanent building that is no longer extant.

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<sup>11</sup> Heritage Resources, Fairfax County Dept. of Planning and Zoning, Fairfax County Inventory of Historic Sites, Individual Property Nomination Form, "Dunn Loring Elementary School," October 15, 2009, 8. Additional information about Virginia's racially segregated public education system is available in the NRHP nomination for the Baker Public School, City of Richmond (NRHP 2016), Sharon Indian School, King William County (NRHP 2007) and the Rosenwald Schools in Virginia Multiple Property Documentation Form (NPS Approved 2004).

<sup>12</sup> Heritage Resources, "Dunn Loring Elementary School," 9.

<sup>13</sup> Fairfax School Board Meeting Minutes, October 28, 1938.

<sup>14</sup> Virginia Department of Historic Resources Preliminary Information Form Resource Information Sheet "George Washington High School".

<sup>15</sup> Herndon Observer, January 25, 1940, page 1. Virginia Room, FCPL.

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By 1944, the building included an access drive leading toward the southwest corner of the building from the Washington-Richmond Highway. A flagpole was set in the broad turf lawn that fronted the building towards the northeast of the main facade. The main entrance was punctuated by a wide stair edged by brick and masonry cheek walls set beneath the Colonial pediment with shrubs along the foundation perimeter. The cheek walls were often utilized for 1940s yearbook group photographs. Land south and east of the school's main building accommodated the needs of several sports teams including football, baseball, volleyball, cheerleading, as well as physical education programs. The women's physical education field was originally located where the gymnasium was constructed, east of the main building.<sup>16</sup> By 1951 and in between additions, the school consistently used Quonset Huts to accommodate the ever growing student population. These were located to the south of the existing Cafeteria and Library building. By 1951, the School Board Meeting Minutes reflect a discussion to construct a road off then known Highway Route 1 to provide a safer bus drop off/pick up area. This road became the sweeping drive currently located in front of the school.

In 1973, the personnel and students of Mount Vernon High School and the Walt Whitman Intermediate School, built in 1961, switched facilities. The building remained Walt Whitman Intermediate School until 1985 when the property was eventually declared surplus by the Fairfax County Public Schools in 1986. This was partially influenced by the extensive renovations required to bring the building into compliance with county policy. During this time, property ownership was transferred to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. In 1987, the Board of Supervisors entered into a long-term lease with a private school entity, which continued to use the school facilities until 2016. There are paved parking lots at the center of the campus around the buildings as well as to the east. A partial chain link fence restricts vehicle and pedestrian traffic onto the site. The athletic fields are south of the buildings and span southward with fencing around the perimeter. A playground was constructed south of the "Old" Shop just prior to the athletic fields. The campus, 154,335 square feet of space between all buildings, currently sits partially vacant.

The property is significant in regards to *Criterion A* as an example of the effects of the PWA and the "New Deal" program enacted by President Roosevelt across the nation. Federal funding was geared towards construction and manufacturing to bolster capital improvements and investments along with employment opportunities. The economy affected the households of many and by March 1933, left 25 percent of the population unemployed. Programs, such as the PWA, allowed local jurisdictions to continue capital improvement projects, which had virtually ceased during this time of insecurity. The funding provided for the main building of Mount Vernon High School was \$100,000 in 1938. It was just one school on a list of many planned for the area and just one of 300 educational building construction projects in the state of Virginia. Architectural designs offered by the PWA typically reflected Art Deco influences prior to 1937 and Colonial Revival influences after 1937. Mt. Vernon High School is also eligible under *Criterion C, Architecture*. The main building, with a construction date of 1939, is a good example of the Colonial Revival Style, which became popular throughout the United States, especially for schools and other institutional buildings.

The school continued to evolve and grow as population in the area soared during and after World War II. The first and second additions to the school, the Home Economics Cottage to the west in 1943 and the "old" shop to the south in 1944, appear to be part of the original design intent for the site as they are

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<sup>16</sup> April 1951, Mount Vernon High School "Em Vee Hi: School Newspaper, 1951, MSS 1104 Series D Box 1 File 1-1951

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described in the original funding request. These buildings were of differing architecture reflecting the intended uses. The Home Economics Cottage reflects a Colonial Revival design and gives the appearance, both on the exterior and interior, of a home atmosphere. Whereas the “old” shop is a square, utilitarian structure with large open spaces to support the building’s use. The exterior giving way from slight Colonial Revival influence to a more Moderne style. The school quickly found itself overwhelmed with students and for several years the school system continued to construct and add to the campus facilities. The next round of construction expanded already built facilities with the west wing of the main building and north extension of the Home Economics Cottage in 1947, almost doubling the capacity. By 1947, the student population grew to approximately 600 students for all grades, 8th through 12th. The senior class alone constituted 103 students.<sup>17</sup>

The east wing of the main building quickly followed in 1951, adding more classrooms to support the school population of approximately 900 students. During this same year, the Board of Supervisors documented in the November 28 meeting minutes the serious need for site improvement for the area where buses pick up and drop off the students. Since the school’s construction, the buses would drive onto the schoolyard with the occasional need to stop on Route #1 during bad weather. W.T. Woodson, Division Superintendent of Schools, stated that 18 school buses were used to take students to and from the school and the potential safety issue of stopping on Route #1 necessitated the construction of an access road to the school that would be utilized by the buses.<sup>18</sup> The note of urgency was accepted by the Department of Highways effective January 3, 1952 with the work to commence shortly thereafter.<sup>19</sup> Both the east and west wings were constructed sensitively to the main building as the Colonial Revival architecture is echoed in the exterior facing facades of these buildings, with steel awning windows only visible at the interior facing facades, now facing the courtyard. By 1951, the school was using two Quonset huts that were located to the west of the “old” shop in an attempt to keep up pace with student attendance demand. The next span of construction was designed by Dixon and Norman, Richmond Architects, between 1952 and 1953 to keep pace with demand. This resulted in the gymnasium addition, auditorium addition to the main building, and cafeteria/library addition. These additions reflect a Moderne influence with flat roofs and steel awning windows.

The National Center for Education Statistics reports that the percentage of 14 to 17 year olds attending secondary schools rose from around 30 percent in 1920 and steadily increased to 65 percent by 1940. Further evidence of the nationwide trend of increasing enrollment is mirrored in the statistic that in 1920 less than 20 percent of 17 year olds were high school graduates and that by 1960 the percentage of 17 year olds who were high school graduates had increased to about 65 percent. During the years of US engagement in WWII, the secondary education rate dropped to about 60 percent (presumably as young men left school to join the armed forces) and then rose again following the war to hover in the 80th percentile between 1955 and 1992. This trend reflects a shift in market conditions with a move from a more agricultural focus to an industrial focus in the US job market. This precipitated a stronger focus on more uniform and a broader education of the population.

Remaining building additions were constructed in 1954 with the west addition of the Home Economics Building and construction of the “new” shop. The “new” shop replaced the wood structure built as the Custodian’s House/Caretaker’s Cottage that was an early structure to the campus. By 1958, the school was using four Quonset huts to accommodate the student body. As documented by a 1958 facilities inventory, the school also contained 1,200 metal lockers and 650 seats in the auditorium to accommodate

<sup>17</sup> The Surveyor, Alexandria, Virginia, 1947.

<sup>18</sup> Fairfax County School Board Meeting Minutes, November 28, 1951.

<sup>19</sup> Fairfax County School Board Meeting Minutes, January 17, 1952.

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the students.<sup>20</sup> The High School Educations and Architectural Program Chart filled out on March 24, 1961 documented the current enrollment of 1,300 students supporting the need to continue the facilities growth, which undoubtedly influenced the final round of major additions.<sup>21</sup>

In 1962, the music building was constructed south of the auditorium followed by the gymnasium and kitchen additions in 1963. These were the last major modifications done to the building. The kitchen addition accommodated a total of 1,100 meals that would be served in three separate shifts to manage the number of students within the enlarged spaced. The population demand on the school was consistent after the last round of facility additions with a student body of 1,249 persons. In 1973, Mount Vernon High School and Walt Whitman Intermediate School switched facilities. By 1985, enrollment totaled 707 and the school building was considered surplus to the needs of Fairfax County Public Schools with other school buildings in close proximity to Mount Vernon having capacity to accommodate the reallocated student body of Mount Vernon High School.<sup>22</sup>

Buildings and additions constructed between 1954 and 1963 were of simple square design with little ornamentation. All buildings throughout the site have brick masonry exteriors, tan mortar, and similar mortar finishes reflecting the long-standing attempt to create a cohesive finish material, yet architecturally unique buildings. This is evident with all additions being modestly designed from the original Colonial Revival main building, which remains the prominent feature of the building.

Architecturally, Mount Vernon High school is significant under Criterion C as an excellent example of Colonial Revival institutional architecture associated with the Public Works Administration program. It was not uncommon for school buildings to be constructed in what was known as “PWA Classical” because it was used so extensively in the construction of public buildings during the 1930s. Late Century Revival architecture began to grow in popularity in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a response to the sometimes dark, heavy and asymmetrical Victorian and Gothic architecture that had become popular in prior decades. At the Columbian Exposition in Chicago the “White City” echoed the growing popularity of the Classical Revival styles and influenced the resurgence of the more “traditional” style. It is a style that remains popular for public buildings despite other architecturally more forward and modern trends.

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<sup>20</sup> Fairfax County Public Schools, 1958 Inventory of Buildings, Moun-Vn-1.

<sup>21</sup> State Department of Educations, Richmond, Virginia, High School Educational and Architectural Program Chart, March 24, 1961.

<sup>22</sup> Fairfax County Public Schools, Memorandum “Old” Whitman School Building and Property Needs, December 12, 1985.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Virginia Department of Historic Resources Architectural Survey Form, "Mount Vernon High School," DHR ID: 029-0230, 1987.

Willgoos, Graff & Davis Architect-Engineers, Additions and Alterations to Mt. Vernon Senior High School, Fairfax County, VA, Cafeteria and Kitchen, April 28, 1961.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA; Fairfax County, VA

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR No. 029-0230

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 10.58

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

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**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 38.731680 | Longitude: 77.102760 |
| 2. Latitude: 38.722400 | Longitude: 77.101430 |
| 3. Latitude: 38.731240 | Longitude: 77.100450 |
| 4. Latitude: 38.729400 | Longitude: 77.100870 |
| 5. Latitude: 38.729110 | Longitude: 77.101400 |
| 6. Latitude: 38.730680 | Longitude: 77.102770 |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |          |           |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Original Mount Vernon High School occupies tax parcel numbers 101-4((1)) 5A and 101-4((7)) 1 as recorded by Fairfax County, Virginia. The true and correct historic boundaries are shown on the attached Sketch Map and Tax Parcel Map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary is drawn to encompass the entire school campus and its acreage that has been associated with the school since its construction in 1939. The boundary thereby includes the property's historic setting as well as all known historic resources.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Rebecca Wong  
organization: Wiss Janney Elstner Associates, Inc.

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Name of Property

Fairfax County, VA  
County and State

street & number: 2751 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 450  
city or town: Fairfax state: VA zip code: 22031  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
telephone: 703 641 4601  
date: 25 October 2017

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

The following information is common to all photographs except photo #4, which was taken in June 2016 by Stephanie Goodrich with Fairfax County:

Name of Property: Original Mount Vernon High School

City or Vicinity: Alexandria

County: Fairfax

State: Virginia

Photographer: Rebecca Wong

Date Photographed: April 18, 2017

VA DHR #: 029-0230

1 of 26.

Original Mount Vernon High School  
Name of Property

Fairfax County, VA  
County and State

Description of Photograph(s): View of Original Mount Vernon High School's main facade, north, camera facing southwest.

2 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of athletic fields, south of school campus, camera facing southwest.

3 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of main building's main facade, north, camera facing southeast.

4 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of the main building's cupola, south facade, camera facing northeast.

5 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of the main building's second floor hallway, camera facing east.

6 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of the main building's east hallway as it transitions to the east wing, camera facing south.

7 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of south hallway, camera facing west.

8 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of stage and auditorium seating from upper balcony, camera facing south.

9 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of auditorium seating from the stage, camera facing north.

10 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of a typical classroom in the original building with chalkboards, room trim, and original wood windows; camera facing southeast.

11 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of a typical laboratory classroom at the second floor of the main building, camera facing northeast.

12 of 26.

Original Mount Vernon High School  
Name of Property

Fairfax County, VA  
County and State

Description of Photograph(s): View of a typical classroom in the south hallway, camera looking west.

13 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Home economics building principal facade, camera looking northeast.

14 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Main space of the original home economics building with original fireplace and ornamental trim, camera looking west.

15 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Principal facade of the "old" shop, north facade, camera looking southwest.

16 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Interior view of the "old" shop", camera looking southeast.

17 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of the gymnasium's principal facade, north facade, camera looking southwest.

18 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Interior view of the gymnasium space, upper floor, camera looking north.

19 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Locker room space with facilities beyond, first floor women's locker room, camera looking south.

20 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Principal facade of the cafeteria and library, east facade, camera looking northwest.

21 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of the cafeteria space, camera looking south.

22 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): View of library room, camera looking south.

23 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Principal facade of the "new" shop showing previous garage and personnel doors now infilled, south facade, camera looking north.

Original Mount Vernon High School  
Name of Property

Fairfax County, VA  
County and State

24 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Typical classroom in the “new” shop with built in cabinet and steel awning windows, camera looking northwest.

25 of 26.

Description of Photograph(s): Principal facade of the music building, west facade, camera looking east.

26 of 26

Description of Photograph(s): Stage space in the music building, camera looking north.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.