DHR | Virginia Department of Historic Resources

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 058-5573

1. General Property Information

Property name: Park View High School

Property address: 205 Park View Circle

City or Town: South Hill

Zip code: 23970

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Mecklenburg

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):

Building X Site ____ Structure ____ Object ____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 14.08

Setting (choose only one of the following):

Urban ____ Suburban ____ Town ____ Village ____ Hamlet ____ Rural X

Briefly describe the property's overall location and setting, including any notable landscape features:

See attached National Register Nomination Form.

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3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): __International Style__

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: _Samuel N. Mayo (1955 campus), Gordon B. Galusha (1978 addition, vocational building)_

If the builder is known, please list here: _English Construction Company, J.E. Burton Construction Company_

Date of construction (can be approximate): _1955, 1978_

Narrative Description (Please do not exceed one page in describing the property):
Briefly describe the property's general characteristics, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions or other major alterations.

See attached National Register Nomination Form.

In a bullet list, include any outbuildings or secondary resources or major landscape features (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

See attached National Register Nomination Form.

4. Property's History and Significance (Please do not exceed one page)

Briefly explain the property's historic importance, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property.
If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

See attached National Register Nomination Form.

Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property, such as deeds, census and tax records, and/or published articles and books. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

See attached National Register Nomination Form.

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: _____ Public\Local __X___ Public\State _____ Public\Federal _____

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)
name/title: _Alex Gohschalk, County Administrator__
organization: _Mecklenburg County_
street & number: _PO Box 307_
city or town: _Boydton_ state: _VA_ zip code: _23917_
e-mail: _alex.gottschalk@mecklenburgva.com_ telephone: _(434) 738-6191_

Legal Owner's Signature: _____
Date: _10/21/24_____

• • Signature required for processing all applications for privately-owned properties. • •

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.
Contact person: _____
Daytime Telephone: _____

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)
name/title: _ Lena McDonald and Ashlen Stump _____
organization: _ Commonwealth Preservation Group _____
street & number: _536 W. 35th Street_____
city or town: _Norfolk__ state: _VA_ zip code: _23508_
e-mail: _ admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com__ telephone: _757-923-1900_
Date: _September 2024_____

PLEASE DO NOT ATTACH CONTINUATION SHEETS TO THIS FORM. THANK YOU!

Note: PIFs are prepared by applicants and evaluated by DHR staff and the State Review Board based on information known at the time of preparation. Recommendations concerning PIFs are subject to change if new information becomes available.

OMB Control No. 1024-0018
expiration date 03/31/2026

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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: Park View High School
Other names/site number: Park View Senior High School; DHR # 058-5573
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: 205 Park View Circle
City or town: South Hill State: VA County: Mecklenburg
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___B ___C ___D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

_____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	☐
Public – Local	X
Public – State	☐
Public – Federal	☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	☐
Site	☐
Structure	☐
Object	☐

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
1	0	objects
4	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
EDUCATION/ School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; GLASS; WOOD; METAL; CONCRETE

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.)

Summary Paragraph

Park View High School is located along U.S. Route 1, approximately one mile west of the incorporated boundary of the Town of South Hill in rural Mecklenburg County, Virginia. Completed in 1955, the school occupies a large, grassy tract of approximately 14.08 acres north of U.S. Route 1/ U.S. Route 58, a collocated, 5-lane, undivided highway. Architect Samuel N. Mayo designed the 1955 campus, main school building, and agricultural building, all of which have remained largely unaltered up to the present. Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, designed the modestly-sized, 1978 classroom addition on the rear wing of the main school building as well as the 1978 vocational building. The property's primary resource is the sprawling, 1-story, brick-veneer, International Style high school with an H-shaped plan and flat roof. The building is situated upon a manmade, terraced knoll above the road grade. Due to the building's horizontal massing and raised site, it is partially concealed from view from the roadway. A monument-type, brick sign, donated by the Class of 1962, stands on the terraced lawn closest to U.S. Routes 1/58 and is parallel to the highway; it is a contributing object. A curving driveway, Park View Circle, extends from the north edge of the road up to the south end of the school, where a large asphalt parking lot wraps around to the east façade.[1] Behind (west) of the main building are a 1955 agricultural shop building and a 1978 vocational building, both of which are contributing buildings. A prefabricated building stands adjacent to the agricultural building and is noncontributing because it postdates the school's period of significance. Park View High School retains high integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association related to its 1955-1978 period of significance.

[1] The campus buildings are not quite fully aligned on a north/south axis but for the sake of simplicity, each building is described as if it were facing directly east.

Narrative Description

Setting

As is typical of high schools built in rural Virginia during the 1950s, Park View High School is not located within an incorporated locality. Mimicking the period's pattern of constructing major new development projects in suburban locations, Park View was placed on a large, manicured tract of approximately 14.08 acres situated alongside a major road (Figure 1). Today, a sunken stormwater retention area located directly southeast of the manmade hillside and a rock-lined swale extending from the property's curving entry drive are the only obvious indications of the site's previously swampy character. The surrounding landscape has a rural, agricultural character, with woodlots interspersed among working fields and widely dispersed dwellings.

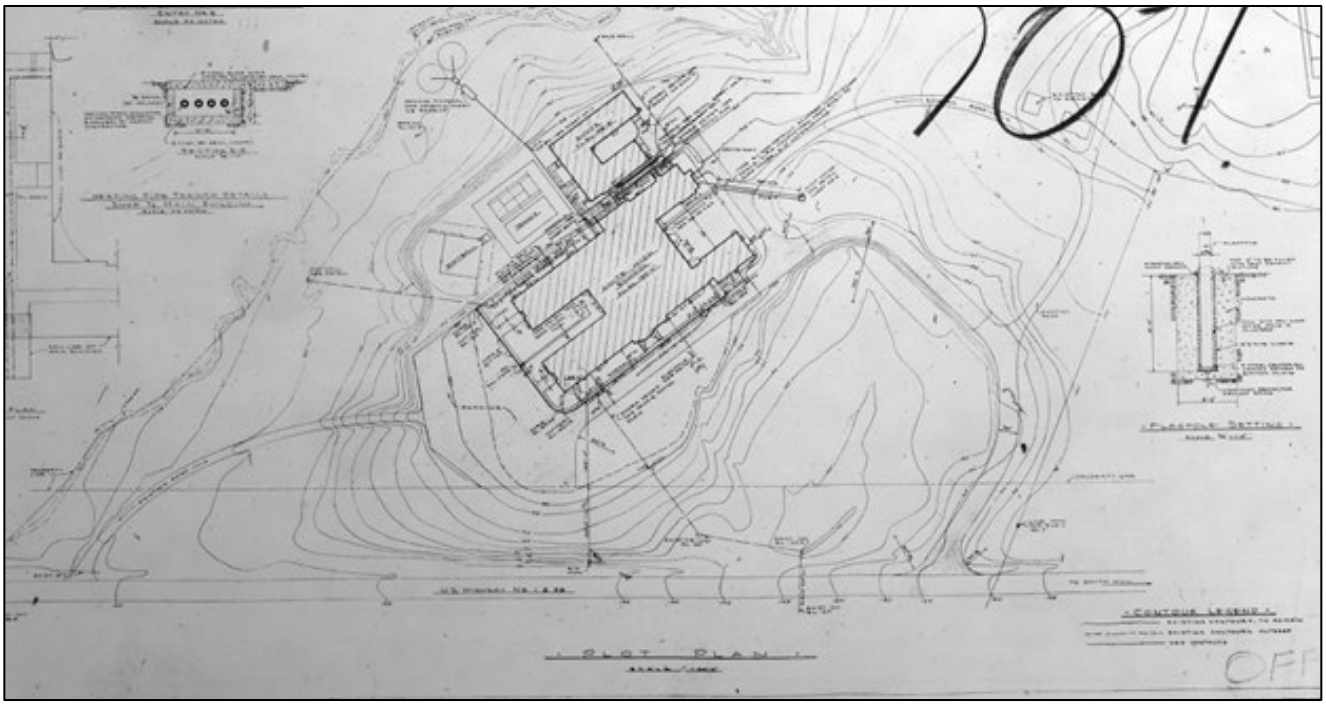

Figure 1. 1954 Site Plan (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

At the southwest end of Park View's campus, the entry drive extends from U.S. Routes 1/58 in a northeasterly direction, hugging the terraced landscape up to the south end of the high school building, where it turns the corner to extend across the school's east façade. A small rectangular visitors' parking area borders the eastern edge of the driveway directly across from the school's main entry. At the south end of the main school building, an asphalt parking lot extends from the driveway and wraps around to

span approximately one-third of the school's east façade. Streetlights are regularly spaced along the driveway and within the parking lot.[2]

A monument-type, brick sign, donated by the Class of 1962, stands on the terraced lawn closest to U.S. Routes 1/58 and is parallel to the highway, while the main school building stands atop the manmade knoll. Behind (west) of the school are a 1955 agricultural shop building and a 1978 vocational building. A prefabricated building is located adjacent to the agricultural building. A driveway extends along the school's northeast side. A paved parking lot fills the space between the school's two wings. Paving also covers the area adjacent to the east (rear) side of the 1955 agricultural building. The remains of a greenhouse and two popup storage sheds, as well as the aforementioned prefabricated building, are in the paved area. A concrete sidewalk spans the 1955 school's east façade and wraps around to the building's south (side) and west (rear) elevations. Behind the high school, a covered concrete sidewalk leads from the paved area on the campus's east side to the 1955 agricultural building and 1978 vocational building as well as the rear entrance to the 1955 school.

Northwest of the campus on a separate tract, accessed via Park View Lane, are a gymnasium built during the early 1980s, a large parking lot, and two baseball diamonds. Although used by the high school from the 1980s to 2022, the sports facilities are now owned by a private nonprofit organization. Because the gym and fields postdate Park View High School's period of significance, they are not included in the nominated boundary; however, they are not incompatible with the school's historic functions and significance.

Detailed Description

Park View High School – Main School Building, 1955, 1978, contributing building

Exterior

The main school building is a sprawling, 1-story, brick-veneer International Style building with an H-shaped plan and multiple flat roofs (Figure 2). The building has a slightly raised, poured concrete foundation, concrete block walls faced with red brick laid in a common bond, and shallow eaves clad with metal. The horizontality and low-slung massing that are character-defining features of the International Style are emphasized by the large rectangular window openings that contain a row of four double-hung wood sash and cast concrete sills in the lower one-third of the apertures and grids of glass block in the upper two-thirds. The glass block grids in each window opening are original to the building.[3] Devoid of ornamentation, the building's brick-veneer walls and contrasting eaves feature the smooth surfaces that also are characteristic of the International Style. The building's asymmetrical massing is composed of one-story wings that flank a slightly taller, left-of-center main entry block and the adjacent two-part block that houses the combined gymnasium and auditorium. On the south end of the rear

[2] During the property's period of significance, the driveway continued from the school building's northeast corner to curve around back to U.S. Routes 1/58. The section of the driveway northeast of the school building is now part of the neighboring property, which is under separate, private ownership and it is not known whether the driveway will be retained in its current configuration.

[3] In February 1954, the Mecklenburg County School Board voted to use glass blocks in the windows because they provided ample natural lighting and were more economical for keeping the classrooms heated during cold weather. See Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, February 8, 1954, p. 245, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

classroom wing is a three-bay addition constructed in 1978. The addition has the same type of red brick veneer and flat roof with metal-clad, slightly overhanging eaves; however, the windows have two awning-type lower sash topped with two fixed lights.

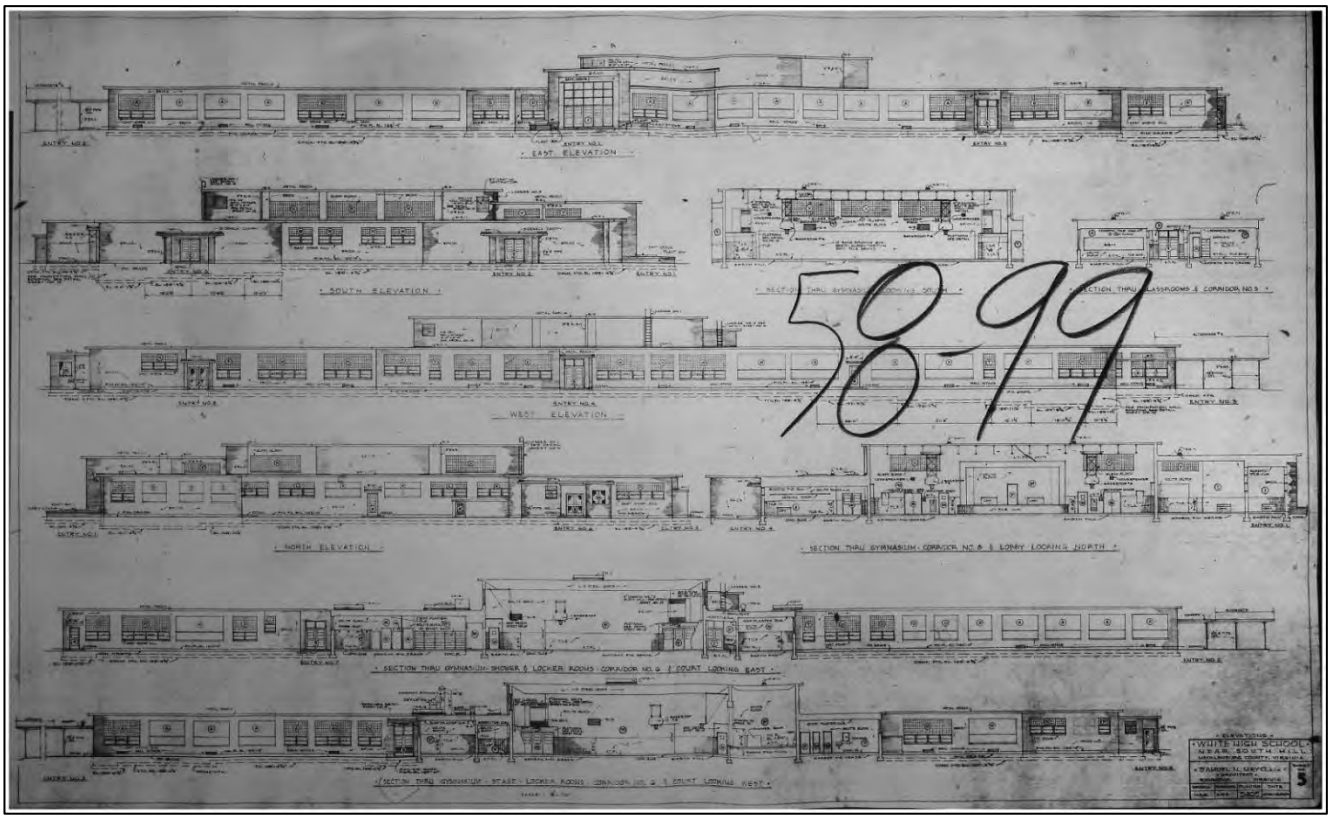

Figure 2. 1954 Elevation Drawings (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

Flanking the east façade's entry block are a 9-bay classroom wing to the south and a 13-bay classroom wing to the north. The entry block rises a few feet above the flat roofs of the flanking wing. Unaltered since its construction, the recessed entry features a series of five doors, each with a single panel in the lower half and three stacked horizontal lights in the upper half. Above the doors is a grid of 15 square lights set within a cast concrete surround. Beneath the slightly overhanging eave, the name "Park View High School" is spelled out in applied metal lettering that spans the entry bay.

The 9-bay south classroom wing is a single, smooth plane and is set back slightly from the entry block. At ground level, there are five regularly spaced rectangular openings filled with louvered metal vents. The north classroom wing has irregular massing, beginning with a projecting 2-bay section adjacent to the entry block's north wall, a 6-bay section that is flush with the south wing's façade, and a 4-bay projecting section. Each bay has the same type of windows as those on the south wing but for the fifth bay from the west, which has a secondary entry containing three-light double doors, each of which is surmounted by a square window like those on the entry block's façade.

The north wing's north (side) and west (rear) wall each has four bays containing windows with grids of glass blocks above two-light sash. An entry directly to the south and has double-leaf doors, above which are two square windows. Within the space formed by the school building's classroom wings, the 7-bay north (side) wall of the gymnasium/auditorium is fully visible. A centered entry has a cantilevered metal overhang and a single door with three stacked horizontal lights. East and west of the entry are three bays, each of which has smaller, rectangular windows with a two-light sash topped by a narrow strip of glass blocks. The east side of the rear classroom wing has four bays with windows of different sizes. All of the windows have the same configuration of glass blocks above the double-hung, two-light sash. The different window sizes are due to this section's historic use as the school cafeteria and kitchen. The north (side) wall of the rear classroom wing has a projecting three-bay section with a double-leaf entry flanked by a window and an opening for ventilation equipment. A ribbon of three small windows is to the west (right) of the projecting section. All of the windows on this wall have the same style of two-light sash topped with glass block grids as are found throughout the building. An above-ground gas or oil tank is adjacent to the rear wing's north (side) wall.

The west (rear) elevation of the rear wing begins with a five-bay section at the wing's north end that has a left-of-center entry with double-leaf doors flanked by irregularly sized windows. The configuration of the windows and door is due to the interior space's historic function as a kitchen and cafeteria. To the south (right) of this section is a four-bay, slightly projecting section with rectangular windows that flank two vertical windows; all of the windows have two-light sash topped with glass blocks. This section of the building originally housed the choir/music room. An entry is located immediately south of the projecting section. Its single-panel, three-light, double doors match those found elsewhere on the building, and a two-light transom is above the doors. A metal canopy above the entry and a concrete sidewalk extends west to the 1955 agricultural building and 1978 vocational building. To the south (right) of the entry are 11 bays, of which 10 have the same types of windows as found elsewhere on the building and a centered, single-leaf entry with a single-light, square transom. Attached to the south end of the rear classroom wing is the 1978 addition with three bays that each have a window with two awning-type lower sash and two fixed upper lights and a cast concrete sill.

The south (side) wall of the 1978 addition on the rear classroom wing is devoid of fenestration, but for a centered, slightly recessed entry with metal double doors, each of which has a narrow vertical light and a single-light, rectangular transom. In the grassy area between the classroom wings, the fenestration on the east wall of the 1978 section matches that of its west (rear) wall. The rear wing's east wall has 8 bays. The northernmost bay has an entry with double-leaf doors like those described elsewhere. The windows of the remaining 7 bays are of the same materials and design as the original windows throughout the building. The south (rear) wall of the main building between the two wings has two pairs of windows, each with two-light sash and glass block grids separated by a slightly wider expanse of plain brick. The west (rear) wall of the east classroom wing has 10 bays with windows identical to those already noted above. The south (side) wall of the east classroom wing has a centered entry with double-leaf doors. A sidewalk leads from the entry out to the driveway and parking lot. An original, flat-roofed, metal canopy with a slender metal column extends from the entry to the driveway.

Interior

From the east façade, the high school's principal entrance vestibule leads to a north/south corridor that extends the length of the building's east wing and an east/west corridor that leads to the building's rear side where it meets the rear wing's north/south corridor. The floor plan has not been altered since the building was completed in 1955; however, a small addition to the rear wing's south end extended the building's footprint in 1978. The historic interior finishes are generally intact and are typical of mid-20th century public schools in Virginia when materials that could be easily repaired or replaced were installed as routine practice. The flooring consists of square vinyl composition tiles. In all corridors, the walls are faced with a tile wainscot that covers the lower half of the wall, and painted concrete block rises up to the ceilings, which are finished with dropped grids with acoustical tiles and surface-mounted fluorescent tube lights. Mechanical equipment such as heating and air conditioning ducts, electrical wiring, electronic cables, and similar materials have been installed above the dropped ceiling. Interior entries have molded, painted wood casing with mitered corners. The metal doors feature stacked lights in the upper half and simple brass hardware. The classrooms have painted concrete block walls but no wainscoting.

The lobby retains the original built-in wood trophy case, which has wood-frame doors with four large lights and raised trim on the lower panels. Nearby is an original glass-and-wood enclosed bulletin board. Surface-mounted emergency lights, alarms, clocks, and exit signage are still present in all corridors. Within the east classroom wing, the original metal lockers once assigned to students are still in place. According to school alumnus Glenn Barbour, class of 1967, the west classroom wing did not ever have lockers. He added, "Before we built the new consolidated school, the superintendent took us on a tour of the [existing] schools. When I walked into Park View it was just like it was back in the '60s. Nothing had changed. The walls were tiled halfway up and block above, the floors were the same."[4]

Floor plans of the school building prepared in 1954 and 1977 are largely the same today (Figures 3 and 4). Administrative offices are in the immediate vicinity of the lobby. The wood double doors that open to the combined gymnasium/auditorium are on the lobby's west wall. After a detached gymnasium was constructed for Park View during the early 1980s, the school's library was moved into the former gym. The basketball hoops and bleachers have been removed from the space, while carpet covers the original wood flooring. The original stage centered on the former gym's north wall is intact. Dropped ceilings with acoustical tiles and flush-mounted fluorescent tube lights also were installed in the space, leaving the original, higher ceiling intact behind these materials. Wood bookshelves line the perimeter walls of the former gym and the stage. A corridor from the north (rear) side of the stage leads to the building's north exit. The showers and locker rooms that originally flanked the corridor have been remodeled to serve as a teacher workroom, two restrooms, a computer equipment room, and storage closets. The lockers and shower fixtures were removed; the ceramic tile flooring was either removed or covered with new materials. Simple wood or metal stud framing with gypsum wallboards have been added to separate the spaces and new floor finishes have been installed as needed. The existing offices and closets on the stage's east and west sides were retained in place and finished with new materials. Along the former gym's east, south, and west walls, similar partitions and interior finishes have been installed to create additional office and administrative spaces. Meanwhile, the former library in the east wing was

[4] Glenn Barbour, personal communication to Lena McDonald, August 28, 2024. In addition to being a graduate from Park View High School in 1967, Mr. Barbour served as a member of the Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors for 24 years and participated in the planning process for the consolidated high school that replaced Park View.

remodeled to provide offices for guidance counselors; finish materials are similar to those in the offices within the former gymnasium.

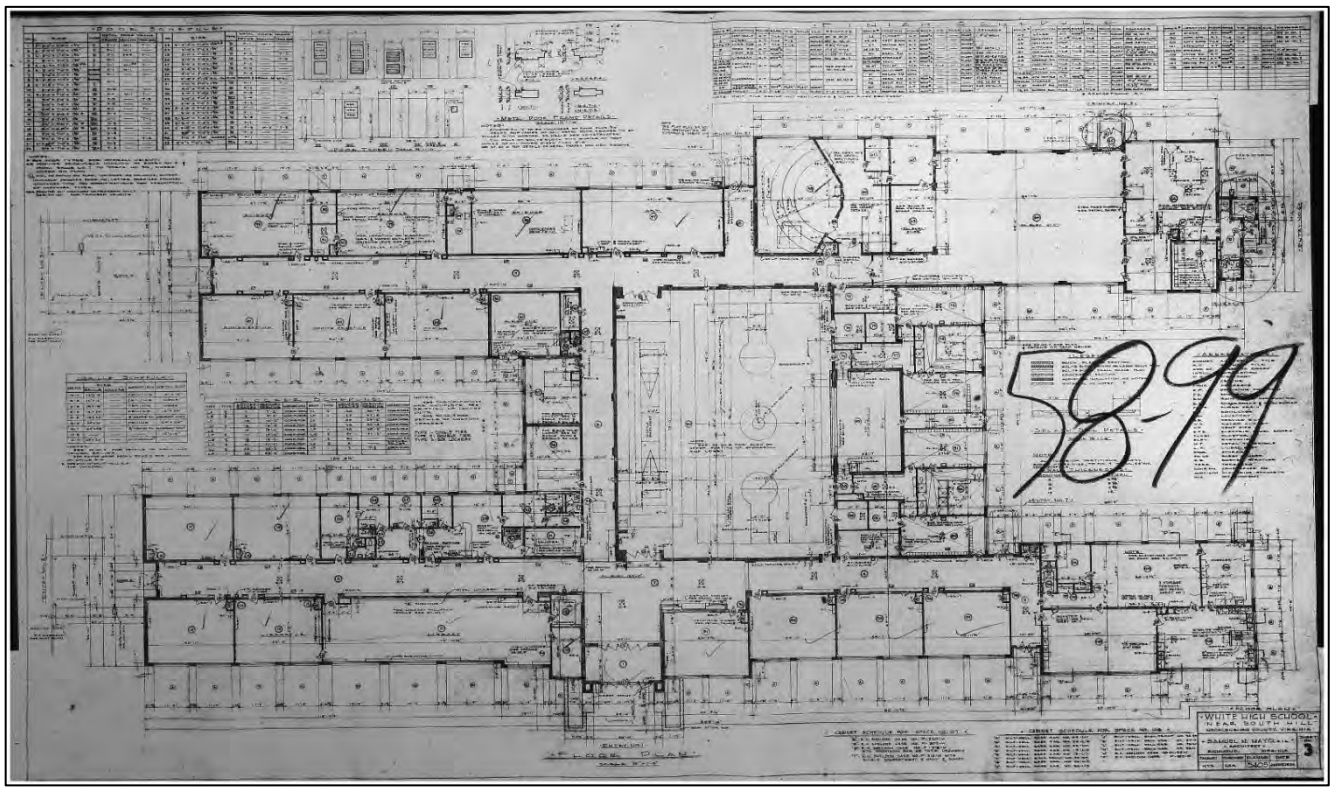

Figure 3. 1954 Floor Plan of High School Main Building (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

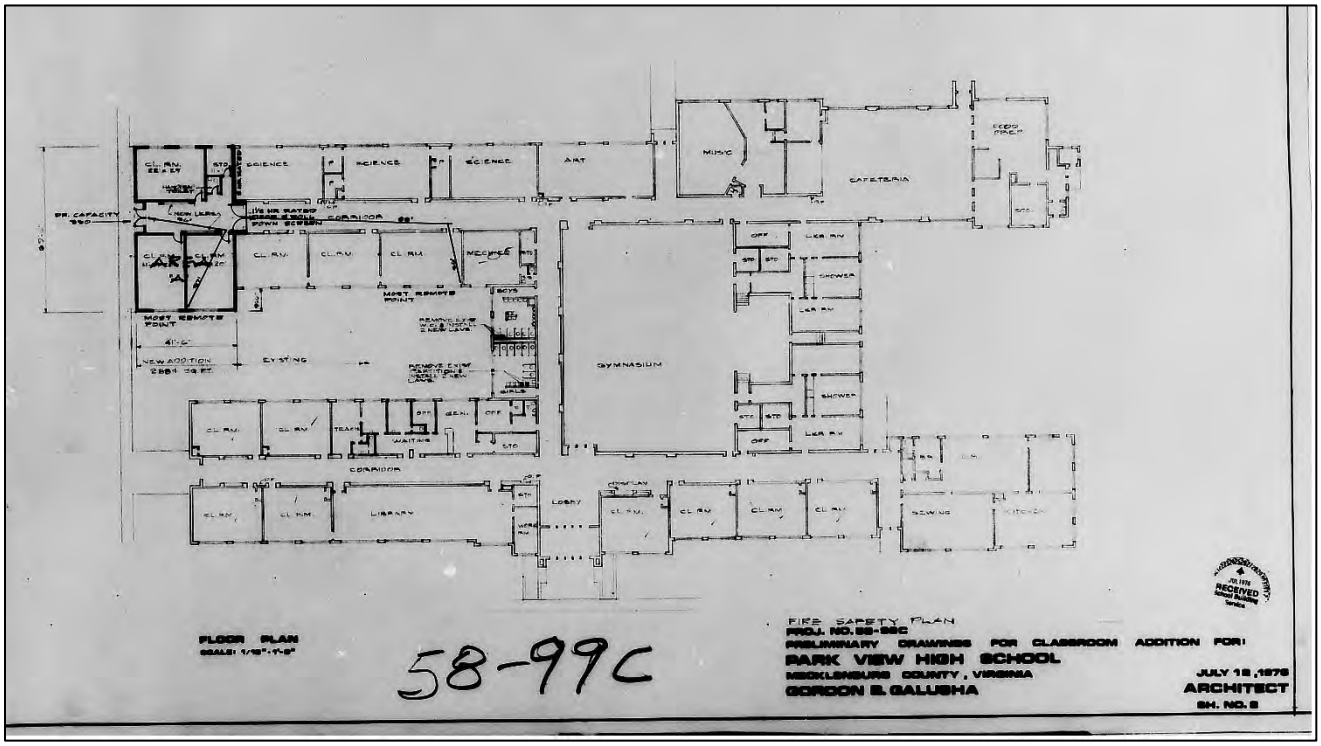

Figure 4. 1977 Floor Plan of High School Main Building; note classroom addition at top left of rear wing (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

The remaining rooms along the east wing's corridor are general-purpose classrooms. At the north end of the corridor is the former home economics department, a four-room area that retains original wood storage cabinets in both the main classroom and adjacent kitchen. At some point after 1980, the kitchen was remodeled when a culinary arts program was added to the school's vocational education curriculum. Most of the commercial-grade equipment installed for this program has been removed. A domestic-scale water heater, washing machine, and dryer are still in the kitchen's northwest corner.

In the west (rear) wing south of the intersecting east/west corridor, general-purpose classrooms are along the main corridor's south side, while science labs and a former art room are on the north side. The aforementioned 1978 addition has three classrooms and a closet (Figure 5). The wing's north end includes the former music room off the corridor's north side. Flooring in this space was covered with carpet and a series of three raised platforms provided space for students to play musical instruments and for the school choir to practice. Within the past 20 years, the music room was repurposed to serve as a distance education lab, which necessitated the installation of video and computer equipment but otherwise left the room unchanged. The west corridor terminates at the cafeteria and kitchen. A small, inset stage is on the cafeteria's south wall, likely because the cafeteria easily could be used for student assemblies without having to rearrange the furnishings. The cafeteria's interior finishes are of the same type and material as the rest of the building. Some of the cafeteria furnishings are still in place, such as

food service counters. The kitchen has ceramic tile flooring rather than vinyl composition tiles and some remnants of commercial-grade ventilation equipment but otherwise is finished with the same materials as the cafeteria.

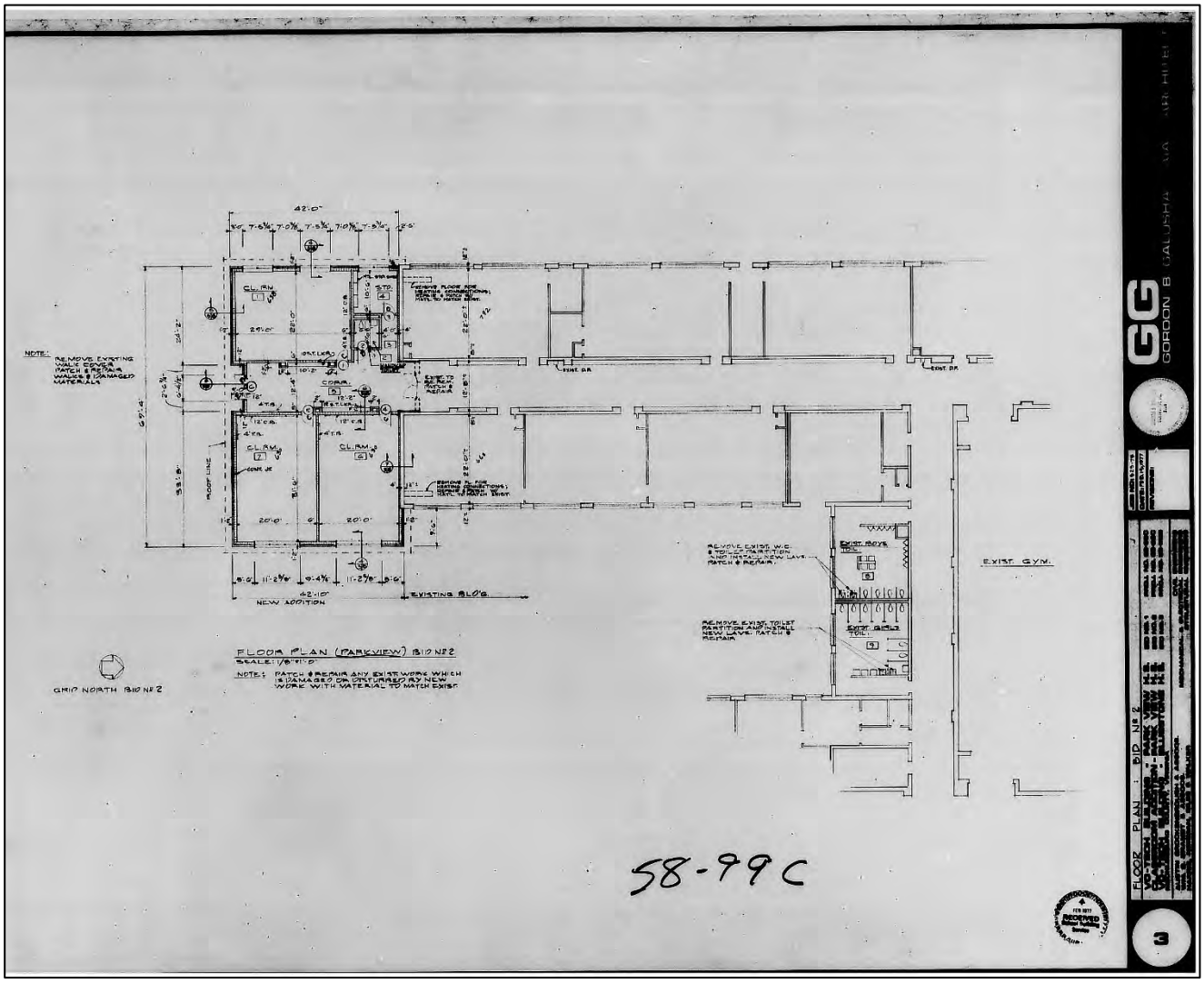

Figure 5. Detail of 1977 Classroom Addition to High School Main Building, Rear Wing (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

Agricultural Building, 1955, contributing building

The agricultural building stands at the main school building's northwest end. The one-story, concrete block building has a poured concrete foundation, red brick veneer laid in common bond, and a flat roof (Figure 6). The building is characterized by large groups of rectangular windows with groups of five, steel-frame stacked lights and concrete sills; the original architectural drawings indicate that these are the

original sash. Most of the lights are fixed, but a hopper sash is at each window's bottom corner. Originally, the agricultural building had a U-shaped footprint. The space between the two rear wings has been infilled to create a third classroom or shop area. Based on historic aerial photos, this additional space was constructed between 1967 and 1983; the addition likely dates to 1978 when the main building's addition was constructed and the two-story vocational building was added to the campus. The building's 9-bay south façade has two entries, each with double-leaf, single-panel, wood doors with three stacked lights and a two-light rectangular transom, all of which match the entries on the main school building. A cantilevered metal canopy with rounded corners is still above each entry; however, beneath them is a later covered walkway composed of square aluminum posts and a flat aluminum roof. Large windows flank the entries, each filled with sash as described above. Windows on both the building's east and west (side) walls are of the same configuration; however, three windows have been infilled with slightly recessed concrete block, leaving the original size and configuration of the openings intact. On the north (rear) of the building, each original wing's end wall has a metal overhead door with flanking windows and entries with flush metal doors, while the 1978 addition's north wall has two large windows with the same stacked-panel sash and concrete sills found on the other three elevations.

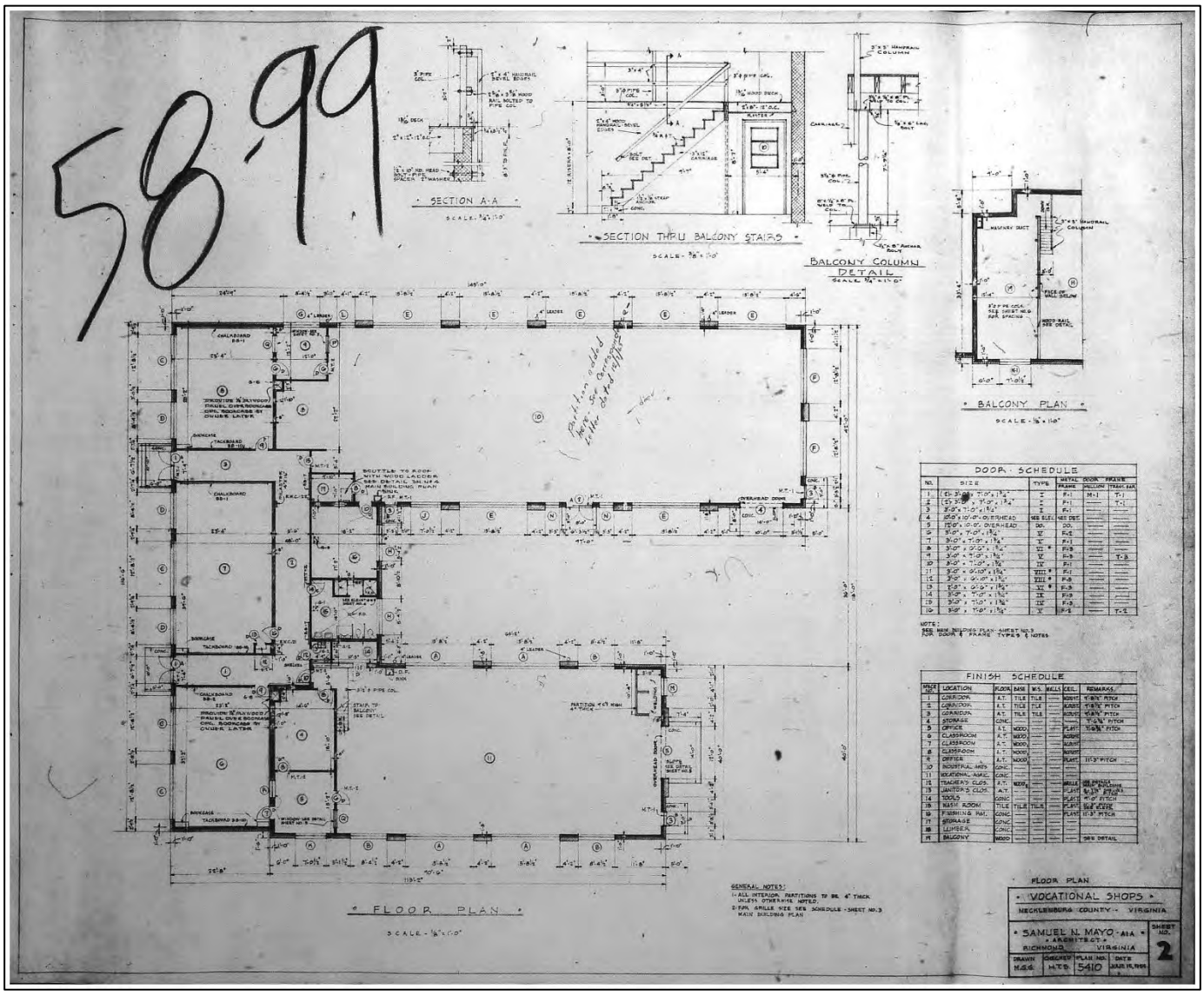

Figure 6. 1954 Floor Plan of Agricultural Vocational Building (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

On the interior, each entry leads directly to an east/west corridor with classrooms opening off each corridor. Instructors' offices and lavatories are on the north side of the east/west corridor. The addition between the original rear wings contains offices, storage closets, and two small restrooms. According to a floor plan that dates to the school's closure in 2022, the four original classrooms at the south end of the building were used for agricultural, science, drafting, and AutoCAD classes. The agricultural shop occupied the south rear wing, while the north rear wing had been converted for use by the school band and included several storage closets. The floors throughout the building are polished concrete, the walls within the corridor have the same type of tile wainscot and painted concrete block as the main school

building, and the ceilings have dropped grids with acoustical tiles and flush-mounted fluorescent tube lights. The classrooms have painted concrete block walls but no wainscoting. The rear wings each are composed primarily of large shop areas that historically were used for mechanical repair classes; the spaces were large enough to accommodate tractors, discers, and other mechanized agricultural equipment. The shop areas have poured concrete floors, painted concrete block walls, and exposed steel roof trusses from which are suspended fluorescent tube lights.

Vocational Building, 1978, contributing building

Architect Gordon B. Galusha designed the 1978 vocational building (Figures 7-8). The two-story building stands along the main school building's southeast (rear) side. Set slightly above the grade of the agricultural building, it is approached by a gently sloped concrete sidewalk with metal railing. Composed of a two-story front section and slightly lower rear block, the building has a poured concrete foundation, red brick veneer laid in common bond, and a flat roof. The north block's main entry is centered on the building's north façade and is sheltered by an aluminum walkway. The commercial-style entry system has double-leaf, metal-framed doors with large lights. Above the entry and covered walkway's roof is a large window composed of two stacked, fixed lights flanked by narrow sidelights. The north façade otherwise is devoid of fenestration. The front block's east and west (side) walls each have six bays. Five of the bays have windows with two-light casement metal sash on each story with a polished, black metal panel affixed to the wall between the stories. The southernmost bay of each side elevation has a slightly recessed entry with steel double doors with narrow vertical windows. Above each entry is a polished metal panel and on the second story is a window with two casement sash.

The south block is not quite two stories in height and extends a short distance beyond the planes of the two-story section's east and west walls. The east and west (side) walls are devoid of fenestration but for an entry; on the west wall, the entry is centered and has double-leaf, flush metal doors. On the east wall, a single-leaf entry is at the south end of the elevation and has a flush metal door. The 7-bay south (rear) wall is composed of a series of five metal overhead doors and two entries with single-leaf, metal doors that are in the west half of the elevation.

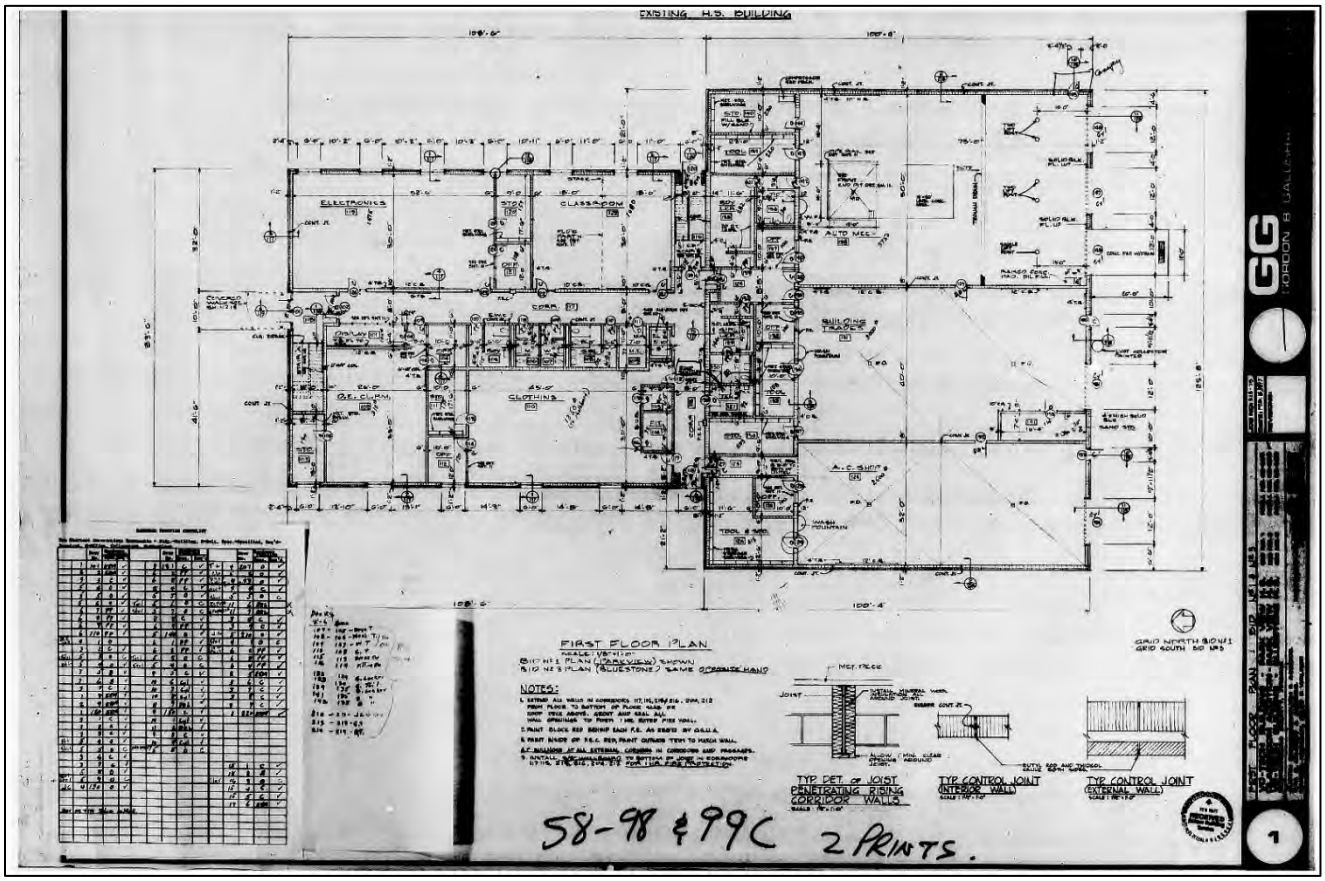

Figure 7. 1977 First Floor Plan of Vocational Building (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

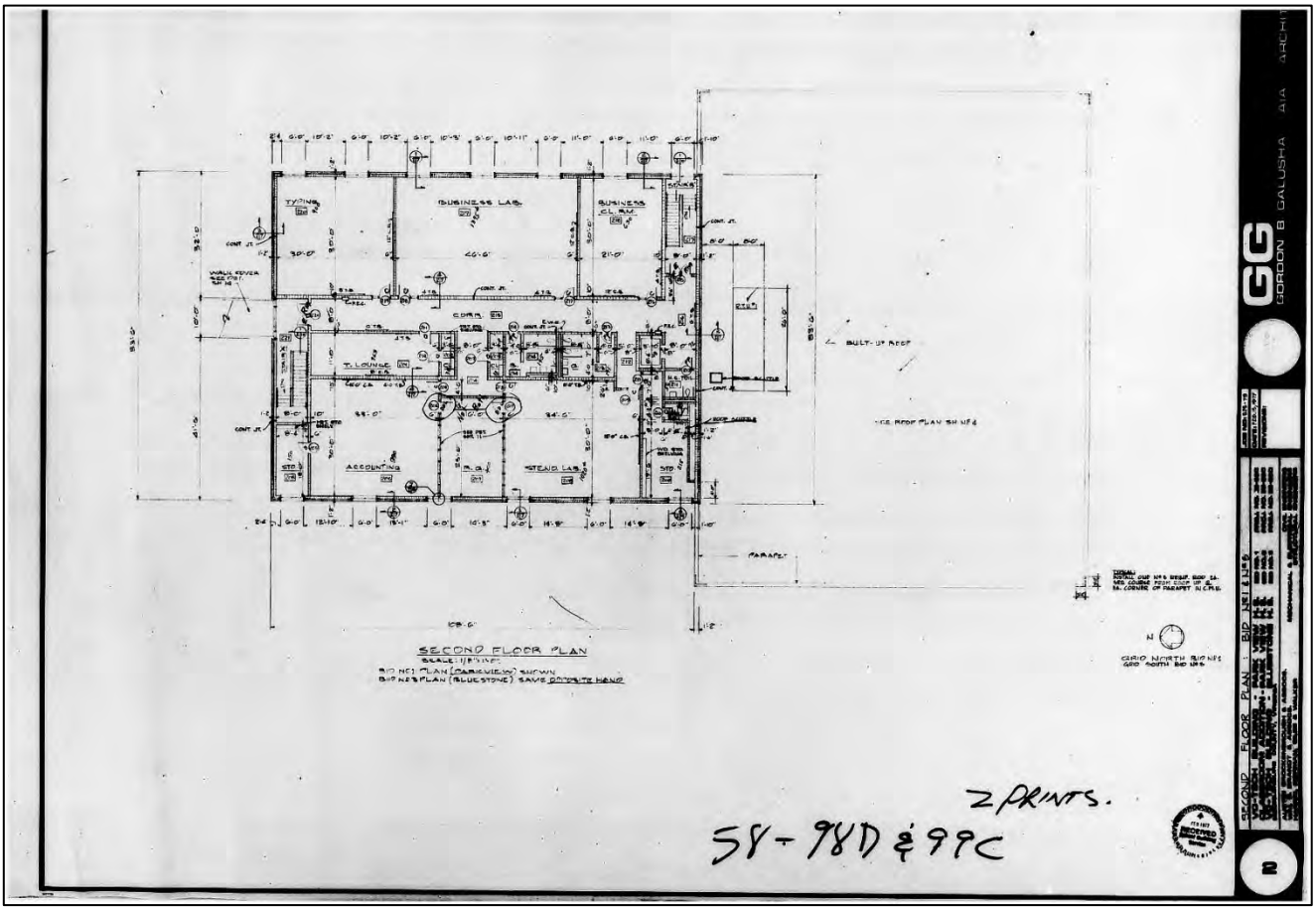

Figure 8. 1977 Second Floor Plan of Vocational Building (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).

In the front block's interior, the main entry opens to a north/south corridor that runs south to meet the east/west passage from the two side entries (Figure 7, above). The flooring is terrazzo while the walls are painted concrete block. The ceilings have dropped grids with acoustical tiles and flush-mounted light fixtures with fluorescent tubes. Classroom entries have metal-framed casing with flush panel, half-glass wood doors and one-light transoms. At the north (front) entry, a stairwell is immediately to the west and a built-in display case is on the south wall of the north/south corridor. Another stairwell of similar design is immediately adjacent to the east (side) entry. Lavatories are along the north/south corridor's west wall, behind which are large classrooms originally identified as "dry cleaning" and "clothing" rooms on the 1954 plans (Figure 7). Small offices and a closet separated the two classrooms. A fitting room was on the south wall of the clothing room, while a large closet was in the dry cleaning room's northwest corner. The clothing room's purpose was not identified on the floor plan in use when the high school closed in 2022, but the former dry cleaning room served as a classroom for marketing classes. Along the corridor's east side are two large classroom, identified as "electronics" and "classroom" on the 1977 floor plan; an office and closet separate the two rooms. The electronics classroom functioned as the "computer systems

technology" classroom as of 2022, while the other classroom had been divided with a partition wall to create two smaller rooms. Both of the building's aforementioned staircases have metal railings and risers topped with terrazzo treads. The second floor has a layout similar to the first floor. According to the 1977 floor plan (Figure 8, above), a teacher's lounge and restroom were on the west side of the central corridor. Behind these were classrooms labeled as "accounting" and "steno lab" with a space labeled simply as "R.G." between them. As of 2022, the accounting classroom served as a "business lab," while the former "steno lab" and "R.G." had unidentified uses. On the east side of the second floor were a "typing room," "business lab," and "business classroom." By 2022, the typing room served as a "business lab," the original business lab continued this use, and the business classroom had become the "career technical education lab."

In the south (rear) block, the three large shop areas are all minimally finished with poured concrete floors, pained concrete block walls, and exposed roof trusses from which are suspended fluorescent tube lights. On the 1977 floor plan, the shops are labeled from east to west as "auto mech," "building trades," and "A.C. shop," indicating the vocational training classes that were being offered at that time. The auto and building trades shops continued to have these same uses as of 2022. The A.C. shop had been partitioned to create spaces for a Junior ROTC program and a health classroom.

School Sign, 1962, contributing object
The 1962 school sign stands on the lower terrace of the property's lawn and is parallel to the nearby U.S. Routes 1/58. The sign is constructed of concrete blocks with red brick veneer laid in common bond. A wood-framed metal sign bearing the words "Park View High School / *Home of the Dragons* / Class of 1962) is centered on the sign's west side.

Prefabricated building, c. 1990, noncontributing building
The prefabricated building stands directly adjacent to the 1955 agricultural building's northeast corner. The one-story building has painted metal siding and a flat metal roof. On the east façade, the slightly right-of-center entry has double-leaf, six-panel metal doors. A window with double-hung sash and six-over-six false muntins is to the left (south) of the entry. A centered window with a double-hung vinyl sash is on the north (side) wall). An entry with double-leaf, six-panel metal doors is left-of-center on the west (rear) elevation. The interior finishes are not known at this time.

Inventory
Park View High School, 1955, 1978, contributing building
Agricultural Building, 1955, contributing building
Vocational Building, 1978, contributing building
School Sign, 1962, contributing object
Prefabricated building, c. 1990, noncontributing building

Integrity Analysis

Park View High School retains high integrity of location and setting. All resources on the campus are in their original locations and no resources have been moved into or beyond the nominated boundary. The larger setting's integrity has been maintained with regard to the rural character of the surrounding landscape, which is characterized by working agricultural fields interspersed among woodlots. Within the campus, only the c. 1990 prefabricated building is a noncontributing resource, and its scale, materials, and position alongside the agricultural building make it an unobtrusive presence. The integrity of design for all three buildings has been maintained. The 1955 high school retains its original footprint, with a modestly-sized 1978 addition to the south end of the rear wing of the H-plan building. The addition's red brick veneer, metal-framed windows, flat roof, and lack of applied ornamentation are in keeping with the main building's International Style characteristics. The 1958 agricultural building and the 1978 vocational building have had few changes to their original designs. Architect Samuel N. Mayo designed the 1955 campus, main school building, and agricultural building. Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, designed the 1978 vocational building and 1978 classroom addition on the rear wing of the main school building, which also retain their original designs and are harmonious with the original buildings. The integrity of materials and workmanship for the three buildings is high as well. Both exterior and interior materials are typical of mid-20th century public school buildings in rural Virginia, with emphasis placed on economy and resilience over embellishments and ornamentation.

Park View High School has a high integrity of feeling as a 1950s-1970s school campus featuring Modern Movement design idioms, which are conveyed through the aforementioned integrity of setting, design, materials, and workmanship. Park View High School's integrity of association with Mecklenburg County's late 1940s to 1950s equalization era, 1954-1968 organized efforts against desegregation, eventual desegregation of the local school system during the late 1960s, and consistent emphasis on the provision of academic and vocational educational opportunities from 1955-1978 are substantiated through ample historical documentation and the campus's integrity. These factors likewise add to Park View's ability to meet Criteria Consideration G for properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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.)

[X] 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

[X] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
EDUCATION

Period of Significance
1955-1978

Significant Dates
1969

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Mayo, Samuel N. (architect)
English Construction Company (builder)
Austin Brockenbrough & Associates (architect)
J. E. Burton Construction Company (builder)

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.)

Park View High School is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Education due to its direct association with a range of locally significant educational trends in Mecklenburg County's public schools during the third quarter of the 20th century. The rural county's economy relied heavily on agriculture for much of its history and inclusion of vocational and agricultural education in the local curriculum occurred simultaneously with professionalization of such instruction. Park View High School's original design included both a home economics department and an agricultural "shop" building that are reflective of the local importance of such training. Built for White students, Park View High School was constructed as part of a countywide school consolidation and equalization effort during the Jim Crow era of segregation in Virginia, which began in 1902, when legal mandates for racial segregation were enshrined in the state's new constitution, and ended during the late 1960s with the dismantling of segregation's legal framework due to passage of federal civil rights legislation. Park View High School, therefore, also is associated with Virginia's 1954-1968 organized efforts against desegregation and the eventual desegregation of the local school system in 1969. Finally, the expansion of vocational education during the 1970s is represented at Park View High School by its purpose-built, two-story educational building that was designed to provide classroom space for courses in electronics, computer science, and other emerging technology-based fields. The period of significance for Park View High School, therefore, begins with its construction in 1955 and ends in 1978 with completion of the vocational education building.

Park View High School is locally significant under Criteria Consideration G because expansion of the vocational curriculum and construction of the 1978 vocational building allowed Mecklenburg County high school students to continue to pursue in-demand career training without having to move elsewhere. From the introduction of vocational education to public high school students during the 1910s to the present, the county's population has held steady at approximately 27,000-30,000 residents, even during periods of severe strain such as the Great Depression, World War II, and the early 1970s energy crisis. The 1978 addition of specialized training in emerging fields at Park View has enabled Mecklenburg County to attract employers in high-technology fields and to prepare students to thrive in traditional industries and agriculture. In contrast, many rural localities in Virginia have lost population as younger workers have moved elsewhere in search of job opportunities. Career technical education continues to be prominently featured at the recently completed Mecklenburg County High School, which replaced Park View in 2022, and now is offered to Mecklenburg's middle school students, too.

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

Acknowledgements
The authors of this nomination are indebted to the following individuals for their assistance with facilitating field survey of Park View High School and for providing copies of Mecklenburg

County Public School Board records and original architectural drawings: Alex Gottschalk, Mecklenburg County Administrator; Paula Giammatteo, Mecklenburg County Public Schools; and G. Ann Belanger, Virginia Department of Education,

Criterion A – Education

Park View High School is directly associated with the provision of agricultural and vocational education in Mecklenburg County from 1954-1978, rural school consolidation after World War II, Virginia's late 1940s-1950s school equalization movement, desegregation of the County's public school system over three years during the late 1960s, and the transition of vocational education from traditional courses of study to new fields in electronics, healthcare, and automated manufacturing. A total of four high schools in Mecklenburg County historically were associated with these locally significant educational trends: Park View, Bluestone, East End, and West End. Their planning, funding, design, and construction occurred between 1951-1954. Thereafter, until 1969, Park View and Bluestone high schools served White students while East End and West End high schools served Black students. Although all four originated from the same trends of school equalization and consolidation, due to segregation the Park View and Bluestone schools proceeded along one path while the East End and West End schools followed another. For example, Park View and Bluestone were "huge rivals" when it came to sports, as Glenn Barbour, Class of 1967, recalled, while their facilities, curriculum, and other educational functions were closely matched. The East End and West End schools similarly were compatible and aspects of their curriculum, notably inclusion of vocational and agricultural training, resembled those offered at the Park View and Bluestone schools. Little, if any, interaction occurred among the four schools across racial lines, however, as state laws and social custom forbade such mingling.

Segregated education, furthermore, inherently was separate and unequal, as the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1954 in its *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* decision. That decision occurred in the midst of construction of the Bluestone and Park View but did not deter the Mecklenburg County School Board from maintaining a racially segregated school system into the late 1960s. Moreover, as demonstrated by Mecklenburg's four equalization era schools, inequities in funding assured that, in fact, inequality was an intrinsic characteristic of each school. After desegregation of the high schools finally was completed, East End and West End were renamed and repurposed to serve as Park View Middle School and Bluestone Middle School, respectively, while enrollment at the Park View and Bluestone schools now included both White and Black students.

By the early 1970s, vocational education at both high schools had acquired greater importance among Mecklenburg County residents due to changes in the local agricultural economy, the loss of traditional industrial jobs, and the advent of technical careers in emerging fields such as electronics and computer science. The county school board determined to build a new vocational training building at Park View and Bluestone high schools and to expand the vocational and technical education coursework at each school. The two buildings were designed to be almost identical and each was completed in 1978, thus marking a locally-significant expansion of the

county's educational opportunities beyond agricultural and industrial instruction to include high-technology fields, an event that meets Criteria Consideration G.

Of the four county high schools associated with mid-20th century educational trends in the county, only Park View High School has been designated for preservation and adaptive reuse, making it the only likely lasting representative of Mecklenburg County's locally-significant educational trends from the equalization era of the 1950s through a lengthy desegregation process to the post-integration expansion of vocational training opportunities in 1978. Through its high level of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, Park View High School conveys its historical significance as a major public educational facility in the county during its period of significance.

Below, the overall contexts of rural life and public education in Mecklenburg County and in agricultural and vocational education are discussed in some detail because Park View High School's local significance is rooted in the county's specific circumstances and the tactics deployed by the county school board to meet local needs. Next, the school consolidation and equalization movements that led to construction of Park View High School and its three counterparts during the early 1950s are summarized. Park View High School's association with desegregation of Mecklenburg County's public schools and its 1978 expansion of vocational education conclude this section.

Rural Context of Mecklenburg County, 1900-1978

Located in Southside Virginia, Mecklenburg County abuts the state line with North Carolina. Mecklenburg County is generally rural. The county seat is the Town of Boydton. Other incorporated towns are Chase City, Clarksville, La Crosse, and South Hill. The town nearest to Park View High School is South Hill, which is situated in northeastern Mecklenburg County. In 1882 the Atlantic & Danville Railroad was formed to transport agricultural products, such as tobacco and cotton, from Southside Virginia and points further south to a port on the Chesapeake Bay. Construction of the Atlantic and Danville Railway was completed in 1889, the same year that South Hill was platted. The 56-acre settlement's location alongside the railroad made it a shipping point for locally produced agricultural products, especially tobacco and timber. South Hill was incorporated in 1900. Two tobacco warehouses were established in South Hill in 1901. Such warehouses were necessary because tobacco was a highly regulated crop in Virginia, a practice with antecedents dating to Virginia's earliest decades as an English colony. Tobacco inspectors were required to inspect crops prior to sale and only authorized warehouses could engage in tobacco sales. Within a year, a third tobacco warehouse followed, along with several prizeries (tobacco was pressed for storage in hogsheads and stored in prizeries prior to shipping). In 1901, 1.6 million pounds of tobacco were sold in South Hill; the total jumped to 3 million pounds the next year. The South Hill Tobacco Board of Trade was chartered in 1903 to oversee

tobacco sales in the town. By 1908, South Hill ranked as the third-largest flue-cured tobacco market in Virginia and, by 1931, hosted 5 tobacco warehouses.[5]

In 1905, the South Hill Manufacturing Company opened in town to process local timber harvests. The company enjoyed considerable success and eventually opened three other plants, in Norfolk and Suffolk, Virginia, and in Baltimore, Maryland. In a pattern that became common across rural Virginia's small towns, South Hill Manufacturing Company became an early supplier of electricity as its coal- and steam-powered boilers could generate excess power that could be sold to local businesses and homeowners. Local governments often purchased electricity from such concerns for newly installed street lights.[6]

Business owners comprised the middle and upper classes in South Hill's racially segregated society. Two banks, various stores, including a drug store, and several hotels quickly added to the commercial activity. A weekly newspaper began publishing in 1906. Doctors, insurance agents, and lawyers also set up offices in South Hill within a decade of the town's incorporation. Early businesses owned by Black men and women included a barber shop owned by the Rev. J. H. Simmons, eating establishments owned by Etta Taylor and Sallie Wilson, and a pool shop owned by Bill Bass. James Skipwith, who operated his successful dry cleaning business from 1911-1960, became Mecklenburg County's first Black member of the Board of Supervisors in 1971.[7]

Infrastructure Development

Initially, local governments across Virginia took the lead on investing in modern infrastructure development during the late 19th and 20th century. Among the first such investments usually was a drinking water supply that served properties within a town or city's corporate limits. Over time, the Town of South Hill owned a series of wells that served this purpose, with the third project, Lane Well, opened in January 1919. In September 1946, South Hill residents approved a $100,000 bond issue to expand the town's water filtration plant. Telephone service also became available in most Virginia towns by the early 20th century; South Hill's service began in 1912 when the Home Telephone and Telegraph Company extended its service from Clarksville. Three years later, the Town acquired the electricity-generating business from South Hill Manufacturing Company and, in 1924, the first sewer system was installed. Starting in 1926, South Hill initiated

[5] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 15-l6, 76; Southside Virginia Genealogical Society, *The Heritage of Mecklenburg County, Virginia 1765-2006* (Waynesville, NC: County Heritage, Inc., 2006), p. 1; Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 361, 363.

[6] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 25.

[7] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 25, 29, 35, 41; Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 363.

a modest street paving program.[8] The ongoing costs of building and maintaining infrastructure soon proved to be beyond the limits of most local governments. State agencies, such as the Virginia Department of Highways, as well as private entities, such as Virginia Public Service Company (later VEPCO), were established to meet the rapidly growing demands for infrastructure. Finally, Virginia's state government, dedicated for generations to having a minimal presence in Virginians' lives, reluctantly began to create laws and regulations for managing both the opportunities and risks of modern life. Some of the first such steps focused on registering motor vehicles, imposing speed limits, and establishing a fund for road construction projects, all of which anticipated the overwhelming significance that automobile transportation would have on urban and rural places across the state. Management of water supplies and sewage systems, however, remained the purview of local governments, which charged fees to users of each system to defray operating and maintenance costs.[9]

South Hill is associated with the rapid changes in transportation options that typified the 20th century. Established first as a railroad town along the Atlantic & Danville Railroad, South Hill also was convenient to overland transportation as automobile enthusiasts launched a new era of tourist travel. The town's first tourist court opened in 1915 to serve travelers venturing through town to reach Goodes Ferry at the Roanoke River. Both the National Highway and the Norfolk to Southwest Highway passed through South Hill. Both roads were more aspirational than reality at this point, but provided an indication for where future investments in road construction were likely to occur. The economic development potential of improved transportation was widely recognized and set off both private and public investments. In 1919, a group of South Hill businessmen formed a corporation for the purpose of erecting a toll bridge across the river to Henderson, North Carolina, which would allow that area's farmers to reach South Hill easily and to sell and ship their products by both road and rail. The Virginia Department of Highways acquired the corporation's assets and South Hill was included on the route of State Route 31, a newly paved road that extended from North Carolina to Washington, D.C. A few years later, the road became part of U.S. Route 1, which was among the earliest federal highways to be designated. Comprised largely of segments of state highways, Route 1 extended from Maine to Florida and represented a new era of interstate travel that was entirely planned and executed by individual travelers in their own vehicles. Although rail traffic began to decrease as early as 1949, when the Southern Railway opted not to renew its lease with the Atlantic & Danville Railroad, automobile and truck transportation continued to grow. The Atlantic & Danville went into receivership in 1962 and was acquired by the Norfolk & Western Railroad (today's massive CSX Transportation). Not coincidentally, during the 1960s a 13-mile segment of Interstate 85

[8] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 51, 110; Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 365.
[9] *A History of Roads in Virginia "The Most Convenient Wayes,"* (Richmond, Va.: Office of Public Affairs, Virginia Department of Transportation, 2006), p. 23.

was built a short distance east of South Hill with two interchanges for travelers to enter and exit South Hill.[10]

While modernizing life in towns and cities was relatively straightforward due to the compact geographic size of such localities, progress moved more slowly in rural areas such as Mecklenburg County. The vast assortment of 1930s public works programs created during President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration to alleviate the worst effects of the Great Depression began a period of massive federal involvement in infrastructure development. Collectively known as the "New Deal," Roosevelt's initiatives covered public health, rural electrification, school construction, flood control, public parks, historic resources surveys, labor organizing, and other facets not traditionally associated with the federal government's range of responsibilities. Although not universally welcomed, the New Deal projects transformed rural life, including in Mecklenburg County, where farmers worked with the Rural Electrification Administration to form the Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative and bring electric power even to remote farmsteads.[11]

The trend of federal involvement in infrastructure development grew even more rapidly after World War II. Public health ranked among the top priorities as rapid innovations in health care had transformed physicians' abilities to treat various maladies and injuries. In 1946, the U.S. Congress passed the Hospital Survey and Construction Act, more widely known as the Hill-Burton Act after its lead legislative proponents, Alabama Senator J. Lister Hill and Ohio Senator Harold H. Burton. The legislation authorized federal grants and loans for construction and modernization of hospitals, nursing homes and other health facilities in exchange for those facilities providing services to people unable to pay for care. On December 2, 1947, a community group comprised of members from Mecklenburg, Brunswick, and Lunenburg counties elected a board of directors to manage planning and fundraising for a new hospital. The 48-bed Community Memorial Hospital opened in June 1954. Major expansions were completed in 1960, 1967, 1979, and 1988.[12] Another major expansion occurred over the course of several years during the 2010s. In 2011, Park View High School alumnus Rick Hendrick donated $2 million toward an expansion of the hospital. In 2017, the community-owned, nonprofit hospital began operating as part of the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Health system.[13]

[10] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 17-18, 65-66, 112, 150, 152; Southside Virginia Genealogical Society, *The Heritage of Mecklenburg County, Virginia 1765-2006* (Waynesville, NC: County Heritage, Inc., 2006), p. 1, 6; Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 366-367, 369.
[11] Jeffrey and Kathryn St. John, *Landmarks 1765-1990: A Brief History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Boydton, VA: Board of Supervisors, Mecklenburg County, 1990), p. 94-95.
[12] John Caknipe Jr., *Around South Hill* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), p. 114, 121; Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 371-372.
[13] "NASCAR's Rick Henderson makes $2 Million Pledge for CMH Expansion," *SoVaNow*, September 28, 2011, https://www.sovanow.com/articles/nascars_rick_hendrick_makes_2_million_pledge_for_cmh_expansion/; "Say Hello to VCUHealth Community Memorial Hospital," *SoVaNow*, October 11, 2017, https://www.sovanow.com/articles/say_hello_to_vcuhealth_community_memorial_hospital/.

Transportation needs grew, too, after World War II, with highways now carrying far more traffic than just a decade earlier. Busy U.S. Route 58 through South Hill was widened in 1952 from its intersection with US Route 1 to South Hill's east boundary.[14] As did many rural areas during the mid-20th century as the potential for commercial airplane travel was beginning to be explored, South Hill also hosted an airfield. Built between 1945-1948, the facility began with two unpaved runways that were built in an X configuration, as shown on the 1955 USGS topographic map of the area. A 2200' paved runway was added between 1955-1962. Although never used for major commercial airline traffic, small airports such as South Hill's served owners of small airplanes who operated limited passenger and/or freight shipping businesses or piloted their craft as a hobby. Individuals seeking to earn a pilot's license also typically received instruction at these types of airports. South Hill Municipal Airport remained in operation until the early 1980s.[15]

In 1950, the Town of South Hill appointed four men to serve on the new South Hill planning commission, which worked with business leaders and the local Chamber of Commerce chapter and with state agencies to manage development in town.[16] Mecklenburg County also had a planning commission by this time. Town, county, city, and regional planning commissions became commonplace in the years after World War II as complex development pressures emerged with increasing frequency. For South Hill and Mecklenburg County, a major infrastructure project of the postwar years was construction of the John H. Kerr Dam near Boydton from 1946-1953 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The federally-owned dam's purpose was to control flooding along the Roanoke River. The roughly 48,900-acre reservoir created by the dam was christened Buggs Island Lake to commemorate an island that was submerged beneath the water. Downstream, in 1963 another dam created a 20,000-acre reservoir, Lake Gaston. The 35-mile long lake straddles the Virginia/ North Carolina boarder. Immediately popular with tourists and local residents, the lake ever since has benefitted tourism-related businesses that served the steady stream of visitors. Equally important, the project provided a substantial new source of hydroelectric power for Southside Virginia and localities in northern North Carolina. Such highly technical projects also required skilled workers with expertise in a variety of trades, which increased local support for vocational education to enable homegrown talent to obtain these jobs.[17]

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[14] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 125.
[15] Paul Freeman, "South Hill Municipal Airport, South Hill, VA," Abandoned & Little Known Airfields: Central Virginia, August 27, 2016, https://members.tripod.com/airfields_freeman/VA/Airfields_VA_C.htm#southhill. The airport site has since been repurposed as an industrial park.
[16] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 123.
[17] Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 370-371; Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 68; John Caknipe Jr., *Around South Hill* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), p. 100-106. The reservoir inundated numerous historically significant archaeological sites dating back at least 11,500 years before the present day. See "Historic Context of the Roanoke Rapids and Gaston Dams," no date, https://www.dominionenergy.com/-/media/pdfs/global/hydro/historic-context-roanoke-rapids-and-gaston-dams.pdf?rev=41ed7eac8ef747bebdf79e58cde247a9, p. 1-2.

For drinking water, meanwhile, South Hill abandoned its reliance on wells during the 1950s to begin purchasing water from the Meherrin River at a reservoir created by Whittles Mill Dam (VLR 2019; DHR #058-5199). Through a voter-approved bond issue, the Town built a new pumping station and filtration plant. Maintaining the public water supply and sewer system became increasingly challenging. both for the Town of South Hill and its residents, into the 1960s. Another bond issue was approved in 1963 to expand the waterworks again, while higher fees were imposed on local customers to help pay costs.[18] The Town's investment in its water supply served the community well just two years later, when one of the largest fires ever to strike South Hill occurred on March 3, 1965. Beginning in a restaurant around 3:00 a.m., the fire spread to a former tobacco warehouse that had been converted to a recreation center and soon destroyed a group of downtown commercial buildings along U.S. Route 1. Over 100 firefighters from seven volunteer fire departments in Mecklenburg County responded and could muster all the water needed to contain the fire before it could spread to adjacent blocks.[19]

Education Initiatives

Wealthy philanthropists also contributed to modernizing aspects of public life in rural Virginia, often focusing on educational opportunities. Among the best-known of these philanthropists today is Julius Rosenwald, who partnered with Booker T. Washington, a nationally renowned educator, to form the Rosenwald Fund, which provided grants for construction of public schools for Black students across the former slaveholding states. In Virginia, 664 such schools were built with the support of Black communities.[20] Local school districts agreed to take ownership of and maintain the schools. Libraries were another educational service often targeted by philanthropists. During the early 19th century, libraries that were "public" began to be established in Virginia's larger cities and town. These generally modestly-sized institutions actually were privately owned and a paid subscription was necessary to access the library's holdings. They were considered public in the sense that, theoretically, anyone could purchase a subscription. Throughout the 19th century and the Jim Crow era of segregation[21], however, most of these "public" libraries refused to sell subscriptions to people of color, including Black and Native

[18] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 125-126, 154-155; "Recreation Center Hit By $200,000 Fire," *The Martinsville Bulletin*, March 3, 1965, p. A7.

[19] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 162-163.

[20] Bryan Clark Green, "Rosenwald Schools of Virginia 012-5041)." Multiple Property Documentation Form, June 30, 2004, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/012-5041_Rosenwald_Schools_2004_NRHP_MPD_FINAL.pdf, Appendix Two.

[21] The Jim Crow era of segregation in Virginia begins with passage of a new state constitution in 1902 that replaced the post-Civil War constitution of 1870. The 1902 constitution rolled back Black voting rights, introduced poll taxes and literacy tests to limit the franchise among all Virginians, and permitted legally-sanctioned segregation in all aspects of public life. The Jim Crow era generally is understood to have ended following passage of federal Civil Rights legislation during the 1960s, the U.S. Supreme Court's 1968 Green v. New Kent County Board of Education decision that dismantled the last vestiges of segregation in Virginia's public schools, and ratification in 1971 of the current state constitution, which acknowledges that the Commonwealth would comply with federal Civil Rights requirements.

American Virginians.[22] Finally, by this time, Virginia's General Assembly had passed a law that permitted the establishment of tax-supported public libraries, but many localities lacked the resources, and a sufficient population base, to manage such an endeavor. Thus, during the early 20th century, wealthy Virginians sometimes included in their wills a bequest for establishing a library as a gift to a local government. These bequests could include a stipulation that service to Black Virginians also be provided, but always in segregated spaces. The McKenney Library in Petersburg, created in 1924, is one such example.[23]

Industrialist Andrew Carnegie famously focused his philanthropic efforts on public libraries, which he credited for his own success as a self-taught businessman. In Virginia, Carnegie's foundation provided grants for construction of three public libraries, with one in Waynesboro and two in Norfolk, as well as academic libraries at the College of William and Mary, Randolph-Macon College (originally located in Boydton, Mecklenburg County), the Manassas Industrial Institute, and Washington & Lee University. The City of Richmond refused Carnegie's offer of a $100,000 grant for a new library, partly out of concern that the library would be required to be open to all races and partly to direct local funds toward schools and the public water system instead. In the City of Charlottesville, segregationist Paul Goodloe McIntire donated land and construction costs for a new public library in 1919.[24]

Another Virginian, David K. Bruce, a philanthropist and businessman from Charlotte County, personally paid for eleven libraries to be built across Southside Virginia from 1937-1942. Bruce's donations were anonymous at the time, and stipulated that service would be free to all citizens, a trained librarian would be employed to head the library, and the local government would support ongoing operations. On March 15, 1939, one such library opened in Boydton in Mecklenburg County. Prior to this, the County's only public library was in Chase City on the second floor of a store building.[25] The former Bruce Library in Boydton currently serves as Mecklenburg County's Elections Office.[26]

During the early 1940s, before the U.S. entered World War II in December 1941, the federal government created an assortment of programs to offer educational opportunities for Americans from early childhood through adulthood. A federal program to improve literacy rates funded bookmobiles to bring more books to rural areas that lacked public libraries. Mecklenburg County's bookmobile service began in 1941; South Hill was served by the

[22] "Library History," Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, no date, https://jmrl.org/library-history; "RPL History," Richmond Public Library, no date, https://rvalibrary.org/about/history/.
[23] LaToya Gray-Sparks and Joanna C. McKnight, "William R. McKenney Memorial Building," National Register nomination, October 19, 2023, p. 33-34.
[24] "Library History," Jefferson-Madison Regional Library, no date, https://jmrl.org/library-history; "RPL History," Richmond Public Library, no date, https://rvalibrary.org/about/history/.
[25] "History of Public Library Service in Halifax County," Halifax County-South Boston Public Library, no date, https://halifaxlibrary.org/history-of-library-service-in-halifax-county/; Jeffrey and Kathryn St. John, *Landmarks 1765-1990: A Brief History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Boydton, VA: Board of Supervisors, Mecklenburg County, 1990), p. 95; Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 373-374.
[26] Alex Gottschalk, Mecklenburg County Administrator, personal communication to author, September 30, 2024.

bookmobile until 1974, when a public library finally reached the town.[27] In 1946, a regional office to assist war veterans with jobs training and reentry to civilian life was established in South Hill.[28] As Virginia's population skyrocketed due to expansion of the federal government's workforce, rapid growth of military installations, and the postwar "Baby Boom," localities were enabled to begin pooling resources in order to meet demand for public services such as libraries. The first regional library systems were established by the mid-1940s, including the Southside Regional Library system, founded in 1944, that included the Bruce-financed library in Boydton.[29] In 1966, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation to allow creation of planning district commissions, another method for transcending county borders to coordinate public services. The Southside Planning District Commission, chartered in 1969 and still active today, includes Mecklenburg, Halifax, and Brunswick counties as well as the Town of South Hill and City of South Boston. The organization provides technical assistance to local governments and coordinates state and federal community development programs. The commission also provides grant administration and economic development services, assistance with transportation planning, and coordination of compliance with federal environmental and cultural resources laws.[30]

Agricultural, Industrial, and Transportation Trends, 1920-1978

The agricultural sector of Virginia's economy from 1920-1954 shows a generally downward trend in the amount of acreage used for agricultural purposes (Figure 9, below). Including fluctuations associated with agricultural market extremes from the early 1920s through the Great Depression and World War II, overall, Virginia had 186,242 farms in 1920 compared to 138,416 farms in 1954. Much of this decrease can be attributed to conversion of land for other purposes, including industrial development, construction of highways and interstates and their associated commercial development, and rapid suburbanization between the mid-1930s and mid-1950s around the state's urban centers and near Washington D.C.[31]

[27] John Caknipe Jr., *Around South Hill* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), p. 99.
[28] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 111.
[29] Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 373-374; "Mecklenburg County Public Library Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2017-2021," approved by Mecklenburg County Public Library Board of Trustees, April 2017, https://www.youseemore.com/mecklib/uploads/revision%20of%20 strategic%20plan%20-%202017-2021.pdf, p. 1. In 2015, Lunenburg County withdrew from the regional system and Mecklenburg County reestablished its Mecklenburg County Public Library system.
[30] Susan L. Bracey, *Life by the Roaring Roanoke: A History of Mecklenburg County, Virginia* (Mecklenburg County, Va.: Mecklenburg County Bicentennial Commission, 1977), p. 378-379; "What We Do," Southside Planning District Commission, no date, https://www.southsidepdc.org/about.
[31] "Rural Life in Virginia," Virginia Museum of History and Culture, no date, https://virginiahistory.org/learn/rural-life-virginia.

State Table 1.—FARMS, ACREAGE, AND VALUE: CENSUSES OF 1920 TO 1954

[Data in italics are based on reports for only a sample of farms. See text]

Item (For definitions and explanations, see text)	Census of—							
	1954 (November)	1950 (April 1)	1945 (January 1)	1940 (April 1)	1935 (January 1)	1930 (April 1)	1925 (January 1)	1920 (January 1)
Farms.....number..	136,416	150,997	173,051	174,885	197,632	170,610	193,723	186,242
Approximate land area (see text).....acres..	25,531,520	25,531,520	25,535,360	25,535,360	25,767,680	25,767,680	25,767,680	25,767,680
Proportion in farms.....percent..	*57.5*	61.0	64.1	64.4	68.5	64.9	66.8	72.0
Land in farms.....acres..	14,685,964	15,372,295	16,358,072	16,444,907	17,644,898	16,728,620	17,210,174	18,561,112
Average size of farm.....acres..	107.7	103.1	94.5	94.0	89.3	98.1	88.8	99.7
Value of land and buildings: Average per farm.....dollars..	*11,290*	*8,447*	5,021	3,860	3,005	5,016	4,578	5,501
Average per acre.....dollars..	*105.53*	*82.33*	53.11	41.04	33.66	51.16	51.53	55.19

Figure 9. Summary of Farms, Acreage, and Value in Virginia, 1920-1954 (Image Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1954, Vol. 1, Counties and State Economic Areas, Part 15, Virginia and West Virginia, Virginia, Chapter A, Statistics for the State, p. 3.

Although rural areas of Virginia, especially in Southside, saw considerably less industrial and suburban development than other areas (notably Hampton Roads and the suburbs of Washington D.C.), similar trends occurred. Southside counties, including Mecklenburg County saw the amount of farmland in their jurisdictions decreasing through the middle decades of the 20th century.

According to U.S. agricultural census data, Mecklenburg County encompasses 435,600 acres of land, of which, 361,933 acres were classified as farmland as of 1940, or 85 percent of the county's total area. The county's 4,303 farms averaged 84.1 acres per farm. The total value of farmland and buildings in Mecklenburg County stood at $5.843 million. The agricultural census broke out the number of farms owned by White operators, and in Mecklenburg County this number was 2,350, while non-White operators owned 1,953 farms. In comparison, neighboring Lunenburg County had 1,948 farms, but at 283,520 acres, Lunenburg is considerably smaller than Mecklenburg County. The average farm size in Lunenburg County was 105.9 acres, and their combined value in 1940 was $4.725 million. The county had 1,225 farms owned by White operators and 723 farms owned by non-White operators. [32]

By 1954, Mecklenburg County had 3,783 farms that together encompassed 338,209 acres, or 79.5 percent of the county's total area. The average value of farmland and buildings was calculated at $6,808 per farm. The average farm size had grown to 89.4 acres. White operators owned 1,880 of Mecklenburg County's farms, and non-White operators owned 1,903.[33] By comparison, Lunenburg County had 1,846 farms covering 177,029 acres, or 62.4 percent of the county's total area. The average value of farmland and buildings was calculated at $6,039 per farm, while the average farm size was roughly 95.9 acres. Of these farms, 1,023 had White

[32] Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940, Agriculture, Vol. 1, Part 3, Statistics for Counties (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 93.
[33] The aforementioned construction of Kerr Dam and the 48,900-acre Buggs Island Reservoir in 1946-1953 contributed some to the decrease in Mecklenburg's farmland.

operators and 823 had non-White operators.[34] In both counties, the rate of change in number and size of individual farms as well as total acreage of farmland had held fairly steady across fourteen years that included the upheavals related to World War II.

A decade later, in 1964, the number of farms in Mecklenburg County had decreased to a total of 2,429 farms that encompassed 279,279 acres of land, or 69.7 percent of the total land area. The average farm size was 115 acres. White operators in Mecklenburg County owned 1,307 farms and non-White owners possessed 1,122 farms. The value of farmland and buildings for the average commercial farm was $19,466 in 1964. In comparison, Lunenburg County had 1,140 farms that encompassed a total of 143,886 acres, or 50.7 percent of the county's total area. Of the total number of farms in Lunenburg, 681 were owned by White farmers and 459 were owned by non-White operators. The average farm size was 126.2 acres. The value of farmland and buildings for the average commercial farm was $16,933.[35] The lower total number of farms in both counties, coupled with the increased acreage of the average farm, correlates with trends that were occurring statewide and nationally in agriculture by the 1960s. These included the impacts of increasingly mechanized farming methods that allowed a farmer to cultivate more area, the need to scale up operations in order to be competitive, and the necessity of earning a higher income on product sales to remain solvent.

By 1978, Mecklenburg County had 1,172 farms that encompassed a total of 194,308 acres, or 49.6 percent of the county's total land area; this decline represented a nearly 40 percent decrease in Mecklenburg's agricultural lands over 14 years. The average size of individual farms had increased to 167 acres, a continuation of a trend in land consolidation and farm sizes that already was evident during the 1950s and had become more prevalent by 1964. Moreover, the average farm size in Mecklenburg County had increased by 77.6 acres between 1954-1978. The value of land and buildings on the average farm was calculated as $594 per acre. In comparison, Lunenburg County had just 604 farms in 1978, encompassing 98,578 of the county's total area, or 34.8 percent; the decline represented a reduction of another 27.6 percent in the county's total agricultural lands over 14 years. As a smaller county to begin with, however, Lunenburg County had fewer acres in farmland in 1954, making its overall decline in farms by 1978 less precipitous than Mecklenburg County's had been. The average size of Lunenburg County's farms stood at 173 acres in 1978, an increase of 77.1 acres over the average farm size of 95.9 acres in 1954. The value of land and buildings on the average farm was calculated as $646 per acre.[36] The near synchrony in the two counties' average farm sizes, coupled with the sharp increase in farmland and buildings per farm, suggests similar socioeconomic trends affected the local agricultural economy in both localities.[37] By 1978, the U.S. Census no longer classified farms according to the race of the farm's owner/operator. It is known, however, that, due to discriminatory practices

[34] U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1954, Vol. 1, Counties and State Economic Areas, Part 15, Virginia and West Virginia, Virginia, Chapter A, Statistics for the State (Washington, D.C.: ,U. S. Government Printing Office, 1956), p. 66, 74, 80.
[35] 1964 United States Census of Agriculture, Vol. 1, Part 24, Virginia (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 281, 307, 317.
[36] 1978 Census of Agriculture, Vol. 1, State and County Data, Part 46, Virginia (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 119, 472, 487.
[37] "Governor Receives Report on Virginia Agricultures," *The Charlotte Gazette*, March 1, 1973, p. 1.

in farm lending, U.S. Department of Agriculture assistance programs, and sales of agricultural products, Black farmers operated at a significant disadvantage when compared to White farmers, which, during difficult economic times, forced more Black farmers to sell their land and seek other types of employment.[38]

Between 1940-1978, the knowledge and skills necessary to operate a successful farm changed considerably. Mechanization and industrialization of agriculture were underway across the U.S. by the 1910s, but did not become truly pervasive until World War II, when domestic food production factored heavily into the overall national defense effort. After the war, new fertilizers, pesticides, hybridized crops, and other innovations permitted farmers to increase yields of commodities such as corn, wheat, soybeans, peanuts, and tobacco. These materials, coupled with mechanized equipment, considerably reduced the amount of farm labor needed to cultivate cash crops. Simultaneously, the increased hazards associated with chemicals and large equipment required farmers to attain both academic understanding and field experience in order to operate safely.

Although the sheer number of individuals engaged in farming declined between 1940-1978, the need to educate young farmers on current and emerging agricultural practices remained constant through these decades. In rural areas such as Mecklenburg County, local public schools, together with state agricultural extension agencies, provided the needed education and experience through agricultural education programs for much of this period. By the 1970s, Virginia's newly created community college system began coordinating postsecondary education for students interested in continuing their agricultural training without having to attend a college or university.

In contrast to the county's 20th-century agricultural trends, transportation and associated industrial and commercial development increased. In November 1965, Interstate 85 officially opened to traffic. The same year, the Town of South Hill annexed approximately 3.75 square miles of land, thus bringing the new interstate into its corporate limits. Extending public water service to this area, perhaps unsurprisingly, was among the locality's top priorities. To manage this and other needs of the growing community, the Town of South Hill hired staff for its appointed planning commission in 1968 and tasked the group with drawing up the town's first comprehensive plan. A national hotel chain, Holiday Inn, built a new motel at one of the South Hill interchanges in 1971, the same year that the Town Council adopted South Hill's newly completed comprehensive plan. As local journalist Frank Nanney Jr. explained in his history of South Hill, the town "would not be where it is today if not for Interstate 85," and he went on to explain that the Holiday Inn's arrival "was followed by the opening of many convenience gas/ food stations and fast-food establishments. Then, later, there came the shopping centers that

[38] For examples of analyses of federal discriminatory practices, see *Civil Rights at the United States Department of Agriculture, A Report by the Civil Rights Action Team* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, February 1997), https://acresofancestry.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CRAT-Report-.pdf; Vann R. Newkirk, "The Great Land Robbery: The shameful story of how 1 million Black families have been ripped from their farms," *The Atlantic* (September 2019), https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2019/09/this-land-was-our-land/594742/; and United States District Court District of Columbia, *Settlement Agreement in re Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation* [aka Pigford Lawsuits], February 18, 2010 (Revised and Executed as of May 13, 2011), https://www.blackfarmercase.com/Documents/SettlementAgreement.pdf.

eventually led to that strip on East 58 being dubbed 'The Golden Mile.' Of course, since then, five additional motels have opened as well as many other businesses, including Wal-Mart."[39]

The number of building permits South Hill issued in 1972 set a record, as did the over $3 million spent on local construction projects; both types of activities increased job opportunities in the building trades.[40] The pattern of development Nanney described was repeated across Virginia's rural areas where new highways were built from the 1950s-1970s. In concentric rings around the highway interchanges, farmland and woodlands in places like South Hill soon were developed for commercial, industrial, and residential uses, while the new types of businesses created employment opportunities beyond farming and heavy industry. Although railroad shipping continued to be important, passenger train service had almost disappeared during the 1950s. Many freight depots saw less traffic or were closed, as in South Hill, where the local Chamber of Commerce moved its office into the depot in 1967.[41]

The loss of freight train traffic reduced South Hill's historical role as a rail-based shipping point for agricultural goods, but the town's location along U.S. Route 1 and its proximity to Interstate 85 had allowed a seamless transition to trucking. The infrastructure needed to support trucking, including warehouse and distribution centers near major roads, service stations, and truck stops, consumed more open land but added more depth to the local commercial activity. Around the same time that the local Chamber of Commerce moved into South Hill's depot, the organization established an industrial development committee to focus on drawing new industries to South Hill. The group also hired its first full-time staff member, who focused on outreach to commercial and industrial interests scouting for new sites to develop. As local journalist Frank Nanny Jr. concluded in his chapter on the abundance of activity during the 1960s, "In 1968, the manufacturing plants finally replaced tobacco farming as the number one employer of the [Mecklenburg County] population."[42]

Agricultural and Vocational Education in Virginia

Virginia's Public School System and Early Schools in Mecklenburg County, 1871-c. 1950
Creation of a statewide public education system in Virginia was mandated in the new constitution ratified by Virginians in 1871; the new constitution had been a requirement before the Commonwealth could be readmitted to the United States after the 1861-1865 Civil War. Prior to the Civil War, no such statewide system had existed. The constitution specified that Virginia's public schools would be racially segregated with separate schools for Black,

[39] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 165-166, 177-179.
[40] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 170-180.
[41] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 169.
[42] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 181-182, 184.

Virginia Indian, and White children in each locality. Although localities were given five years to set up their school system, provisions for funding the new schools soon proved to be inadequate. In Mecklenburg County, the earliest public schools often were held in private homes, churches, and rented spaces above stores. The first purpose-built schools were small, log or frame one-room buildings where a single teacher taught all grades. A uniform statewide school calendar had not yet been established and, often, school terms were as brief as three or four months. Annual reports prepared by William Henry Ruffner, who had been appointed by the General Assembly, documented the efforts under way and obstacles encountered.[43] To aid emancipated African Americans, religious organizations sponsored schools that provided instruction to children during the day and adults during evenings, such as the Presbyterian Church-sponsored Thyne Institute in Chase City, Mecklenburg County.

In 1902, a new state constitution was approved by a convention of politicians rather than Virginia's voters, an action upheld by the Virginia Supreme Court in its 1903 *Taylor v. Cunningham* decision. The new constitution included a notorious poll tax and literacy test, which disenfranchised Black and working-class White voters for decades, as well as statewide imposition of racial segregation. Some Progressive Era social improvement principles also made their way into the final document. These included more effective provisions for funding public schools, establishing standards for teacher certification, making school attendance compulsory, establishing a state board of education, and setting minimum standards for school buildings in terms of size, light, heat, and ventilation.[44] The racial inequities inherent to the segregated school system, however, continued for another 66 years in Virginia, until passage of federal civil rights legislation and decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the last vestiges of legally-mandated segregation in public schools.[45]

Another aspect of the first 40 years of Virginia's public school system was its emphasis on elementary education, roughly the first through seventh grade. By 1900, Progressive Era activists, mostly women, including Richmond's Lila Meade Valentine and Mary-Cooke Branch Munford, were forming "education leagues" to advocate for greater investments in public schools and, in 1904, organized the Cooperative Education Association. The new group worked with local White and Black communities to press for school improvements, although did not challenge the racially segregated system itself. Due to their statewide campaign efforts, approximately 50 school leagues formed across Virginia. Statewide, Virginia had just 75 high schools by 1906 and accreditation, curriculum standards, and school calendars were still in the process of being standardized. That year, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Mann High School bill, which authorized an appropriation of $50,000 in state funds to aid localities with

[43] Marianne Julienne & Brent Tarter, "The Establishment of the Public School System in Virginia," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/public-school-system-in-virginia-establishment-of-the.
[44] Susan Breitzer, "Constitutional Convention, Virginia (1901–1902)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/constitutional-convention-virginia-1901-1902.
[45] Mecklenburg County's unequal public school system and the responses of local Black communities are described in detail in VLR/NRHP nominations for the Averett School and Wharton Memorial Church and Wharton Cemetery at https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/058-5127/ and John Groom Elementary School at https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/301-5063/.

constructing high schools. By 1910, the number of high schools throughout Virginia had increased to 360, the vast majority of which served only White students.[46]

In Mecklenburg County, high schools for White students were erected in Chase City and South Hill in 1908. Both schools were built entirely with public funds; however, it does not appear that tax dollars were made available for any Black high schools at this time. The County's overall investment in schools for Black students from the 1870s-1910s is not entirely clear. In South Hill, the first documented instance of a 20th-century, public school for Black children came in 1915, when the local Black community in South Hill formed a league to raise money to rent space in the True Reformers Hall for use as a school. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Walker, Rev. and Mrs. J.H. Simmons, and Robert Walker were the league's original officers. Over the next three years, the school league raised $1,200 of private funds to acquire land and build a two-room elementary school. The parents' league next set their sights on a county training school for Black students. Between 1920-1925, the group raised $3,000 in private donations to obtain a $1,500 grant from the Julius Rosenwald fund. Serving the entire county's school-age children, the new school had an enrollment of 200 students for grades 1-7. In 1927, Black families raised still more funds to pay for construction of an agricultural shop building, making the new school officially a county training school that offered high school classes, too, albeit with more emphasis on vocational rather than academic courses.[47] A second high school was built in Clarksville during the mid-1930s to serve Black students in the western half of Mecklenburg County; it had a single teacher and 100 students ranging in age from 13 to 22. As with the training school, the Black community had to raise private funds, donate materials, and perform construction work themselves to provide adequate facilities, including a cafeteria for hot lunches. Private individuals also purchased school buses and donated their time and labor to transport students to the school. West End High School received accreditation from the State Board of Education in 1939. Each of the secondary schools included vocational, agricultural, and home economics in their curricula.[48] Additionally, during the 1930s, New Deal programs paid 45 percent of local school construction costs. Federally-funded vocational education opportunities to adults were held at the county's public schools after the students' school hours had ended. Federally-sponsored vegetable gardens that were planted and maintained by local residents were established at the schools, as well as opportunities for learning how to can foods

[46] Jennifer McDaid, "Cooperative Education Association," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/cooperative-education-association;
[47] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 99-100.
[48] Ann Garnett Miller, "Recounting the Proud Heritage of Black Education in Mecklenburg County," *Southern Virginia Now*, February 22, 2012, https://www.wehsnaa.org/BlackEdMeck.pdf, p. 2-3. Note that the provision of vocational education in Black schools throughout the former slaveholding states *was not* equivalent to the same such education in White schools. Black high-school-age students often were limited primarily, if not exclusively, to vocational classes in "training schools," which typically offered classes only through 10th or 11th grade. Even these types of schools were scarce in rural Virginia through the 1940s and, often, they were not fully accredited in the same fashion as four-year high schools for White students. At "training schools," Black students were steered toward training for low-paying manual trades and work as domestic servants in the belief among White inhabitants that such jobs were the only ones "appropriate" for them. A more detailed discussion of this topic is found in John L. Rury and Shirley A. Hill, *The African American Struggle for Secondary Schooling 1940-1980* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2012).

properly. The yields from the vegetable gardens also were used to supplement free lunches in school cafeterias.[49]

Unequal Consolidation of Schools, 1910s-1950

Starting in the early 1910s, Mecklenburg County began to consolidate the county schools for White students in order to create fewer, larger schools, and continued to do so into the mid-20th century. Their effort was helped along, ironically, by fires that caused extensive damage to local schools. South Hill's elementary school for White children was destroyed by fire in April 1932. The South Hill High and Grammar School, a building with ten classrooms, was hastily erected and opened in October of that year.[50] In April 1942, the La Crosse High School for White students was destroyed by fire and students completed the school year at South Hill High School.[51] Consolidating schools typically resulted in lower maintenance costs and larger enrollments, which created efficiencies that facilitated expanded curricula. A total of 13 consolidated White schools had been erected in Mecklenburg County by 1946, including high schools in Chase City (built 1908 with subsequent additions), Boydton (built 1913 with subsequent additions), Clarksville (built 1915 with subsequent additions), Buckhorn (built 1919 with subsequent additions), South Hill (built 1932 after a fire), and La Crosse (built 1942 after a fire). Six elementary schools for White children were constructed between 1930-1934 and a seventh school dated to 1919. Between 1942-1944, a community cannery was erected at four White schools to aid families with preserving their homegrown produce as part of the home front's contribution to World War II; community canneries also were segregated by race.[52] Five of the White high schools had an agricultural shop building or, in one case, a manual training building. Purpose-built home economics buildings were added to the campuses at Clarksville High School in 1945 and Buckhorn High School in 1949, while Boydton High School received a new cafeteria in 1937 and an auditorium in 1949.[53]

In comparison, none of the schools for Black students had been consolidated. Mecklenburg County operated 53 Black schools as of 1950. Also at this time, classes beyond seventh grade were offered to Black students at the mid-1920s Mecklenburg County Training School in South Hill, the originally private Thyne Institute, established c. 1876[54] and acquired by the Mecklenburg County school system in 1946, located in Chase City, and the mid-1930s West

[49] Heather Fearnbach, "John Groom Elementary School," National Register nomination, May 27, 2017, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/301-5063_John_Groom_School_2017_NRHP_FINAL.pdf, p. 19; *State/Local Relations & Service Responsibilities: A Framework for Change*, Report of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia, Senate Document No. 37, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, 1993, p. 95.
[50] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 79.
[51] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 106, 125.
[52] No information was found regarding canneries at Black schools during research for this nomination.
[53] School listed provided by staff at Mecklenburg County Public Schools, Boydton, Virginia, August 5, 2024.
[54] "About Us," Thyne Institute Memorial Inc., no date, https://www.thyneinstitutememorial.com/blank-1.

End High School[55] in Clarksville offered classes beyond seventh grade for Black students. During the early 20th century, "institutes" and "training schools" attended by Blacks were distinguished from four-year high schools by their curricula. Academic coursework typically reached only the tenth or eleventh grade and students spent approximately half of their school day on what, at the time, typically was described as "industrial training." Male students were expected to learn one or more manual trades, such as masonry, smithing, carpentry, or agriculture-oriented skills including crop cultivation and livestock care. Due to rampant discriminatory hiring practices, young African American men often were hired only for low-paying jobs; Black educators, however, hoped that such students would graduate with enough skills eventually to acquire and manage their own farms successfully or to start a small business or shop that would allow them greater autonomy. Female students focused their efforts on domestic skills to prepare them for employment as maids, cooks, and housekeepers for White households; these skills also were useful in management of their own homes and families. Vocational training was a valued part of the curriculum at White schools, too; however, four years of academic coursework was the norm. For these reasons, secondary schools for Black children were not always accredited by the State Board of Education at the same level as those for White students. African American institutes, training schools, and high schools typically included training rooms that either were attached to the classroom building or in ancillary shop buildings.[56] As with their academic curricula, the training curricula at Black schools was neither as extensive nor as well equipped as at White schools.

The Mecklenburg County Training School campus was expanded in 1940 with a cafeteria and an auditorium around 1942, but the 1925 building was destroyed by fire in late 1942. For years thereafter, Black high school students and teachers were forced into makeshift temporary buildings on campus as well as private dwellings, to continue holding classes.[57] Sixteen of the elementary schools dated to the 1910s, another sixteen were built during the 1920s, fourteen were from the 1930s, and three dated between 1942-1949. The remainder of the Black elementary school buildings still in use as of 1950 predated 1910.[58]

[55] According to Ann Garnett Miller, West End High School was destroyed by a fire during the early 1950s. The school's name does not appear on the County's list of schools in use as of 1950, but the name does appear in Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes from 1951, and a reference to the school's destruction is recorded in the December 10, 1951, meeting minutes. See Ann Garnett Miller, "Recounting the Proud Heritage of Black Education in Mecklenburg County, *Southern Virginia Now*, February 22, 2012, https://www.wehsnaa.org/BlackEdMeck.pdf, p. 2 and Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, December 10, 1951, p. 37, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

[56] Descriptive information about the specific buildings at the Mecklenburg County Training School, Thyne Institute, and mid-1930s West End High School was not identified during research for this nomination.

[57] Heather Fearnbach, "John Groom Elementary School," National Register nomination, May 27, 2017, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/301-5063_John_Groom_School_2017_NRHP_FINAL.pdf, p. 15, citing Archie G. Richardson, *The Development of Negro Education in Virginia, 1831-1970* (Richmond, Virginia: Richmond Chapter Phi Delta Kappa, 1976), 29; Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 106; .

[58] Information about the County Training School and Thyne Institute was included on the school listed provided by staff at Mecklenburg County Public Schools, Boydton, Virginia, August 5, 2024.

Agricultural Education, Enriching Rural Life, and Professionalization of Vocational Instructors in Virginia

Eli Whitney's patent for the cotton gin in 1794 is often cited as a transformative event in American agriculture, especially in states where cotton was a major cash crop. Introduction of new technologies and scientific research continued at such a rapid rate through the 19th century that few farmers could thrive unless they were willing to learn new methods to increase crop and livestock yields. A thornier issue was developing means for educating farmers. Starting in the early 19th century, assorted attempts to form agricultural improvement societies occurred sporadically across Virginia. Most were local organizations that endured for brief spans and appear to have served a social as well as educational purpose, primarily suited for plantation elites rather than the "yeoman farmers" extolled in earlier times. At society meetings, papers on different aspects of agricultural practices and experiments were presented. Local fairs, during which planters showed livestock and examples of agricultural products, were popular as well. Mecklenburg County was among the first of the Southside counties to host an agricultural society, as did numerous counties in Virginia's more populous Tidewater region. The Virginia Agricultural Society also was founded during this period, although it struggled to obtain sufficient funds for consistent operations.[59] After the Civil War ended slavery in the United States, Virginia's agricultural economy was restructured but with the social and class divisions of the antebellum period still intact. Consequently, a relatively small number of people owned vast quantities of land for which they hired paid laborers and/or created a sharecropping system to continue production while reinforcing class stratification. Many farmers operated relatively modestly-sized farms that produced both cash crops and sufficient vegetables, fruits, and livestock to provide for their families' needs. Emancipated African Americans who wanted to live in rural Virginia rather than moving to cities began to accumulate farmland as quickly as they could manage. These individuals often purchased a few acres at a time as their financial means allowed. Warranting further study are the methods emancipated persons pooled resources with kinship networks or local community members to create greater stability for their farms and families.

By the turn of the 20th century, county and state fairs had become a popular means for transmitting new agricultural methods to farmers, but these occurred only once a year. Specialized publications also provided a method for conveying new information to farmers, many of whom subscribed to publications such as *The American Farmer*, *The Farmer's Magazine*, and *The Southern Planter and Farmer*. Such journals were accessible, however, only to farmers who could afford them and who were literate. In rural Virginia, while the literacy rate improved between 1870-1900 as public schools were established, growing from 59.4 percent among White adults in 1870 to 77.1 percent in 1900, older populations still had much higher levels of illiteracy. Prior to the Civil War, Virginia law forbade education for all enslaved persons, which also curtailed educational opportunities for free Black Virginians, and

[59] Charles W. Turner, "Virginia Agricultural Reform, 1815-1860 and Philip St. George Cocke," *Agricultural History* Vol. 26 No. 3 (July 1952), p. 45-48; Kenneth Koons, "Philip St. George Cocke (1809–1861)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirgiia.org/entries/cocke-philip-st-george-1809-1861.

led to a high illiteracy rate among Black Virginians in 1870. By 1900, however, the African American population accomplished an approximately 55.4 percent literacy rate.[60]

Also by the turn of the century, the pace of technological innovations had increased with the first mechanized agricultural equipment becoming available as gasoline-powered engines were being refined. In 1892, John Froelich, an American inventor who lived in rural Iowa, debuted the Froelich Tractor, which was "the first stable gasoline/petrol-powered tractor with forward and reverse gears."[61] Soon an array of new mechanized equipment that could be pulled by tractors came onto the American market, including planters, cultivators, reapers, pickers, threshers, combine harvesters, mowers, and balers. In 1909, a German chemist named Fritz Haber developed a high-temperature, energy-intensive process to synthesize nitrate for use in chemical fertilizers, which had a revolutionary impact on agricultural practices in much the same way as mechanization.[62] Both made possible much higher yields with considerably less manual labor. Although mechanized equipment was an expense beyond many farmers' ability to pay, chemical fertilizers were more accessible. For either type of technology, training was needed in proper use to protect safety of workers as well as to generate optimal crop yields.

A third trend that began during the mid-19th century and gained momentum over succeeding decades involved use of evidence-based methods to instruct women on ways to improve family health and overall wellbeing. The field's roots extend back to the mid-19th century when Catherine Beecher authored *A Treatise on Domestic Economy*, which "brought together education, cleaning, religion, civics, gender, and morality" to argue for the many roles that women held in both homemaking and larger civil society.[63] Across the latter half of the 19th century, women of various background utilized Beecher's conflation of home and society to argue for greater opportunities for women's education as part of the longstanding American ethos that an educated citizenry benefitted the republic as a whole. The term "domestic science" captured the movement's emphasis on science-based methods for improving home life and, by extension, social and civic life in the country. With their application of "scientific principles to childrearing, cooking, and housekeeping;" these early domestic scientists' efforts coincided with rapid modernization of American life due to changing demographics, the abolition of race-based, heritable slavery, industrial and scientific advances, and similar trends.[64] In many ways, domestic science developed due to the same impulses that fueled other

[60] Marianne Julienne & Brent Tarter, "The Establishment of the Public School System in Virginia," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/public-school-system-in-virginia-establishment-of-the.
[61] "Froelich Tractor in Iowa and South Dakote," State Historical Society of Iowa, based on "Froelich Tractor Photos, Langford, South Dakota, and Froelich, Iowa," 1892, courtesy of Froelich Foundation and Museum, https://history.iowa.gov/history/education/educator-resources/primary-source-sets/iowa-s-connection-to-world/froelich-tractor/.
[62] "The Nobel Prize in Chemistry 1918: Fritz Haber," The Nobel Foundation, no date, https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/chemistry/1918/haber/facts/.
[63] Danielle Dreilinger, *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2022), p. 4.
[64] Danielle Dreilinger, *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2022), pp. 5-25.

data-driven, social improvement movements of the Progressive Era, including agricultural education, settlement houses, and sanitation.[65] Such education, dubbed "home economics" at a conference of women educators in 1899, was formalized during the first decade of the 20th century. The American Home Economics Association, founded in 1908, "effectively lobbied federal and state governments to provide funding for home economics research and teaching, including adult education work through agricultural extension services, leading to the rapid expansion of educational programs."[66]

Finally, the professionalization of agricultural education itself required time to mature. The first agricultural degree programs followed passage of the Land Grant College Act of 1862 (commonly known as the Morrill Act), which created a nationwide system of land-grant colleges. The vast majority of these were colleges that admitted only White students. The Second Morrill Act, passed in 1892, allowed creation of land-grant colleges for Black students but did not provide the same funding mechanism, a factor that hobbled these later colleges for decades. In Virginia, the land grant colleges are Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) and the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (today's Virginia State University). Initially, demand for postsecondary agricultural education was low, but Booker T. Washington, a native Virginia, was an early and skilled advocate for agricultural degree programs. As graduates gained opportunities to provide agricultural instruction through rapidly emerging community-level educational programs being offered through an assortment of methods, discussed below, more colleges began to create agricultural education programs within their agriculture departments.

The advances described above in home economics education dovetailed with efforts to create more formal educational opportunities for farmers through "farm demonstration" programs. Among the earliest documented, small-scale experimentation with farm demonstration agents occurred between 1906-1914, first in Texas in 1903 and then in Virginia in 1907. In 1910,

[65] Not all of the Progressive Era's "data-driven" movements were beneficial. Perhaps most notoriously, the eugenics movement created "data" using pseudo-scientific methods to argue for managed reproduction of the human population to enhance the White "race" while eliminating "undesirable" features, including perceived genetic shortcomings and even personality traits. See Elizabeth Catte, "Eugenic Sterilization in Virginia," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, July 25, 2023, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/eugenic-sterilization-in-virginia. Danielle Dreilinger explains that some early promoters of domestic science also allied themselves with eugenics and nativist movements and, for example, see David P. Munns, "'Not by a Decree of Fate:' Ellen Richards, Euthenics, and the Environment in the Progressive Era," *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (October 2023), doi:10.1007/s10739-023-09733-9, pp. 525-557 and Edith Kuiper, "Hazel Kyrk, Eugenics, and Consumption Standards," chapter in *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology: Including a Symposium on Hazel Kyrk's A Theory of Consumption 100 Years after Publication*, Vol. 41, part D, eds. Luca Fiorito, Scott Scheall, and Carolos Eduardo Suprinyak (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2024), pp. 47-67.

[66] Martin Heggestad, "About: Home Economics." Cornell University Library, HEARTH – Home Economics Archive: Research, Tradition, History, 2024, https://digital.library.cornell.edu/collections/hearth/about. The field of home economics encompassed much more than educational programs for farm women and girls, discussion of which is beyond the scope of this nomination. For further information, see Cornell University Library's HEARTH website, https://digital.library.cornell.edu/collections/hearth, and Danielle Dreilinger, *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2022).

similar experiments began for "girls' canning clubs" and "home demonstration agents."[67] Demonstration agents traveled routinely through an assigned rural geographic area, often a single county, to explain their programs to farmers or homemakers and to organize opportunities for demonstration projects at an individual's farm or dwelling. Neighbors within easy traveling distance also were invited to attend. The agent then would demonstrate a specific item, such as a new piece of equipment, or a method, such as incorporating different kinds of fertilizer based on soil conditions. Home demonstration agents offered parallel training for managing households and rearing healthy children. The demonstration agents also organized clubs that would encourage ongoing participation and would allow students to see for themselves how a new method could succeed. Thus, boys joined "corn clubs" to learn how to maximize crop production and harvesting, while girls joined "canning clubs" to learn how to preserve food effectively.[68]

In 1914, congressional passage of the Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative Extension system, a partnership among land-grant colleges and universities and federal, state, and local governments. The same year, Virginia's General Assembly passed legislation authorizing participation in the new program, appropriated funds for a statewide County Extension network, and authorized county boards of supervisors to include salaries and other costs of County Extension Agents in their local budgets.[69] Virginia's two land-grant schools, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) and Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (today's Virginia State University), were the headquarters for extension work in Virginia. Such programs were well received due to growing concerns among educators, government leaders, and social activists that public education, particularly in rural areas, was not providing students with instruction useful for their daily lives. Working-class children and those who lived on family farms often made integral contributions to their families' livelihoods. Practical education, it was believed, both would help to improve the students' lives and encourage them to remain in school for as long as possible. [70] Due to Jim Crow segregation, the cooperative extension system in Virginia was racially segregated, with African American agents exclusively serving Black farms and families and White agents serving only White farms and families.

[67] "History of Virginia Cooperative Extension," Virginia Cooperative Extension, no date, https://ext.vt.edu/about/history.html.
[68] "History of Virginia Cooperative Extension," Virginia Cooperative Extension, no date, https://ext.vt.edu/about/history.html.
[69] "History of Virginia Cooperative Extension," Virginia Cooperative Extension, no date, https://ext.vt.edu/about/history.html; Angela M. Giordana-Evans, *A History of Federal Vocational Education Legislation in the Twentieth Century*, L.C. 1043U.S., 75-126 ED, Congressional Research Service, Education and Public Welfare Division, Updated May 12, 1975, p. 5.
[70] Laura Dainton, Jacob Hodges, and Jama Coartney, "History of Virginia Cooperative Extension," *Radford News Journal*, January 31, 2023, https://radfordnewsjournal.com/history-of-virginia-cooperative-extension/ and "History of Virginia Cooperative Extension," Virginia Cooperative Extension, no date, https://ext.vt.edu/about/history.html. Another important component of the Cooperative Extension network was the 4-H movement, which began in 1898 and spread rapidly throughout the country. 4-H was not based in public schools and is beyond the scope of this nomination. For additional information, see https://ext.vt.edu/4h-youth/history.html.

In 1917, the U.S. Congress passed the Smith-Hughes Act, which provided federal support in perpetuity for vocational, trade and industrial, and agricultural education, as well as home economics, in public school systems. By law, home economics was the only one of the three educational tracks accessible to girls. The legislation was supported by an unusual coalition that included the American Federation of Labor, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Education Association, General Federation of Women's Clubs, American Home Economics Association, and Progressive Era reformers.[71] The Federal Board for Vocational Education (FBVE) was created to oversee the law's implementation, while states were required to create state-level boards for the same purpose and to match federal appropriations for educational programs. Reporting directly to the U.S. Congress, the original FBVE's members included the U.S. Secretaries of Commerce and Labor, the U.S. Commission of Education, and private citizens representing labor, agriculture, manufacturing, and commercial interests. The law also provided federal funds for training instructors that would be supervised by state boards of education. Finally, the agricultural education training carried out under the Smith-Hughes Act was required to include high school students, young farmers out of high school, and adult farmers.[72] Due to the availability of financial support at the federal (and, for many schools, at the state) level, as well as public demand, agricultural education quickly became part of school curricula in Virginia's rural public school systems. An assortment of agricultural clubs soon began to be organized at individual schools. Many of these focused on a specific topic of interest, such as poultry, corn, soybeans, and other commodities. Counterparts for girls were oriented toward home vegetable gardening and preserving.[73]

Virginia, perhaps, holds a unique role in the history of agricultural education because two of the most enduring student farmers' educational organizations were founded here. In September 1925, a small group of men, Edmund C. Magill, Henry Casper Groseclose, Walter Stephenson Newman, and Harry Warriner Sanders, all of whom were agricultural educators at various universities, founded a statewide organization focused on educating student farmers at the high school level. They selected the name "Future Farmers of Virginia" (FFV). Educators from other states and territories quickly learned about the new educational group and began forming their own. In 1928, the Future Farmers of America (FFA) became a national organization. Although FFA was not segregated at the national level, state and local chapters in Southern states, including Virginia, were racially segregated. In 1927, at Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (today's Virginia State University), Prof. George Washington Owens formed the New Farmers of Virginia (NFV) as a counterpart to the FFV. Dr. Harvey Owen Sargent, at that time

[71] John Hillison, "The Coalition that Supported the Smith-Hughes Act or a Case for Strange Bedfellows," *Journal of Vocational and Technical Education*, Vol. 11, No. 2 (Spring 1995), https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ504569.pdf, p. 4-11. All of the vocational education programs became coeducational following passage of the Education Amendments of 1972. The section of the law widely known as "Title IX" protected all people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance.
[72] Angela M. Giordana-Evans, *A History of Federal Vocational Education Legislation in the Twentieth Century*, L.C. 1043U.S., 75-126 ED, Congressional Research Service, Education and Public Welfare Division, Updated May 12, 1975, p. 6-7.
[73] Virginia FFA Association, "Virginia Agricultural Education History," no date, https://www.vaffa.org/ffa-history; Danielle Dreilinger, *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2022), p. 61.

the federal agent for Vocational Agricultural Education for Special Groups,[74] had suggested this endeavor to Owens. The NFV was received with enthusiasm among rural Black Virginians and its mission soon spread to other states. The national New Farmers of Virginia (NFV) organization was founded in 1935 and headquartered at the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. In addition to practical education, both organizations emphasized development of leadership, character, citizenship, thrift, cooperation, patriotism, and other virtues among students. The two organizations "merged" in 1965, although in effect, the NFV essentially ceased to exist while the FFA continued its usual operations, albeit now with racially integrated membership of educators and students at its local, state, and national levels.[75]

With the growing popularity of agricultural education, instructors at the secondary and postsecondary levels organized to share pedagogical methods, practical advice for managing school farms, and articles about the latest research studies to continue their own education. In 1926, the American Vocational Association (AVA) was formed by the merger of the National Society for Vocational Education and the Vocational Education Association of the Middle West. Just as with the Smith-Hughes Act, the new organization included both industrial and trades education as well as agricultural instruction in its mission. AVA committees focused on the full range of practical education as discussed above – industrial, agricultural, and home economics – as well as adult, part-time, and rehabilitation education.[76] Separately, in January 1929, the magazine *Agricultural Education* debuted "for those interested in public school programs for the improvement of agriculture and country life."[77] In 1948, the National Vocational Agricultural Teachers' Association (NVATA) convened for the first time in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In 1997 at the annual NVATA convention in Las Vegas, Nevada, the name of the organization was changed to the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) and today it "is a quasi-federation of 50 state agricultural educators associations" with more than 9,000 members.[78] State associations for agricultural educators also were organized; today, the Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators appears to be the principal

[74] "Special groups" included African American, Native American, and Latin American populations.
[75] Antoine J. Alston, Dexter B. Wakefield, and Netta S. Cox, *Images of America: The Legacy of the New Farmers of America* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2022), p. 7-8, 11, 13-14. In southern states, the merger of local chapters often proceeded more slowly due to local resistance to integration.
[76] "A new association is born," *Techniques,* Vol. 77, No. 2 (February 2002), https://www.acteonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/A-New-Association-is-Born.pdf, p. 20. Adult education programs gained new importance during the Great Depression as many workers facing unemployment required assistance. By the late 1930s, such training was considered valuable to the national defense effort as war loomed in Europe. Over the course of the 20th century, the AVA expanded and reorganized several times; today the successor organization is the Association for Career and Technical Education. The American Association of Agricultural Educators is the successor organization of the AVA's original agricultural committee, which morphed into the AVA's Ten-Year Teacher Trainers in 1930.
[77] "Editorial Announcement," *Agricultural Education,* Vol. 1, No. 1 (January 1929), p. 2, https://www.naae.org/naae/document-server/?cfp=/naae/assets/file/public/magazine/volume1/v1i1.pdf.
[78] "75 Years of NAAE: Our History," National Association of Agricultural Educators, 2023, https://www.naae.org/about/history/75-years-of-naae/. The NAAE's website has an Archives section that contains complete, digitized copies of *Agricultural Education Magazine* from the 1920s to the present; see https://www.naae.org/resources/ag-ed-resources/ag-ed-magazine/the-agricultural-education-magazine-archived-issues/.

organization for Virginia's agricultural instructors.[79] Due to mechanization of agriculture, by the 1940s, instruction in "farm mechanics" was introduced at Virginia Tech.[80] The influence of technological innovations continued to shape vocational and agricultural instruction through the remainder of the 20th century. Today, agricultural education is defined as "a systematic program of instruction available to students desiring to learn about the science, business, and technology of plant and animal production and about the environmental and natural resources systems."[81] Provision of agricultural education continues largely under federal leadership at the U.S. Department of Education and, at the state level, through multiple agencies and institutions, including state departments of education and of agriculture, land grant universities, community colleges, and high school career technical education (CTE) centers.

Meanwhile, home economics professionalized in a similar fashion, in part due to the support of the federal government through initiatives, such as cooperative extension in partnership with land-grant universities, that were particularly intended for improving rural life. As noted above, home demonstration agents employed by the newly formed cooperative extensions at Virginia Tech and Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (today's Virginia State University) traveled the rural countryside offering instruction in various aspects of home and family management. During World War I, home demonstration agents, home economics instructors in public schools, and their students demonstrated the value of traditional women's work in the national defense effort through improved food production and preservation that provided sustenance to their families and communities and medically-appropriate nutrition to wounded soldiers. In 1923, the Bureau of Home Economics was added to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Home economists were charged with consumer protection, occupational safety, industry standardization, food safety and nutrition, and other programs associated with improving public health, safety, and quality of life. They also wrote for publications aimed at female audiences and were among the earliest radio show producers, writers, and hosts. With federal support through the Smith-Hughes Act, home economics departments opened in high schools across the country, creating readily accessible educational opportunities for girls in rural and urban areas. Recognizing the need for professional educators to teach students in public schools, colleges and universities began establishing home economics degree programs during the 1910s-1920s. Due to the inclusion of Black land-grant colleges in the Smith-Lever Act, colleges such as the Hampton Institute (today's Hampton University), Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (today's Virginia State University), and Tuskegee Institute were part of the cooperative extension network and also created home economics departments that opened up a broader range of occupations to Black women. The Smith-Hughes Act made home economics available to young women and girls at segregated public schools for Black students. Rampant discriminatory practices curtailed Black women's

[79] To date, research has not identified the founding date and origins of the Virginia Association of Agricultural Educators.
[80] "History of Virginia Cooperative Extension," Virginia Cooperative Extension, no date, https://ext.vt.edu/about/history.html.
[81] "Overview," The National Council for Agricultural Education, no date, https://live-the-council.pantheonsite.io/ageducation/. The National Council for Agricultural Education serves as an "umbrella organization for the agricultural education community" and advocates for agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources systems education in the U.S.

employment opportunities in programs that were not aimed solely at Black communities, but Black leaders found ways to maximize their opportunities.[82]

Home economics educators convened in Illinois in June 1945 to found the Future Homemakers of America (FHA). The same year, New Homemakers of America (NHA) was established as the parallel organization for Black students and educators. Both organizations served the same mission to educate young women in domestic skills, health and nutrition, and financial and budget management, while also providing character-building and leadership opportunities. FHA and NHA chapters were established at high schools throughout Virginia, including those in Mecklenburg County. After World War II, emphasis on improving rural life continued. In 1948, the State Advisory Board of Virginia met in Mecklenburg County to discuss "The Farm and Home as a Unit for Better Living." The board worked with the cooperative extension service on such projects. Speakers at the meeting included a home management specialist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm and Home Administration, as well as the director of the USDA's extension service program and a local farm demonstration agent.[83] The persistence of home economics educators expanded the field continually and contributed to changing expectations and opportunities for women. Graduates of home economics program went on to careers in the food industry, textiles and clothing, hotel and restaurant management, interior design, public-sector policymaking, nonprofit management, public health, social work, nutrition, child development, consumer protection and advocacy, and standardization of textiles and other consumer products. The NHA and FHA merged in 1965, again with the White organization, FHA, essentially absorbing NHA, the Black organization. In 1974, male students began to be permitted to join FHA. In 1999, FHA was renamed to Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA).[84]

Although the vocational and home economics educational tracks maintained strict heteronormative gender roles through the first three-quarters of the 20th century, together they created a more holistic approach to improving rural life than had been typical of earlier periods of Virginia's history. Their enduring popularity is indicative of the continued significance with which vocational instruction has been regarded in Mecklenburg County for more than a century.

School Equalization, Consolidation, and 1950s High Schools in Mecklenburg County
As explained above, Virginia's segregated public schools demonstrably were unequal by the time the 1902 state constitution went into effect. Subsequent efforts to standardize school building designs, calendars, and curricula were devoted largely to schools for White students. Black communities often had to provide private funds in order to have schools built and

[82] Danielle Dreilinger, *The Secret History of Home Economics: How Trailblazing Women Harnessed the Power of Home and Changed the Way We Live* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2022), p. 34-37, 54-58, 65-67, 76-79, 95-99. Although state and local politicians sometimes resisted the need for home demonstrations, federal administrators prevailed in their insistence on continuing this aspect of cooperative extension work.
[83] "State Advisory Board of Virginia Met in Mecklenburg County Sept. 7-8," *Suffolk News-Herald*, September 14, 1948, p. 7.
[84] "FCCLA: About: History," Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, 2023, https://fcclainc.org/about/history.

furnished and to host teachers as boarders in private homes. In 1934, the Virginia State Teachers Association, an organization formed by and for Black educators, began to coordinate with the NAACP to develop a legal strategy to force "equalization" of segregated schools. As is described in detail in the nomination for Union Street School in Loudoun County, attorney Charles Hamilton Houston managed the NAACP's strategy to begin dismantling Jim Crow segregation by using equalization lawsuits to create a body of evidence that segregated schools intrinsically were unequal.[85] Between 1938-1940, in addition to Loudoun County, the NAACP pressed lawsuits filed by two Black teachers in Norfolk's public schools who were paid a lower salary than White teachers with similar responsibilities. The Norfolk case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled that unequal salary for teachers solely based on race was unconstitutional. The NAACP and teachers in other Virginia localities, including Petersburg, Danville, Richmond, Mecklenburg County, Chesterfield County, and Goochland County, began planning to file similar lawsuits. Mecklenburg and Goochland counties both settled with Black teachers without going to court.[86]

The exigencies of World War II and its related shortages of construction workers and materials forestalled efforts to equalize other aspects of segregated schools, notably the school buildings themselves. Between 1947-1949, however, the NAACP and Virginia's Black communities resumed their legal strategy. In 1948, a case from Surry County reached the U.S. District Court. County school board officials were charged with discrimination due to the lack of an accredited high school for Black students, lack of bus transportation, inequities in buildings, equipment, and libraries, and unequal salaries for school staff. The court ordered the County to equalize salaries over the next two school terms and to provide the court with a report on equalization of facilities by mid-September 1948. A cascade of lawsuits followed, stretching the NAACP's legal team thinly; while many were settled out of court, Virginia school officials were alarmed by several court rulings that stated unequivocally that racial discrimination in public schools was illegal. These included a case from Gloucester County that also embroiled King George County, where school officials in both counties refused to recognize the right of Black children to attend White high schools despite that no Black high school existed in either county. King George officials suspended all high school classes in biology, chemistry, physics, and geometry rather than conceding the necessity for such coursework for Black students, and were held in contempt of court and fined for their actions. A lawsuit from Pulaski County that reached the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in 1949 included the court's declaration of their "solemn duty" to strike down "forbidden racial segregation."[87] Such results were electrifying to White officials who had paid lip service to "separate but equal" schools for generations.

[85] Jane Covington, "Union Street School," National Register nomination, September 14, 2022, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/253-5117_Union_Street_School_2022_NRHP_nomination_FINAL.pdf, p. 23-26.
[86] Doxey A. Wilkerson, "The Negro School Movement in Virginia: From 'Equalization' to 'Integration,'" *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 1960), p. 18-19.
[87] Doxey A. Wilkerson, "The Negro School Movement in Virginia: From 'Equalization' to 'Integration,'" *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (Winter 1960), p. 20-22. The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals quotes are as cited by Wilkerson on p. 22 of his article in the *Journal of Negro Education*.

During the 1949 Virginia gubernatorial primary, Francis P. Miller, John S. Battle, and Horace H. Edwards, competed for the Democratic nomination. Miller opposed U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd Sr.'s conservative political machine, which dominated Virginia politics from the 1920s-1960s, and Edwards had a falling out with one of Byrd's operatives, Everett R. Combs. Edwards proposed a new 2 percent sales tax to pay for educational needs. Advising candidate John S. Battle, in April 1949, Combs countered with using surplus state funds for the same purpose but without creating a new tax. Edwards and Miller split the anti-Byrd machine vote and Battle won the election.[88]

From 1950 to 1954, Battle's administration used the surplus state monies to provide grants to localities for school construction. Such construction was necessary, according to state government officials, "to accommodate the first wave" of the Baby Boom generation (children born between 1946-1964) who were reaching elementary school age.[89] According to local news reports, although Mecklenburg County officials showed less concern about enrollment increases, they also monitored the effects of the massive flood control project on the Roanoke River then under construction, which had brought hundreds of new workers and their families to the county.[90] For localities under pressure to equalize their segregated schools, including Mecklenburg County, the new state aid provided some relief as well. The "equalization" effort went beyond school plants. In 1952, Battle's administration also established a $10 million fund to equalize salaries of Black and White teachers across Virginia. Both the school construction and salary expenditures came to be regarded as measures to thwart lawsuits against Virginia's segregated public schools, which on paper were required to operate as "separate but equal" facilities, but had failed to do so.[91]

New construction to relieve overcrowding and, to some extent, equalize the segregated schools actually had been under way since 1947 after Mecklenburg County voters approved a $350,000 bond issue. Another major reason for the County's new investment was the extent of deferred maintenance and new construction that had accumulated during the economic straits of the Great Depression and the shortages of labor and materials during World War II. Growing student enrollments and a desire to house all elementary students in schools separate from those of high school students also factored into the decision to undertake new construction as quickly

[88] "Francis Miller Dies; Virginia Politician," *The New York Times*, August 5, 1978, p. 22, https://www.nytimes.com/1978/08/05/archives/francis-miller-dies-virginia-politician-he-opposed-the-byrd.html; Larry Hall, "Horace Hall Edwards," *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, Library of Virginia (1998–), 2023 http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/dvb/bio.asp?b=Edwards_Horace_Hall; James Sweeney, "John Stewart Battle (1890–1972)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/battle-john-stewart-1890-1972.

[89] Peter R. Henriques, *John S. Battle and Virginia Politics, 1948-1953*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1971, p. 78-82, 131-132.

[90] James Sweeney, "John Stewart Battle (1890–1972)," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, December 7, 2020, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/battle-john-stewart-1890-1972; "City, Area Counties Push School Completion," *Danville Register and Bee*, September 7, 1952, p. 11.

[91] Peter R. Henriques, *John S. Battle and Virginia Politics, 1948-1953*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1971, p. 127-131.

as was feasible after the war. As explained in the National Register nomination for John Groom Elementary School (NRHP 2018; DHR #301-5063),

> In addition to a new eight-classroom building to serve South Hill's African American elementary-grade youth, the proposed scope of work included four classrooms and a 450-seat auditorium at LaCrosse High School, two classrooms and a five-hundred-seat auditorium at Boydton High School, a home economics building at Buckhorn High School, plumbing and heating system installation at Clarksville High School, and repairs at Thyne Institute.[92]

Elementary students attending classes in temporary buildings at the County Training School were to be assigned to a new elementary school. Construction of a new building for the high school students, however, was not included in the bond issue, despite that the training school's principal building had been destroyed by fire in 1942.

Since the spring of 1951, Mecklenburg County's school board had been evaluating various sites around the county for acquisition in order to build four new high schools. In the east side of the county, a Works Progress Administration wayside park developed in the 1930s was identified as the preferred site for a new high school for White students, which became the eventual site of Park View High School. The board also was evaluating the county's financial position and the anticipated costs of the ambitious construction plans. On September 25, 1951, a request for a bond issue of $2.5 million was settled upon, along with approval to build two consolidated high schools for White students and two consolidated high schools for Black students. Each consolidated school would include enrollments from a larger school and a smaller school currently located in the various incorporated towns across the county.[93] The bond issue, however, was not approved by Mecklenburg County's voters.

The Mecklenburg County School Board opted to proceed with construction of the two new high schools for Black students, as well as various additions and renovations to existing schools across the county. In 1952, Mecklenburg County received a $15,100 grant for an elementary school in Boydton.[94] In September 1952, the *Danville Register and Bee* reported that additions to the Chase City and Clarksville high schools recently had been completed, as well as renovations at Boydton, and construction of a "Community Agriculture" building at Buckhorn, all of which were White schools; these projects had been paid for with pre-1952 allocations from the "Battle Fund," as the 1950 and 1952 budget surpluses came to be known. The newspaper article further noted that the Battle Fund not only had made many new construction projects possible, but had also "brought to the minds of school boards and the public the increasing importance of properly located, well-equipped, and planned educational facilities.

[92] Heather Fearnbach, "John Groom Elementary School," National Register nomination, May 27, 2017, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/301-5063_John_Groom_School_2017_NRHP_FINAL.pdf, p. 20.
[93] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, various dates, 1951, p. 5, 7, 12, 17-18, 21-22, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[94] "Henry County High to Receive $300,000 Construction Funds," *Danville Register and Bee*, May 23, 1952, p. 17; Alex Gottschalk, Mecklenburg County Administrator, personal communication to author, September 30, 2024.

Mecklenburg County's Superintendent of Schools, A. B. Haga, noted that the County already was studying "a long-range program of high school construction" as the existing schools were "not believed adequate in either size, quality, or location."[95]

Also in September 1952, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported that construction of the new schools for Black students would begin immediately, with costs anticipated to total $943,486, or $468,221 for East End High School and $475,265 to replace the West End High School that recently had been destroyed by fire. The two new high schools would replace the partially destroyed Mecklenburg County Training School in South Hill, the Thyne Institute, and a high school for Black students in Chase City. In addition to classrooms and administrative offices, each school was planned to include a home economics department, combined gymnasium/ auditorium, cafeteria, science laboratory, business department, art room, and music practicing rooms. Such an array of amenities had long been standard for White schools in Mecklenburg and other rural counties, but represented a significant departure from the pre-World War II emphasis on trades and agricultural instruction for Black students. [96] In December 1952, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported that the financing for construction included the County's entire allocation of "Battle funds" totaling $1,104,312, a $300,000 Literary Fund loan, insurance settlements for the recently burned South Hill High School, and $100,000 in bank loans. East End High School was dedicated in April 1953. Dr. Archie G. Richardson, a Black educator and the Associate Supervisor of Education for the Virginia State Board of Education, was the keynote speaker. Richardson, a native of South Hill, had donated the land for construction of the late 1940s John Groom Elementary School (NRHP 2018; DHR #301-5063).[97]

On June 1, 1953, the Mecklenburg County School Board agreed to request a bond issue of $1.3 million to pay for construction of two new White high Schools. In September 1953, Mecklenburg County voters approved the bond issue. One new school was to be built on the western outskirts of South Hill to serve the east side of the county. The second school's selected site was northwest of Clarksville in the Bluestone area for the county's west side students. The Mecklenburg County School Board solicited public input for the name of each school, with Park View and Bluestone, respectively, ultimately chosen. Park View's enrollment was composed of students from Buckhorn, LaCrosse, and South Hill high schools, while Bluestone's was composed of students from Clarkesville and Chase City; Boydton High School students were divided between the two new schools based on their geographic location.[98]

[95] "City, Area Counties Push School Completion," *Danville Register and Bee*, September 7, 1952, p. 11.
[96] "Construction Will Begin at Mecklenburg Schools," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, September 21, 1952, p. 40; Heather Fearnbach, "John Groom Elementary School," National Register nomination, May 27, 2017, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/301-5063_John_Groom_School_2017_NRHP_FINAL.pdf, p. 21. The Literary Fund was the body created by the General Assembly to provide low-interest loans to localities for public education needs.
[97] Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 126.
[98] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, various dates, 1951, p. 143-144, 147, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia; Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill,*

In 1951, Mecklenburg County had commissioned architect Samuel N. Mayo to prepare the plans for East End and West End high schools and, in 1953, they did the same for Park View and Bluestone high schools. East End and West End had nearly identical drawings, as did Park View and Bluestone. As had their predecessors, all four of the new high schools had home economics departments within the school itself and adjacent vocational/agricultural shop buildings.[99] Mayo, an architect based in Richmond from 1940-1955, designed all four schools in the International Style, which had become popular across Virginia as an economical but progressive style for educational buildings.[100] The County's mid-1950s investment in school construction using Battle funds represented the last time that state grants were provided to localities for school construction. Starting in the 1960s, Virginia's schools were financed "almost exclusively" through loans from the Literary Fund and a newly formed Virginia Public School Authority.[101]

During the same period, with a string of successful cases regarding needs for equalization of public education, Charles Hamilton Houston and the NAACP turned their attention to legal cases with which to argue that segregation itself was discriminatory, a strategy that met with success on May 17, 1954, with the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* decision that segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. Despite, its name, the decision included a lawsuit from Virginia, *Davis v. Prince Edward County School Board,* that, along with two other lawsuits, had been added to the *Brown* case.

In Virginia, state and local officials responded with delay tactics that included simply ignoring the ruling, continuing equalization efforts, and requesting guidance from Virginia's Attorney General at the time, J. Lindsay Almond, who found that the decision did not require Virginia to begin desegregating local schools immediately. As an example, the minutes for the Mecklenburg County School Board meeting on June 14, 1954, show that the members voted unanimously to approve construction of two new high schools; although not explicitly stated in the minutes these new schools were Bluestone and Park View, both to be built for White students. For their next item of business, according to the minutes, local Superintendent of Public Instruction Dowell J. Howard directed the members' attention to a May 27, 1954, letter

Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 106, 125, 128-129; "White Schools to Open Sept. 8; Black Schools to Open Sept. 21; Bond Election Coming," *The South Hill Enterprise*, August 13, 1953, p. 1. The two-week difference in school openings was related to delays in completion of the new East End and West End high schools for Black students. The distribution of students from pre-World War II high schools to Park View and Bluestone was provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

[99] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, various dates, 1951, p. 85, 151, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia; Heather Fearnbach, "John Groom Elementary School," National Register nomination, May 27, 2017, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/301-5063_John_Groom_School_2017_NRHP_ FINAL.pdf, p. 22.

[100] Another example of Mayo's work is Ralph Bunche High School (NRHP 2006; DHR #048-5007) in King George County.

[101] *State/Local Relations & Service Responsibilities: A Framework for Change*, Report of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to the Governor and the General Assembly of Virginia, Senate Document No. 37, Commonwealth of Virginia, Richmond, 1993, p. 95.

from Almond to the State Board of Education and Howard's May 28, 1954, memo that he had prepared; copies of each document were included with the minutes.[102]

Referring to the *Davis v. Prince Edward County School Board* case that originated in Virginia rather than the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the State Board had requested from Almond guidance on "what is the legal vitality and efficacy of section 140 of the Constitution of Virginia, and the statute enacted pursuant thereto, providing, in substance, that white and colored children shall not be taught in the same school?" In his correspondence, Almond quoted the Supreme Court's finding "separate but equal" education is "inherently unequal" and violates the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. He also explained that the Supreme Court had sent each of the class action lawsuits that made up *Brown v. Board of Education* back to lower federal courts for re-argument, which left the method for addressing the unconstitutionality of "separate but equal" education yet to be determined. Almond's guidance read as follows:

> Pending a final adjudication, it is my opinion that section 140 of the Constitution of Virginia, and the statute of Virginia enacted pursuant thereto, remain intact and unimpaired, imbued with full legal vitality and efficacy.
>
> It is clearly manifest from the Court's opinion that it reserves judgment on the matter of final disposition of the cause before it until it could be further advised as to matters procedural relating to adjustment to the Court's opinion on the basic issue.
>
> You have also requested my opinion, in the event I conclude that our constitutional and statutory provisions retain vitality, as to whether the State Board of Education would be within its legal rights to direct the Division Superintendents throughout the State to proceed with plans for the coming school year on the same basis as have heretofore obtained.
>
> It is my opinion that the Board would have full legal authority to issue such directives, in view of the Court's retention of the question as to how and when the Court's opinion on the basic question is to be implemented.[103]

In his May 28 memo, Howard provided quotes from the May 27, 1954, State Board of Education meeting itself:

> In view of the opinion of the Attorney General on this day rendered, to which we adhere, the Board proclaims the following policy:

[102] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, June 14, 1954, p. 229, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[103] A copy of Almond's two-page letter to the State Board of Education was included in the Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes for June 14, 1954, after p. 229; scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

> The local Boards of Education are hereby advised to proceed as at present and for the school session 1954-55 to operate the public schools of this State on the same basis as they are now being operated and as heretofore obtained.[104]

According to the Mecklenburg County Board of Education minutes, the members received both documents without discussion. The Board moved on to a discussion about acquiring additional school buses for transportation of students to school.[105] Private resistance to the *Brown v. Board of Education* was not as muted. In 1954, the Defenders of State Sovereignty and Individual Liberties led private efforts to resist school desegregation. The Mecklenburg County chapter of this organization stated in October 1954 that the ability to "'pass on to our children and grandchildren the proud heritage of the white race'" was at stake.[106] Two years later, the organization claimed to have 12,000 members in chapters across Virginia. The same year, U.S. Senator Harry F. Byrd, who had dominated Virginia politics for decades, called for "massive resistance" to school desegregation and the General Assembly altered Virginia's constitution to legalize tuition grants which would create an opportunity for White parents to enroll their children in private schools in order to avoid desegregated public schools. In response to the local school board in Arlington County deciding to integrate its schools, the General Assembly "revoked Arlington's right to have an elected school board."[107] These actions preceded the General Assembly's actions in early 1956 to create a plan to implement Byrd's call for resistance to school desegregation. Various aspects of the Massive Resistance legislative package were struck down during the late 1950s-early 1960s, but its tactics shaped many Virginia localities' responses to federal court rulings into the mid-1960s.[108]

[104] A copy of Howard's one-page memo to the Mecklenburg County School Board was included in the Board's meeting minutes for June 14, 1954, after p. 229; scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[105] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, June 14, 1954, p. 229, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[106] The quote of the Mecklenburg County chapter's statement is found in Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep on Keeping On: The Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education *in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), p. 63.
[107] Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep on Keeping On: The Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education *in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), p. 47-48. Since the 1950s, the multiple-component legislative package has been known simply as Massive Resistance as a nod to Byrd's original demand for "massive resistance" against school desegregation.
[108] Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep on Keeping On: The Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education *in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), p. 74-75.

Figure 10. East Facade of Park View High School (Image Source: 1959 Leaves of Memory *Yearbook, interior cover photo; https://virginiagenealogy.org/ brunswick/mecklenburg-county-public-library-collection-of-yearbooks/).*

Meanwhile, on September 12, 1955, the newly completed Park View High School opened its doors to the public (Figure 10, above). The campus was large enough to accommodate multiple academic buildings, along with school buses and parking for faculty, staff, and students during the regular school day and for local community events such as basketball and football games. Park View's location also was selected to make it accessible to its student enrollment, which was drawn from the eastern half of Mecklenburg County. Additionally, the school was built on land that originally was a wetland, which had been partially drained and graded during the 1930s to serve as a wayside park.[109] Following an opening ceremony in the combined gymnasium/auditorium, student volunteers provided peers with maps and tours. The school offered courses and programs that had not been available at its predecessors, including industrial art, mechanical drawing, business, modern languages, and drama. Park View's initial

[109] Wayside parks were built during the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps and were among the project types categorized as "recreational demonstration areas." Such projects were designed to provide new outdoor recreational opportunities to people across the U.S. and included national, state, and county parks, reforestation projects, and wayside parks. "Waysides" were typically about 20 acres and, as their name suggests, were areas that were alongside roads and highways; thus, a wayside served as both a park for nearby residents to enjoy and as a place for motorists to stop during longer trips. In addition to Mecklenburg County, wayside parks were built in Amherst, Fauquier, Hanover, Pittsylvania, and Pulaski counties during the 1930s. See *Recreational Demonstration Projects as Illustrated by Chopawamsic, Virginia,* (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, no date), p. 1-2, 21. During the early 1950s, Mecklenburg County officials had negotiated with the National Park Service to return the land to County ownership and redevelop it for the new high school. An act of Congress also was secured to facilitate the property ownership transfer. Before construction began on Park View in 1954, the former wayside park required extensive grading that altered the site's drainage patterns and created a terraced knoll for the school.

enrollment was 450 White students. The school's approximately 25 teachers taught a full curriculum of academic and vocational courses. Bluestone High School also opened during the fall of 1955.[110]

As evidenced by period newspaper articles, vocational instruction continued to hold a prominent role across rural Virginia for both students and adults. In 1951, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported that 86,882 students statewide were enrolled in agricultural classes, an increase of 10,000 students compared to the previous year. Of this number, approximately 7,400 veterans were eligible for agricultural classes through military benefits that became available after World War II; veterans typically convened in adults-only classes held at high schools during evening and weekend hours. Another cohort of 14,530 students were enrolled in farm machinery repair classes, learning skills that were increasingly in demand due to the continued mechanization of many aspects of farming. Both Black and White students participated in the vocational coursework. [111] In April 1952, the busy student members of the New Homemakers of America and New Farmers of America chapters in Mecklenburg County held their "annual social" at John Groom Elementary School. The students also celebrated National NFA Day on April 4 and honored Booker T. Washington for his "great contribution in vocational education," and were looking forward to their "Federation Ball."[112] The same year, a contingent of Mecklenburg County's White students participated in the second annual convention of the Young Farmers of Virginia (YFV), a statewide organization that served young farmers who had completed high school. Mecklenburg County resident John A. Cleaton aided in its founding and served as its first president. Buckhorn, Chase City, South Hill, and LaCrosse had local chapters of the YFV at the time.[113]

Anecdotally, the continued importance of vocational training at Park View High School is evidenced by school yearbooks from 1956-1977. A range of clubs existed at Park View High School throughout its history, including Beta Club (academic), Student Council (student government), Dramatics Club (performing arts), Choral Club (performing arts), 4-H and Junior 4-H (agriculture and homemaking), and the Annual Club (school yearbook). Distributive education, for which federal support had been added during the 1930s, also was represented; distributive education focused on commercial marketing and management skills. From the 1950s-1970s, membership in each club ranged between approximately 10 students to more than 60 students. Based on a review of the Park View High School yearbook during the period of significance, the Future Farmers of America (FFA) and Future Homemakers of America (FHA)

[110] "Park View High School Opens," *The South Hill Enterprise*, September 22, 1955, p. 1; Frank L. Nanney Jr., *South Hill, Virginia: A Chronicle of the First 100 Years* (Winston-Salem, NC: Frank L. Nanney Jr. and Jostens Inc., 2001), p. 130.
[111] "Agricultural Classes Total 86,882 for Year in Virginia," *Richmond Times-Dispatch,* October 8, 1951, p. 6; "Many Veterans Studying Agriculture," *The South Hill Enterprise*, October 17, 1946, p. 1. In addition to mechanical trades, veterans also took coursework to become extension agents and agricultural educators as well as a general farmers or specialists in poultry or livestock.
[112] Willie Wilson, "N.F.A. Chapter News," *The South Hill Enterprise*, April 17, 1952, p. 2.
[113] "State Officers of Young Farmers of Virginia, 1951-1952," *South Hill Enterprise*, April 17, 1952, p. 4.

consistently had larger memberships in comparison to most other clubs.[114] In 1956, the Beta Club had approximately 67 members, making it the largest academic club at Park View. The Choral Club included approximately 130 members. Special-interest clubs had smaller memberships, such as the Library Club and Dramatics Club, both of which had approximately 45 students, the Student's Council's 20 members, and the Distribution Club's 10 members. The FFA's membership of about 50 students is in keeping with those of other special-interest clubs. The FHA club, however, included approximately 95 students, which prompts consideration of the 1950s' dual trends of home economics education providing women with an assortment of career possibilities and American society's particularly high emphasis on women's domestic responsibilities.[115] As of 1968-1969, when desegregation of Park View High School had begun, several more clubs, including the French Club, Future Teachers of America, and Latin Club, were available to students. Overall membership in Park View's various clubs appears to have been as robust as a decade earlier, although by this time the Future Teachers of America had the highest number of members among the school's student organizations. Several clubs had been divided into two chapters, such as the Latin I and Latin II clubs, making the overall membership comparable to the popular FHA and FFA clubs. An interesting reversal in membership numbers for the FHA and FFA clubs occurred between 1955-1969; whereas FHA appears to have been considerably more popular that FFA in 1955, circumstances had switched in 1969, when FHA's membership was approximately 54 students while FFA's was about 75 students.[116] By 1977, most of Park View's clubs had approximately 25 members, although the Park View High School Band was a larger organization with approximately 36 members, the Student Council members numbered 48, and the Art Club had 56 members. The more recently created Forestry Club had 18 members. The FFA's membership totaled 96 students and FHA's totaled 91 students.[117] The higher number of students enrolled in FFA and FHA may be associated with the impacts of desegregation on student demographics and the growing emphasis that vocational education received in Mecklenburg County during the 1970s. Additional research, however, is needed to establish whether other major trends beyond local control, such as high inflation, the early 1970s energy crisis, and regional loss of manufacturing jobs, influenced students' choices at Park View.

Desegregation at Park View High School

[114] The yearbooks were entitled *Leaves of Memory* between 1956-1969. By 1975, the name of the yearbook had changed to *Traces*. Digitized copies of the yearbooks are available at https://virginiagenealogy.org/brunswick/mecklenburg-county-public-library-collection-of-yearbooks/. Just three editions, 1975-1977, of *Traces* have been uploaded to the website. Editions for the 1970-1974 yearbooks are not posted on the website.
[115] Park View High School, *Leaves of Memory*, 1956, https://virginiagenealogy.org/brunswick/mecklenburg-county-public-library-collection-of-yearbooks/, p. 42-58. The Distribution Club appears to have been a type of business education organization focused on sales.
[116] Park View High School, *Leaves of Memory*, 1969, https://virginiagenealogy.org/brunswick/mecklenburg-county-public-library-collection-of-yearbooks/, p. 38-61.
[117] Park View High School, *Leaves of Memory*, 1977, https://virginiagenealogy.org/brunswick/mecklenburg-county-public-library-collection-of-yearbooks/, p. 62-82. Membership numbers cited herein are based on group photos and lists of student members in the cited yearbooks.

In 1959, the repeated failures of Massive Resistance to withstand scrutiny in federal courts prompted a plan for "token compliance" through a new "freedom of choice" plan crafted by the General Assembly. Originally, local "pupil placement boards" were established to review applications submitted by parents to assign their children to a specific school. Most of the applications were initiated by Black parents seeking to enroll their children in White schools due to the inequities in segregated school systems. The overwhelming majority of such applications were denied, but for a time the process provided some cover for local school systems to claim they had adopted a desegregation plan.[118]

The federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 empowered the U.S. Attorney General to file school desegregation lawsuits and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (a predecessor to the U.S. Department of Education) to withhold federal funding from school systems that discriminated against Black students. The law, however, did not require immediate desegregation of all public schools to achieve racial balance in the makeup of students, faculty, administrators, or staff. Thus did the "freedom of choice" strategy evolve in Virginia to continue the façade of school desegregation in Virginia localities. Parents and students selected their preferred school and, in theory, the local school board now was required to assign students to a particular school without regard to the school's existing racial makeup or the student's race.

On June 18, 1965, *The (Danville) Register* reported that "freedom of choice" plans complied with the 1964 Civil Rights Act and that most school placement applications concerned high school students. Examples cited included Halifax County, where the number of Black students at formerly all-White high schools had increased from just two in 1964 to 48 in 1965. Of 347 such applications in Henry County, a total of 189 Black students were transferred to previously all-White high schools. In Mecklenburg County, according to the newspaper, of the 121 applications for student transfers, 27 were for Black high school students to attend Park View and 23 to go to Bluestone High School.[119] As is described by scholar Brian Daugherity, both students and their families met with resistance, bullying, and threats of violence. In 1967, a Black grandfather reported a gunshot fired at his home after he enrolled his grandchildren in a majority-White school. The same year, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare found that Southside localities, including Mecklenburg County, had not met the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requirements. Black student enrollments at Mecklenburg's formerly all-White schools stood at 1.14 percent.[120] The 1960 and 1970 decennial censuses demonstrate that the county's rate of desegregation had barely begun as of 1967. In 1960, the decennial census recorded that Mecklenburg County's "non-white" individuals comprised 46.8 percent of the

[118] Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep on Keeping On: The Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education *in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), p. 76-77.
[119] "Area Negro Applications For Transfers Mainly For High Schools," *The (Danville) Register*, June 18, 1965, p. 3-B.
[120] Brian J. Daugherity, *Keep on Keeping On: The Implementation of* Brown v. Board of Education *in Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2016), p. 111.

county's population.[121] For the 1970 census, percentages of "Negro" individuals were shown on a national map that included county boundaries; counties were shaded according to their approximate percentage of "Negro" residents. Census results showed by Mecklenburg County's Black residents comprised 30-49.9 percent of the total population.[122]

In the spring of 1968, a lawsuit originally filed in 1965 by Black parents in Virginia seeking to integrate local schools, *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County*, reached the U.S. Supreme Court, along with similar cases filed in Tennessee and Arkansas. In New Kent County, a rural county situated between Richmond and Williamsburg, residential patterns were broadly integrated due to the dispersion of the majority of Black and White residents across agricultural tracts. Black parents argued that geographic zoning of school districts, therefore, would immediately and effectively end segregation in the local school system.[123] The minutes of the Mecklenburg County School Board's meeting on July 8, 1968, state that the County was among 10 localities that had been instructed by U.S. District Court (Richmond) Judge Robert R. Merhige Jr. to submit desegregation guidelines based on the Supreme Court's findings in the *Green v. New Kent County* decision.[124]

At their meeting on August 6, 1968, the Board presented a plan for desegregating Mecklenburg County's schools but also adopted a resolution stating that the plan would not be implemented until the 1969-1970 school year because "registration for the 1968-69 school year has been conducted pursuant to said Freedom of Choice Plan." [125] A combination of "pairing" grades and/or geographic zoning would be used to integrate school enrollments. The County previously had paired the Black and White high schools, with West End High School and Bluestone High School for students in the west half of the county and East End and Park View

[121] This percentage represented an 11 percent decrease in the number of African Americans residing in Mecklenburg County as of 1950. Reasons for the decline in total numbers of Black residents in rural Virginia localities warrant further study but are not within the scope of this nomination. See "U.S. Census Bureau, By County 1950 and 1960," 1960 Census of Population, Supplementary Report PC (S1)-52, p. 59.
[122] "U.S. Census Bureau, By County 1950 and 1960," 1960 Census of Population, Supplementary Report PC (S1)-52, p. 59; "U.S. Census Bureau, Distribution of the Negro Population, by County," 1970 Census of Population, Supplementary Report (June 1971), p. 3.
[123] Such broad integration existed throughout most of Virginia's rural areas, including Mecklenburg County. Towns and cities, however, continued to have substantial residential segregation. Integrating independent school districts in towns and cities, therefore, could not be achieved through geographic zoning. Use of bus transportation to integrate schools by transporting both Black and White students as necessary to different schools in order to achieve desegregation was introduced during the early 1970s. The method, however, met with immediate resistance as many parents objected to their children attending schools far from their homes; such objections also provided cover in some quarters for continued resistance to integration. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Milliken v. Bradley* struck down use of busing across local jurisdiction boundaries, such as busing of students from residences located in a city to a suburban school in a different jurisdiction, such as a county. The decision particularly applied to metropolitan school desegregation plans. The means of desegregating Virginia's public schools, therefore, due to the *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County* decision applies primarily to the Commonwealth's rural localities, not to independent cities such as Norfolk, Richmond, Petersburg, Roanoke, and Alexandria.
[124] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, July 8, 1968, p. 3, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[125] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, July 8, 1968, p. 5, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

high schools for the east half.[126] The school reorganization plan also called for filling faculty vacancies by placing White teachers at formerly Black schools and Black teachers at formally White schools. The School Board pledged to file the desegregation plan with the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, by March 1, 1969.[127]

Included with the September 6, 1968, minutes of a lengthy meeting of the School Board is a copy of a letter of the same date from the Mecklenburg County Voters League to the Board. The letter noted that, due to lack of communication to Black residents by the School Board, and to the fact that a majority of school-age children in the county were Black but that the board had no Black members, the Voters League would be sending its own delegation to each Mecklenburg County School Board meeting. Their correspondence stated that White residents were in the process of organizing creation of a private school for their children to attend. Richard Bagley addressed the Board at the September 6 meeting and argued for "maintenance and promotion of a strong public school system in Mecklenburg County."[128] At the same meeting, a group of Black residents addressed the School Board; the group included Rev. E. Russell Wilson, Garland Davis, William T. Carter, Rev. J. J. Wood, Lynwood Baskerville, and Lewis B. White. These individuals echoed the Voters League's statement that the School Board lacked a Black member and local Black residents "did not have satisfactory communications with the Board," thus necessitating representation of their concerns by audience members at every Board meeting. The Board responded that its members were "appointed by the School Trustees Electoral Board."[129] All local school boards in Virginia historically and continued to be appointed either by a local selection commission or by local government officials until 1992, when the General Assembly passed legislation allowing localities to switch to elected boards. Virginia was "the last state to allow elected school boards."[130] The Board added that its regularly scheduled meetings occurred on the second Monday of each month. Tellingly, however, the Board noted that "executive sessions that might be held to discuss business involving personalities, sale of property, and legal matters" were not open to the public.[131] Legal matters related to compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the *Green v. New Kent County* legal case, in particular, are likely to have been of great interest to local residents in 1968.

[126] "Pairing schools" was not defined in the meeting minutes. Based on later reports, it appears to have entailed integrating grades 8-10 in one school and 11-12 in another school. Thus, all students in grades 8-10 would attend a previously all-Black high school, while those in grades 11-12 were assigned to a previously all-White school, resulting in complete desegregation of each school at grades 8-12.
[127] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, August 6, 1968, p. 6-7, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[128] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, September 6, 1968, copy of Mecklenburg County Voters League correspondence between pages 15-16, and p. 16, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[129] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, September 6, 1968, p. 16, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[130] "Rules governing school board election dates and timing in Virginia, Appointed vs elected school boards in Virginia," Ballotpedia, no date, https://ballotpedia.org/Rules_governing_school_board_election_dates_and_timing_in_Virginia.
[131] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, September 6, 1968, p. 16, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

Both the Voters League's correspondence and the statements by Bagley and delegation of residents are indicative of the persistence of concerns among Black residents with regard to equality of educational opportunities in Mecklenburg County. With public schools now set to complete desegregation, divestment in the public school system on the part of County officials appears to have been a top concern of Black residents. Similar tactics had been a common practice during the 1950s to early 1960s, and included closure of public parks, swimming pools, and other publicly-owned facilities rather than conceding to judicial rulings requiring integration. Enforcement of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, implementation of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, passage of new laws and implementation of federal regulations that assured all citizens the right to participate in all elections collectively reduced the viability of such measures. Additionally, over time, schools from pre-kindergarten through university levels that received any form of federal funding had to conform to federal antidiscrimination laws or risk losing such funds.

After considering various other items of business, including approval of multiple payroll changes, appointment of an additional teacher at Thyne Elementary School, and provision of sick leave for teacher aides, the Mecklenburg County School Board approved a resolution to adopt a desegregation plan and submit it to Judge Mehrige as ordered. The resolution stated that the Board found that the county's existing public schools were located in a way that "pairing" the schools was preferable to switching to geographically-defined school districts. Regarding the county's four high schools, Bluestone, East End, Park View, and West End, East End and West End would become "junior high schools" for grades 8-9 while Park View and Bluestone would be "senior high schools" for grades 10-12. The Board further instructed Superintendent A. B. Haga to request an estimate from the University of Virginia's School of Education regarding the cost of a study of the county's school system.[132] At the Board's meeting on October 14, 1968, Reverends M. Raymond Turner, S. Russell Wilson, Harry S. Coffey, and Leslie Cummings-Palmer presented a petition to the Board requesting the creation of a citizen's advisory committee as had been done previously for school consolidation campaigns. The petition asked that a Black and a White representative from each of the county's districts be appointed. The committee's roles would include relieving Board members of public relations responsibilities and facilitating communications to local residents regarding the Board's actions. The petition concluded by noting that the petitioners' interests did not "lie in promoting the cause of school integration as such but in promoting the cause of quality education for our young, and (2) that this petition was adopted at the conclusion of a County-wide meeting of clergy held September 24 at South Hill Methodist Church" that had been attended by Superintendent Haga and two Board members, none of whom had voiced objection to the petition when asked for their opinion. The petition originally was submitted to the County Board of Supervisors, which deferred on it until the School Board first had opportunity

[132] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, September 6, 1968, p. 16-19, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia. Inserted between p. 18 and p. 19 of the minutes was a series of 9 charts that tabulated the County's school-age residents by magisterial districts.

to act. The School Board endorsed the petition and Haga stated he would ascertain which government body had authority to create the advisory committee.[133]

Although results of the School Board's meetings on September 6 and October 14 indicated progress toward an amicable resolution of the school desegregation problem, the Board's meeting on November 21, 1968, demonstrated continued disagreements. At this meeting, the School Board approved a resolution stating that, having considered alternatives to the County's "freedom of choice" plan, it still considered that process to be most preferable for the purpose of school desegregation.[134] At the Board's meeting on December 9, 1968, Garland Davis, Chair of the Mecklenburg County Voters League, appealed to the Board to operate local schools "for all schools without regard to race." Immediately after, the South Hill Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) asked the Board to retain "freedom of choice," preferably through a voters referendum that would allow residents to express their preference.[135] At the January 13, 1969, School Board meeting, Davis reiterated his request for local schools to desegregate. Rev. Russell Wilson, LeRoy King, and L. R. Carter expressed their support for Davis's comments. The Board moved on to other business without responding to these entreaties.[136]

On February 8, 1969, Mecklenburg County's superintendent of education, A. B. Haga, testified in a hearing before U.S. District Judge Robert R. Merhige Jr. that both local officials and residents believed that the "freedom of choice" plan in the county was effective at desegregating local schools. Haga stated that the county's dual (i.e., segregated) school system was likely to be eliminated within the next three to six years. At this time, the county's total public school enrollment stood at 7,600 students attending four high schools (including Park View) and 13 elementary schools. Haga further said that integration had "steadily increased" since 1965, when four Black students were assigned to all-White schools by the pupil placement board, with 126 African Americans attending formerly all-White schools in 1969. Judge Mehring disagreed and ordered the County to implement its "pairing plan" for desegregating schools. The equalization-era East End and Park View high schools were paired, as were Bluestone and West End.[137]

During a lengthy School Board meeting on February 10, 1969, Superintendent Haga distributed to the Board members the federally-approved desegregation plan for Mecklenburg County

[133] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, October 14, 1968, p. 24-25, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia. A copy of the petition was included with the minutes between pages 24 and 25.
[134] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, November 21, 1968, p. 31, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[135] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, December 9, 1968, p. 32, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[136] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, January 13, 1969, p. 38, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[137] "Mecklenburg School Pairing Ordered," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, February 8, 1969, p. 16.

schools. The name of each school was changed to reflect its new use.[138] For example, "John Groom Elementary School became South Hill Primary School… and housed first- through third-grade pupils."[139] Park View's name was changed to Park View Senior High and East End became Park View Junior High. The names of Bluestone and West End similarly changed.[140] The Board did not discuss the plan during the February 10 meeting. At the Board's March 10, 1969, meeting, a group of residents, with Bob Howerton as their spokesman, asked the School Board to appeal Judge Mehrige's February 8, 1969, order to desegregate the county's schools and presented a petition with 500 signatures from people in Boydton, Clarkesville, and Chase City. The Board's response was as follows:

> The Board informed the group that they had been advised by their attorney that an appeal would be useless and they would be wasting time and money to appeal the decision.
>
> Mrs. Ann Roberts asked the Board if there would be a possibility of grouping students according to their levels of learning ability.
>
> The Superintendent stated that a program is being studied for the slow learner and felt that the fast learner would benefit from such a program. He also stated that Federal funds would be available for the educationally and economically deprived children.
>
> The Board thanked those present for their interest and stated that they would be working on problems for the fall and the coming years and hoped that parents would support their efforts.[141]

After considering an assortment of other issues regarding school personnel, school calendar items, school bus purchases, and the 1969-1970 school budget, Superintendent Haga informed

[138] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, February 10, 1969, p. 42, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia. A copy of the desegregation plan was included in the scan of the meeting minutes between pages 42 and 43.

[139] Heather Fearnbach, "John Groom Elementary School," National Register nomination, May 27, 2017, https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/301-5063_John_Groom_School_2017_NRHP_FINAL.pdf, p. 24. The nomination also notes that fourth- through seventh-grade students who previously had attended John Groom were reassigned to the formerly all-White South Hill Elementary School.

[140] At the Board's April 14, 1969, meeting, representatives of a joint committee of the student governments at the former East End and West End high schools questioned why the schools had been so renamed; the Board responded that the renaming was based on geographic locations of each school. The students requested that a plaque be placed in each school honoring the person for whom the building originally had been named. The Board agreed to this suggestion and asked the students to provide ideas for the content of each plaque. See Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, April 14, 1969, p. 53, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia. A copy of the students' correspondence to the Board was included between p. 53-54 of the minutes.

[141] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, March 10, 1960, p. 44, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia. A copy of the petition was not included with the scan of the Board's meeting minutes. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) directed federal aid to local school districts using a funding formula based on the number or percentage of economically disadvantaged children living in a given district.

Board members that the School Board's special attorney had been advised by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare that the county school system's continued eligibility for federal funds would not be restored until the Board communicated its intention to comply with Judge Merhige's February 1969 desegregation order "in good faith." The Board agreed that Superintendent Haga would advise the special attorney of its intention "to comply with the order of the United States District Court, as delivered orally from the bench on February 7, 1969, and subsequent orders or amendments thereto."[142] Thus did the school segregation era end in Mecklenburg County.

Vocational Education and the 1978 Expansion of Park View High School

At the same time that the Mecklenburg County School Board was ending its opposition to desegregation, County officials were engaged in discussions to expand vocational educational opportunities. The February 8, 1969, edition of *The Charlotte (Drakes Branch, Virginia) Gazette* reported that a committee composed of Southside county boards of supervisors would be meeting at Park View with a representative from the State Department of Community Colleges to discuss a method for these localities to share costs of a regional community college and to recommend appointees for the community college's advisory board. The "Region 20" committee included representatives from Mecklenburg County and neighboring localities including Brunswick, Charlotte, Halifax, Lunenburg, and Nottoway counties. The committee previously had selected a Brunswick County location for the new regional community college. Funds to construct the college campus had been included in the Commonwealth's 1968-1970 biennial budget. Another Southside community college was planned for Keysville in Charlotte County. Virginia officials planned to construct 22 community colleges across Virginia, thus placing every Virginia resident within commuting distance of at least one such school; ultimately, 23 community colleges were built by 1970. While state funds would pay for construction and operation of each community college, localities were required to provide a suitable site for each campus at no cost to the Commonwealth.[143]

Virginia's community college system had been founded in 1964 to counter perceptions beyond the Commonwealth that Virginia lacked the "ability to educate and train a modern workforce."[144] The origins of the community college concept extended back to turmoil over Virginia's Massive Resistance policy when, in 1958, a small group of business leaders became concerned that the Commonwealth's business-friendly reputation was being damaged. A year later, they had formed the Virginia Industrialization Group (VIG), whose goals included ending Massive Resistance and creating a "statewide system of technical education." In 1962, the

[142] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, March 10, 1960, p. 47, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[143] "New Developments Advance Regional College Planning," *The Charlotte (Drakes Branch, Virginia) Gazette*, February 6, 1969, p. 3; Richard A. Hodges, "The Founding of the Virginia Technical College System," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, July 1, 2022, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/the-founding-of-the-virginia-technical-college-system.
[144] Richard A. Hodges, "The Founding of the Virginia Technical College System," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, July 1, 2022, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/the-founding-of-the-virginia-technical-college-system. The new college system's name changed in 1966 from "technical college" to "community college."

group hired its first full-time, paid staff member and began lobbying for creation of a new State Department of Technical Education. The technical colleges originally were intended to provide vocational education beyond what traditionally had been offered at the high school level. They were meant for adults of any age seeking to obtain more advanced skills in order to change careers, improve their opportunities for promotion, and to compete for jobs based on newly emerging technologies and industries. Additionally, the VIG anticipated that additional training opportunities would make Virginia's overall workforce more competitive with those in other states, which would draw new industrial development.[145]

The business community's growing interest in vocational education, however, did not bypass high schools. Local newspaper coverage during the 1960s often included discussion of the value of high school vocational training. The federal Vocational Education Act of 1963 directed federal funds to construction of vocational schools for high school students. Amended during the late 1960s, the law included home economics training, which emphasized both homemaking and wage-earning.[146] In 1964, *The South Hill Va. Enterprise* ran a syndicated column by a Dr. Benjamin Fine of the North American Newspaper Alliance in which the suitability of vocational coursework was endorsed for the 50 percent of high school students who, at that time, did not seek, or could not obtain, a college education. Vocational education alongside academic coursework could entice such students to earn their high school diplomas rather than opting to drop out of school altogether and would equip these students with necessary skills for employment.[147] As an example of the successes achieved by vocational students, one 1960s Park View High School student, Rick Hendrick, participated in vocational education courses and continued such instruction at a technical school in North Carolina before going on to become a highly successful businessman whose entrepreneurship included automobile dealerships and ownership of a NASCAR racing team.[148]

Regarding high-school level programs, the Vocational Education Act of 1946 (also known as the George-Barden Act) overhauled the federal vocational education program to allow states to have greater flexibility in managing their programs, to permit apprenticeship programs as part of vocational education, and to add new fields, such as healthcare, fisheries, diesel engine operation and repair, navigation and piloting, and commercial fishing, to the overall array of training programs. In 1958, Congress amended the 1946 law to allow creation of "area" or regional vocational training programs and provide funding for program administrative and instructional costs. Five years later, Congress expanded training options again with the Vocational Education Act of 1963, which provided grants to states for implementing new training options for individuals in high school, young adults out of school, people who had

[145] Richard A. Hodges, "The Founding of the Virginia Technical College System," *Encyclopedia Virginia*, July 1, 2022, https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/the-founding-of-the-virginia-technical-college-system. The new college system's name changed in 1966 from "technical college" to "community college."
[146] Chris Zirkle, "The History of Vocational Teacher Education," The Ohio State University, 2024, https://voc-ed.ehe.osu.edu/2014/07/01/1960-1979/. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 replaced the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917.
[147] Dr. Benjamin Fine, "More Vocational Courses Could Prevent Drop-Outs," *The South Hill Va. Enterprise*, February 20, 1964, p. 1.
[148] Alex Gottschalk, Mecklenburg County administrator, personal communication to author, September 30, 2024.

been underserved while in school, and adults in need of training or retraining to learn new trades or skills due to rapid changes in skilled labor fields. States receiving the federal aid were required to develop and implement multiple-year plans for vocational education and to update their plans on a regular basis. Options for home economics education were expanded alongside those for industrial and agricultural fields. Although the 1963 law required matching funds from states in order to access federal aid, the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 eliminated this requirement. Training opportunities for "disadvantaged" students and for people residing in economically challenged areas also were introduced in 1968. Between 1963-1973, the multiple expansions in educational options resulted in the number of students engaged in such programs increasing from approximately 4 million in 1963 to more than 12 million a decade later. High school students comprised 7.35 million of those persons enrolled in vocational training; the federal government estimated that, by 1978, approximately 11 million high schoolers would be so enrolled. Alongside the traditional industrial, agricultural, and home economics training, office, distribution, and health programs had become widely popular among students enrolled in vocational education.[149]

In 1968-1969, as public school segregation drew to a close in Mecklenburg County, the School Board and Superintendent Haga also conducted routine business for various aspects of the local school system's operation, such as reviewing purchase requests for school buses, setting the calendar for the school year, and maintaining vocational education curriculum. Concerning the latter, as of August 12, 1968, the School Board set fees for students to participate in vocational programs as follows: Industrial Arts, $3.50 per year; Agriculture, $3.00 per year; Home Economics, $3.00; fees for the Agriculture and Home Economics classes included dues to the respective FFA and FHA clubs for each student enrolled in these classes. Likely in response both to the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 and the completion of desegregation at Virginia's public schools, George W. Swartz, Supervisor of the Industrial Education Service at the State Department of Education, sent local school superintendents a summary of the vocational facilities expected to be in place for the 1969-1970 school year at "reorganized" senior high schools.[150]

As of April 14, 1969, Mecklenburg County's two remaining senior high schools, Park View and Bluestone, each employed two home economics instructors and one industrial education instructor. Bluestone High also had two industrial arts instructors while Park View had one. The County's nine agricultural education instructors had not yet been assigned to a specific school for the 1969-1970 school year. Likely due to the federal aid that supported vocational education programs, all of these instructors were "off-scale" teachers, meaning that their salaries were established using a different formula from other teachers in the local system.

[149] Angela M. Giordana-Evans, *A History of Federal Vocational Education Legislation in the Twentieth Century*, L.C. 1043U.S., 75-126 ED, Congressional Research Service, Education and Public Welfare Division, Updated May 12, 1975, p. 16, 18-20, 22-24, 30, 32, 41-42, 45; Chris Zirkle, "The History of Vocational Teacher Education," The Ohio State University, 2024, https://voc-ed.ehe.osu.edu/2014/07/01/1960-1979/. The 1968 amendments also included a mandate for each state to update and revamp its teacher certification requirements for home economics and agricultural educators in time for the 1972-1973 school year

[150] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, August 12, 1968, list of fees between p. 12-13 and p. 46, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.

Music teachers, coaches, guidance counselors, and librarians also were among the "off-scale" staff.[151]At their next meeting on May 7, 1969, the School Board assigned three agricultural instructors to Bluestone Senior High School and two to Park View Senior High, while Bluestone and Park View junior highs each were assigned two instructors.[152]

Speaking in 1971 at the annual Virginia Business Education Conference, Dr. Margaret E. Andrews spoke about rising anxiety among students about obtaining necessary training to obtain a well-paying job. She urged educators to encourage students with challenging circumstances to consider vocational training.[153] On February 14, 1973, Virginia Fifth District Congressmember W. C. Daniel voiced a similar argument in support of vocational education in an editorial that decried a $100 million dollar decrease in federal funding for such programs. By this time, however, funding for vocational education, as well as for most other educational fields, was dramatically impacted by deteriorating national economic conditions brought on by the energy crisis that had begun in 1973 with an embargo against the U.S. by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The national economy worsened due to inflation, brought on by spiraling energy costs, during the mid-1970s. In Virginia, falling tax revenues at the local and state levels prompted painful cuts to education as well as most other government services.

The quality of Mecklenburg County's school system was considered a key element to maintaining the county's long-term viability but competing demands had to be balanced and, in some cases, such as two proposed gymnasiums, had to be tabled indefinitely.[154] At a joint meeting of the School Board and Board of Supervisors, Superintendent A. B. Haga and a colleague, Norman Spender, who was an employee of the School Board office, presented the results of a Vocational Education Task Force Committee appointed by County officials to study the role that vocational education played in local schools and an argument for investing local funds to expand course offerings at Park View and Bluestone High Schools. Haga explained that adding ninth-grade students to the enrollments at Park View and Bluestone would allow the County to devote its high-school educational programs and resources into the two senior high schools instead of splitting them among two senior and two junior high schools. The junior high schools then would become middle schools for seventh and eighth grades,[155] which in turn would alleviate overcrowding at some elementary schools, a necessity as funds for new school construction were not available. Spencer then presented the five-year plan for the County's vocational education program, with an emphasis on trade and industrial education, agriculture, business, distributive education, and "occupational home economics," a term used for programs that taught career education as well as homemaking skills. Also at the meeting

[151] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, August 12, 1968, list of off-scale staff between p. 58-59, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[152] Mecklenburg County School Board meeting minutes, August 12, 1968, p. 64, scan of minutes provided by Mecklenburg County Public Schools staff, Boydton, Virginia.
[153] "Upswing in Vocational Education Cited," *The (Danville) Bee*, August 18, 1971, p. 3. At the same conference, Dr. Robert T. Greene, spoke about the necessity of completing desegregation in terms of the content of school curricula, staffing at schools, and embracing values beyond those of the white middle class.
[154] "Joint Meeting Planned by Two Boards," *The South Hill Enterprise*, November 13, 1974, p. 2A.
[155] Sixth grade was added to Virginia middle schools at a later date.

was George W. Swartz from the State Board of Education, who endorsed the plan. Swartz added that vocational education still was a necessity for students who did not want to attend a traditional four-year college or university and that the latter institutions were not well-suited to providing vocational instruction in addition to academic programs. He added that Virginia received $12-$14 million annually for vocational education, opening the possibility that Mecklenburg County's expanded program would not have to rely solely on local or state funds.[156]

Due to continuing uncertainty with economic conditions, however, the School Board delayed a decision on building new vocational buildings at Park View and Bluestone high schools. In November 1975, Mecklenburg County officials learned that state school aid would be decreased by $170,000 based on a funding formula using average daily school attendance. Coupled with other shortfalls in funding, the circumstance required the County to postpone construction of the vocational buildings at Park View and Bluestone high schools. A local newspaper, however, reported in December 1975 that Mecklenburg County had adopted the proposed ninth- through twelfth-grade curriculum, which met new requirements for high schools to be career-oriented and prepare students for work immediately upon graduation. Meanwhile, similar programs were still under discussion at Prince Edward County and Nottoway County school boards, while Lunenburg County had recently completed new space for a four-year program at its high school. Other Southside localities, such as Brunswick County and Pittsylvania County, approved expanded programs in 1978.[157]

In January 1977, the Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors received a proposal to place the $2.5-million construction project for the vocational buildings at Bluestone and Park View before county voters in a referendum. While the majority of costs would be paid for with state and federal aid, $323,000 in local funding also was needed.[158] A few months later, however, the Board of Supervisors voted to approve $2.5 million for the vocational buildings, to be obtained via a loan from the State Literary Fund. Demonstrative of the period's financial difficulties, at the same meeting, the Board of Supervisors authorized a cut of $116,000 from the School Board's budget for the 1977-1978 fiscal year.[159] In July 1977, however, the Coastal Plains Regional Commission awarded Mecklenburg County a $51,800 grant for the purchase of vocational educational equipment. The commission was a federal-state partnership focused on

[156] Scott Amsberg, "For Schools: Showdown Monday on Planning $'s," *The South Hill Enterprise*, December 4, 1974, p. 1.
[157] "Public School News," *The Charlotte (Virginia) Gazette*, December 18, 1975, p. 1; "Aid Cut Deepens in Mecklenburg," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, November 18, 1975, p. 6; Melissa Bragg Brown, "School Board Approves 5-Year Vocational Plan," *The South Hill Enterprise*, February 2, 1976, p. 12B; Andrea Burney, "County's Five-Year Vo-Tech Plan OKed," *Danville Register and Bee*, December 15, 1977, p. 2. Gregory Nye, "City schools re-open tomorrow in advance of action by board," *The (Danville) Bee*, January 2, 1978, p. 2. Brunswick County and Danville both planned to extend vocational classes to adult students, while Pittsylvania County expected its business classes to be in demand among its high school students. Due to a clerical error at the federal level, Charlotte County's 1977 application for a federal grant to expand its vocational program was not considered; the County was promised to be considered first in a subsequent grant application round. See "Charlotte County Loses $1.5 Million to Computer Error," *The Charlotte (Virginia) Gazette*, February 17, 1977, p. 1.
[158] John Clement, "Voters May Get Mecklenburg Building Plan," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, January 11, 1977, p. 6.
[159] "Mecklenburg Refuses to Alter School Cut Order," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 10, 1977, p. 10.

economic development in coastal plain localities from Virginia south to Florida. Projects that were funded were based on "their long-term economic benefits" and compliance "with local and regional plans."[160] In January 1978, Mecklenburg County received an additional $100,000 from the Coast Plains Regional Commission to help pay for construction costs for the new vocational education buildings. The Commission also awarded grants totaling $240,000 toward building a vocational education center for Halifax County-South Boston.[161] In May 1978, however, the county school system faced another budget cut. Although the County Board of Supervisors had approved a property tax increase, a shortfall remained and $111,000 was removed from the School Board's budget for the 1978-1979 year; among other things, the budget difficulties forced closure of Palmer Springs Elementary School and busing of its students to Buckhorn's elementary school.[162]

Despite the budget challenges of the late 1970s, Mecklenburg County's two new vocational buildings at Park View and Bluestone were completed by mid-1978. The County's commitment to expanding each school's vocational education curriculum demonstrates the exceptional importance that officials, residents, and students placed on such educational opportunities. The economic conditions that characterized the 1970s have proved to be exceptional, thus far, in U.S. and Virginia history. In the face of such difficulties, other priorities, such as raising teachers' salaries, purchasing new equipment and furnishings, and building sports facilities, were deferred. The County's populace and elected officials agreed that vocational training would be a worthwhile long-term investment that would meet the needs of individual students and the County as a whole.

The vocational programs at Park View and Bluestone and their respective 1978 vocational buildings remained in use for 43 years. During that time, the term "vocational education" was replaced by "career and technical education." Included in this revamped approach to career education are the fields of agriculture, business and information technology, family and consumer sciences, health and medical sciences, marketing, technology and engineering education, and trade and industrial education. Similarly, student organizations have been retained, including the familiar Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (formerly Future Homemakers of America), Future Farmers of America, and Future Business Leaders of America, as well as newer entities such as the Health Occupations Students of America (founded in 1976) and Technology Student Association (formerly the American Industrial Arts Student Association).[163]

[160] "Southside Given Tentative Grants," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, July 30, 1977, p. 3.
[161] "Southside Counties Got $11 Million," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, January 2, 1979, p. B-8. Mecklenburg County also received grants for courthouse, fire station, and sewer construction projects and a $3.86 million grant for housing development.
[162] "Mecklenburg School Budget Cut $111,000," *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, May 16, 1979, p. B-4; Alex Gottschalk, Mecklenburg County Administrator, personal communication to author, September 30, 2024.
[163] "Career and Technical Education," Virginia Department of Education, no date, https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/instruction/career-and-technical-education-cte; "Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)," Virginia Department of Education, no date, https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/k-12-standards-instruction/virginia-career-and-technical-student-organizations-ctso.

Park View High School closed in 2022, as did Bluestone High School, after completion of the new Mecklenburg County High School, which serves the entire county. In 2024, Glenn Barbour, a member of the Mecklenburg County Board of Supervisors for 24 years, and its chair for 18 years, said of the County's long-time investments in career and technical education, "Our [school] superintendent established the high school career centers [at the new high school]. We're one of the first high schools in the state of Virginia to do that. Actually starting in middle school, these kids that aren't college oriented can use the career centers to learn things like welding, heating and air conditioning, HVAC, nursing, technology – Microsoft is instrumental in helping with that. We actually have a farm as part of the facility – that has been there since the beginning." Barbour added, "Microsoft is building data centers here. We have the largest Microsoft data center in the world. When they get through it's going to be nine different facilities spread around the county. They're 300-400 acres, all linked together. [Due to the revenue from Microsoft's data centers,] that's the reason we've been able to build a $150 million educational facility without raising taxes."[164] Barbour also cited the technical education options at the high school and community college levels as a reason for selecting Mecklenburg County for its data centers. Today, Brunswick, Charlotte, Lunenburg, and Halifax counties also all have a single high school. The Brunswick, Charlotte, Lunenburg, and Halifax schools prominently feature Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities on their respective websites. For decades, the availability of specialized career training has enabled Mecklenburg County to attract employers in high-technology fields and the county's population has held steady at approximately 30,000 residents up to the present. In contrast, many rural localities in Virginia have lost population as younger workers have moved elsewhere in search of job opportunities. For these reasons, the period of significance for Park View High School ends in 1978 with completion of the vocational education building, a locally significant event that meets Criteria Consideration G. The addition to Park View's campus and curriculum continued the County's commitment to providing high school students with career training options, while expanding beyond the traditional agricultural, home economics, and industrial training offered from the 1910s-1960s.

Closure of Park View High School

In addition to Park View and Bluestone high schools, the Park View and Bluestone middle schools also closed in 2022. The four schools were replaced by the newly completed joint campus of Mecklenburg County High School and Mecklenburg County Middle School in Baskerville. Upon opening in August 2022, the two schools' total enrollments numbered 1,800 middle school and high school students. No other public high schools currently operate in the county.

In 2022, Park View Middle School (previously East End High School) and Bluestone Middle School (previously West End Hight School) were slated for demolition and redevelopment. The Bluestone MS site in Skipwith, Virginia, was repurposed for use as a waste and recycling center

[164] Glenn Barbour, personal communication to Lena McDonald, August 28, 2024.

and the Park View MS site was acquired by an agricultural products / services company with the intent of building a warehouse. Demolition of Park View MS (formerly East End High School) occurred in March 2024. Although Bluestone High School closed in 2022, the property was converted to serve as an elementary school while the Clarksville Elementary and then Chase City Elementary school buildings are renovated and upgraded. The Mecklenburg County School Board officially relinquished ownership of the Park View High School property in July 2023, returning it to the County's ownership. The former school is planned to be rehabilitated for a new use and, presently, is the only equalization-era high school in Mecklenburg County for which preservation is assured.

Comparative Analysis

In Mecklenburg County, just one high school currently is individually listed in the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places. The original portion of the Chase City High School (DHR #186-0002) dates to 1908, and a separate, near-identical building was constructed in 1917 alongside the original block. The 1908 and 1917 sections are two-story Georgian Revival edifices designed by H. H. Huggins, an architect based in Roanoke, Virginia. A separate vocational agricultural building was added behind the buildings in 1917; this facility was expanded in 1939 with an addition that served as a community cannery. A diminutive 1960 addition joined the 1908 and 1917 buildings. The school served White students during the segregation era. During the early 1990s, the former high school was adaptively reused to provide senior housing. Although listed only under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, Chase City High School is associated with the early- to mid-20th century educational trends described herein. The building, therefore, serves as a bookend and complement to the locally-significant educational trends embodied by Park View High School.

The South Hill High and Grammar School, located within the South Hill Commercial Historic District (DHR #301-5062), is a 1932 Art Deco building with a 1952 International Style addition. The campus also includes an agricultural education building and a community cannery, both of which were built ca. 1941. All three buildings are contributing to the historic district, which was listed in 2017. White students attended the school during the segregation era. In Clarksville, the former Clarksville Elementary School (now home to a performing arts organization) was completed in 1934. The diminutive building is a fine example of Stripped Classicism, featuring a central block with a five-bay, symmetrical façade composed of entries at each end and large, round-arched windows in the central bays. Each entry is recessed within a round-arched opening. Brick pilasters with cast stone capitals separate the bays. A low parapet with concrete coping includes a cast stone plaque bearing the school's name and construction year. Decorative brickwork includes a Flemish bond variant with glazed headers and rectangular panels of stretcher bond bricks with cast stone corner blocks. Flanking the central block are two slightly lower flat-roofed wings with large banks of windows and similar architectural detailing. A more recent addition spans the building's rear elevation. Now adjacent to a large shopping center, the school's integrity of setting has been lost but exterior alterations otherwise are minimal. These two schools are representative of New Deal-era educational design and educational trends through the early 1950s. Furthermore, upon its completion, Park View High School drew some

of its enrollment from South Hill High and Grammar School, which thereafter continued in use as an elementary school for White students. The South Hill campus, therefore, is illustrative of eastern Mecklenburg County's high school educational facilities immediately prior to completion of Park View High School.

Together, Chase City High School, South Hill High and Grammar School, Clarksville School, and Park View High School represent Mecklenburg County's provision of high school education from 1908 through 2022. During this period, investment in public education has become increasingly substantial as local residents have recognized the necessity for providing the finest educational opportunities available for their children. The continued preservation of these three schools respects the sacrifices made, energies expended, and youthful aspirations encouraged by both County government and residents.

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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:

_X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
_X___ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, Virginia; Mecklenburg County Public Schools, Boydton, Virginia

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR No. 058-5573

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 14.08 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)
1. Latitude: 36.704072 Longitude: -78.184784

2. Latitude: 36.704019 Longitude: -78.181843

3. Latitude: 36.700314 Longitude: -78.181951

4. Latitude: 36.700384 Longitude: -78.184891

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 nominated boundary for Park View High School is coterminous with tax parcel PRN 39877 as recorded by Mecklenburg County, Virginia, and includes approximately 14.08 acres associated with the school during its period of significance. The true and correct boundary is shown on the attached Location Map, Sketch Map, and Photo Key.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
All known historic resources associated with Park View High School during its period of significance, as well as the property's historic setting, have been captured within the nominated boundary. At the time that Park View High School closed in 2022, the campus included tax parcel PRN 39877 and tax parcel PRN 39878, which is located directly east of the nominated boundary. Now under separate private ownership, the latter tax parcel includes a gymnasium, parking lots, and athletic fields that postdate the property's period of significance and, therefore, these resources have not been included in the nominated boundary.

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11. Form Prepared By
name/title: Lena McDonald and Ashlen Stump
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group
street & number: 536 W. 35th Street
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23508
e-mail: admin@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com
telephone: 757-923-1900
date: September 2024

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

Name of Property: Park View High School
City or Vicinity: South Hill vicinity
County: Mecklenburg County State: Virginia
Photographer: Marcus Pollard
Date Photographed: July 11, 2024

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo Number of 52	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
1	Setting of Park View High School	NW	7/2024	CPG
2	Setting of Park View High School	NE	7/2024	CPG
3	1962 school sign	NW	7/2024	CPG
4	Setting of Park View High School	W	7/2024	CPG
5	Southwest oblique of Park View High School – Main Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
6	Primary entrance of Park View High School – Main Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
7	Partial view of Park View High School – Main Building east façade	SW	7/2024	CPG

Photo Number of 52	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
8	Northeast oblique of Park View High School – Main Building	SW	7/2024	CPG
9	Paved courtyard of Main Building	S/SW	7/2024	CPG
10	Noncontributing prefabricated building (foreground) and Agricultural Education Building (background)	SW	7/2024	CPG
11	Covered walkway between Main Building (at left) and noncontributing prefabricated building and Agricultural Education Building (at right)	S/SW	7/2024	CPG
12	Partial west (rear) elevation of Main Building	S/SE	7/2024	CPG
13	South façade of Agriculture Education Building	W/NW	7/2024	CPG
14	South façade of Agricultural Education Building	NE	7/2024	CPG
15	West (side) elevation and south façade of Agricultural Education Building	NE	7/2024	CPG
16	West (side) and north (rear) elevations of Agricultural Education Building	S/SE	7/2024	CPG
17	Partial east (side) elevation of Agricultural Education Building	N	7/2024	CPG
18	North façade and west (side) elevation of Vocational Education Building	S/SE	7/2024	CPG
19	West (side) elevation of Vocational Education Building, with Agricultural Education Building at left background	NE	7/2024	CPG
20	North (rear) elevation of Vocational Education Building with Main Building at right background	NE	7/2024	CPG
21	North (rear) and east (side) elevation of Vocational Education Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
22	Partial east (side) elevation of Vocational Education Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
23	Walkway between Vocational Education Building (near left) and Agricultural Education Building (far left) and Main Building (right)	N/NE	7/2024	CPG
24	East (side) elevation of Vocational Education Building (at left) and west	N	7/2024	CPG

Photo Number of 52	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
	(rear) elevation of Main Building (at right), including 3-bay c. 1977 addition (at far right)			
25	South (side) elevation of Main Building, including c. 1977 addition (at left)	NE	7/2024	CPG
26	Parking lot southeast of Main Building	SE	7/2024	CPG
27	Noncontributing prefabricated building	SE	7/2024	CPG
28	Two modular sheds (at left) and ruins of greenhouse (at right) adjacent to Agricultural Education Building	S/SW	7/2024	CPG
29	Entrance lobby of Main School Building	W	7/2024	CPG
30	Lobby and corridor in Main School Building	N	7/2024	CPG
31	Typical corridor in Main School Building	N/NE	7/2024	CPG
32	Library in Main School Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
33	Music Room in Main School Building	W/NW	7/2024	CPG
34	Cafeteria in Main School Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
35	Kitchen in Main School Building	SW	7/2024	CPG
36	Typical classroom in Main School Building	NE	7/2024	CPG
37	Typical office spaces in Main School Building	E	7/2024	CPG
38	Kitchen in former Home Economics Department (more recently the Culinary Arts Department)	NE	7/2024	CPG
39	Classroom in former Home Economics Department (more recently the Culinary Arts Department)	W/NW	7/2024	CPG
40	Classroom in Agriculture Building	SE	7/2024	CPG
41	Typical corridor in Agriculture Building	NW	7/2024	CPG
42	Garage in Agriculture Building	NE	7/2024	CPG
43	Garage in Agriculture Building	SW	7/2024	CPG
44	Classroom in Agriculture Building	N	7/2024	CPG
45	Typical corridor in Vocational Education Building, first floor	W/NW	7/2024	CPG
46	Classroom entries in Vocational Education Building	SW	7/2024	CPG
47	West Garage in Vocational Education Building	S/SE	7/2024	CPG

Photo Number of 52	Description	Camera Direction	Date	Photographer
48	East Garage in Vocational Education Building	N/NE	7/2024	CPG
49	Classroom in Vocational Education Building, first floor	NE	7/2024	CPG
50	Stairwell in Vocational Education Building	N	7/2024	CPG
51	Classroom in Vocational Education Building, second floor	NE	7/2024	CPG
52	Classroom in Vocational Education Building, second floor	NW	7/2024	CPG

Historic Images Log

Figure No.	Caption
1	1954 Site Plan (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
2	1954 Elevation Drawings (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
3	1954 Floor Plan of High School Main Building (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
4	1977 Floor Plan of High School Main Building; note classroom addition at top left of rear wing (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
5	Detail of 1977 Classroom Addition to High School Main Building, Rear Wing (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
6	1954 Floor Plan of Agricultural Vocational Building (Architectural Drawings by Samuel N. Mayo, AIA, Architect, Richmond, Virginia, June 16, 1954. Plan No. 5410. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
7	1977 First Floor Plan of Vocational Building (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
8	1977 Second Floor Plan of Vocational Building (Architectural Drawings by Gordon B. Galusha, AIA, Architect, Petersburg, Virginia, February 15, 1977. Job No. 323-75. Original drawings at the Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia).
9	Summary of Farms, Acreage, and Value, 1920-1954 (Image Source: U.S. Census of Agriculture: 1954, Vol. 1, Counties and State Economic Areas, Part 15, Virginia and West Virginia, Virginia, Chapter A, Statistics for the State, p. 3).
10	East Facade of Park View High School (Image Source: 1959 Leaves of Memory Yearbook, interior cover photo; https://virginiagenealogy.org/ brunswick/mecklenburg-county-public-library-collection-of-yearbooks/).

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.
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Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 OakridgeDrive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

Location Map
2024

Park View High School

205 Park View Circle, South Hill, Mecklenburg County, Virginia

0 100 200
Feet

N

Boundary of Nominated Property

Sketch Map
2024

Park View High School

205 Park View Circle, South Hill, Mecklenburg County, Virginia

Scale: 1:2,500

0 100 200

Feet

N

Boundary of Nominated Property

Parcels


PARK VIEW
HIGH SCHOOL
HOME OF THE DRAGONS
CLASS OF 62


FEED
MORE


PARK VIEW HIGH SCHOOL


PARK VIEW HIGH SCHOOL


DO NOT
ENTER


NOTICE
NOTICE


GUIDANCE


EXIT


EAT SMART
MOVE MORE


CONGRATULATION
SENIOR CLASS
WAY TO G!
CAUTION
WET FLOOR
CUIDADO
PISO
MOJADO


EXIT


EXIT
P 3
P 3


CAUTION