

**ARLINGTON COUNTY REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION FORM**

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic District Name: Stratford School Historic District
Historic Name: Stratford Junior High School
Current Name: Stratford/H-B Woodlawn School

2. LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Street and Number: 4100 Vacation Lane
County, State, Zip Code: Arlington, Virginia, 22207

3. TYPE OF PROPERTY

- 1) Ownership of Property: Public
- 2) Category of Property: Public
- 3) Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	objects
		Total

- D. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places
X Yes _____ No

Resource: Stratford Junior High School (approved 2004). VDHR File No. 000-9412.

4. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic Functions: EDUCATION: SCHOOL: Junior High School
Current Functions: EDUCATION SCHOOL: Middle School & High School combined programs

5. THEMES

ARCHITECTURE: International Style
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION: School
SOCIAL HISTORY: Civil Rights Movement

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American, Civil Rights Movement

6. DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

Summary Description: Constructed in 1950, the Stratford School is located at 4100 Vacation Lane in Arlington County, VA. This vernacular International Style school building was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register in 2003 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2004. The school is located within the boundaries of the Cherrydale Civic Association. New additions to the north and south elevations were constructed in 1995, along with renovations to the original building. A new Fine Arts addition was constructed in 2005.

Site Description: The Stratford School is sited on an irregularly shaped 8.8-acre parcel that slopes steeply downward generally from west to east. The property is bounded by: Vacation Lane and single-family dwellings to the north; Old Dominion Drive to the south; single-family dwellings to the east; and 23rd Street North, single-family dwellings, and Stratford Park to the west. The school building is oriented along a southwest to northeast axis and is located along the western edge of the tract.

Vehicular access to the school site is provided from the east by Vacation Lane, which serves primarily as the northern boundary of the property, and from the west by 23rd Street North, which runs through the Stratford Park property. Parking lots are located on the southwest corner of the property (located within Stratford Park), and to the immediate northeast of the building, on either side of Vacation Lane. These parking lots are connected by a system of concrete-paved sidewalks around the school

In the traffic circle in front of the main entrance to the school is a non-historic, one-story, wood-frame gazebo with a pyramidal-shaped roof sheathed in asphalt shingles. A non-historic stone marker with the name of the current HB Woodlawn program is located in the southern end of the traffic circle, facing away from the school's entrance. An Arlington County Historic Marker is located along the sidewalk to the northwest of the traffic circle.

An exterior courtyard and playing fields are located to the southeast (rear) of the building, sloping down towards Vacation Lane. The athletic field was part of the original design of the school site and is accessed by a concrete set of stairs on the southwest corner. The field is surrounded by a crushed stone pedestrian path and is fenced along Vacation Lane with metal chain-link fencing. These stairs and the location of the concrete sidewalks in the rear are largely original, though some pathways have been created with new additions and the relocation of the portable classrooms. A non-historic playground is located adjacent to the southeastern terminus of the building, facing the athletic field.

Also on the school grounds are four one-story, aluminum-clad temporary classroom trailers. The trailers are located on the southeast side of the school overlooking the principle athletic field. Two of the trailers were relocated and installed in 1972; one came from Thomas Jefferson Junior High

and the second came from Yorktown. A year later, two more temporary trailers were installed. Permit records show that new trailers were installed in 2010.¹

The setting of the property is characterized by a number of shade trees and mature vegetation. The largest mature trees line the edges of the property and are clustered around the facade of the school, oriented to the northwest. Smaller mature trees are located along the northwest and southeast elevations. Foundation plantings have been installed adjacent to much of the basement level of the school. Other mature trees are scattered throughout the site, in the traffic circle at the facade, and adjacent to the eastern edge of the athletic field. A portion of the northeastern portion of the property is designated as an Arlington County Resource Protection Area (RPA) due to its proximity to a below-grade stream which exists off-site to the north.²

Also of note is a stone-masonry drainage culvert that runs underneath Old Dominion Drive, linking the school property with the southern portion of the Cherrydale neighborhood. The culvert is shown on the school's original construction drawings, and while it may have been used by pedestrians to access the site at one time, it was not constructed with that intent. Access to the culvert is now blocked by metal bars and heavy vegetation. The culvert is owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation, and while it is a contributing element to the site, it will not be included in the boundaries of the historic district.

Architectural Description:

Exterior

The Stratford School consists of four major sections: the original central classroom building, the southwest gymnasium and cafeteria wing, the northeast auditorium and lobby wing, and the Fine Arts addition. The school is three stories in height with an additional basement level underneath the auditorium. It is concrete post-and-beam construction with a steel truss frame in the gymnasium and auditorium and a flat roof. The building is clad in a combination of blonde brick and sandstone veneer referred to in the original plans as "rubble stone." The sandstone veneer is used along the foundation and first story of the building and to accent the entries. The primary entrance and southeast addition are finished in concrete. Windows are fixed metal and hinged, part of the 1995 renovation, or fixed glass block, original to the building. Window openings are accented with unmolded limestone surrounds, sills, and mullions. Limestone is also used to accent the primary entries. Metal coping lines the edge of the flat roof and runs the entire perimeter of the building.

Central Classroom Building (1950)

The primary (northwest) elevation is dominated by the central, original classroom section, which features a wide two-story facade with a sandstone-veneered foundation and horizontal bands of metal windows. The openings, which feature paired eight-light fixed windows over hinged four-light windows, are accented by unmolded limestone surrounds and sills. At the center of the long elevation is a projecting two-story, three-bay wide portico executed in exposed concrete. The

¹ Permit card.

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portico features three bays of twelve-light fixed metal windows, robust concrete pillars that taper to the base, and affixed letters that spell "H-B Woodlawn, 4100" centered above the loggia. The elevated entry is substantially recessed, thereby lending greater prominence to the central volume of the portico. Flanking the entry within the portico are paired windows surrounded by sandstone veneer. At the northeast end of the classroom wing is a massive exterior-end chimney that rises above the roof of the building and is clad in sandstone veneer. Also at the northeast end a curvilinear buff-brick retaining wall projects from the foundation level.

The rear (southeast) elevation of the classroom section is three stories in height, features a sandstone-veneered foundation, and is characterized by long, horizontal bands of windows framed by unmolded limestone surrounds and sills on each story. The windows are glass block over paired four-light hinged windows. The primary rear entrance is contained within a projecting central bay faced in stone veneer and featuring a central, vertical glass block tower that illuminates the central stair within. The entry is sheltered by a cantilevered hood and features two pairs of double-leaf metal doors. At the northeast end of the classroom section is another tall, vertical field of glass block that illuminates, like the central entry bay, the stair within. The vertical and material articulation of these stair towers, set within the horizontal ribbons of the classroom windows, define the rear addition and lend it an architecturally distinctive identity from the main façade.

Southwest Cafeteria and Gymnasium Wing (1950, 1995)

At the southwest end of the classroom section is the cafeteria and gymnasium wing. Sited on a steep slope, the northwest portion of the wing is two stories in height and the southeast section is three stories in height. The southeast elevation of the wing, which projects beyond the central classroom section of the school, has a slightly projecting first story clad in sandstone veneer. The six bays of the elevation are articulated by projecting buttresses that extend from the first story. The openings have glass block with six-light operable windows grouped in pairs or threes. Attached to the northeast end of the gymnasium is a two-story, single-bay extension. On the southwest end of the gymnasium is a three-story, single-bay exposed concrete extension, constructed as part of the 1995 renovation.

The southwest elevation of the cafeteria and gymnasium wing is separated into three distinct sections. The two-story western section is original and features a horizontal band of glass block windows over paired four-light hinged windows on the second story. The first story is dominated by a projecting loggia on slender steel piers. The loggia was partially enclosed in 1995 to provide additional storage space for the school. The eastern bay of the loggia remains open and houses a rear entry to the school. The central section of the wing, part of the 1995 addition, is two stories in height and features a window opening on each story. The eastern section of the wing is also part of the 1995 addition. It is three stories in height and is finished in exposed concrete. It is characterized by a projecting portico with three bays of fenestration on the second and third stories with eight-light windows arranged in groups of three over hinged four-light windows. The first story features four robust concrete piers that taper to the base, echoing the original piers of the primary entrance to the school. The first story also exhibits a sandstone-veneered foundation and a recessed entry in the west bay. Projecting from the southwest elevation of the wing is a tall concrete retaining wall

that divides the upper and lower parking lots. At the west corner of this elevation is a stone-masonry retaining wall supporting a concrete stair.

The northwest elevation of the wing is partially underground and consists of only one exposed story. The elevation, which is largely obscured by trees, contains a projecting central entry and no exterior ornamentation.

The two-story northeast elevation, which projects from the central classroom section of the school, originally consisted of a recessed second story that created an exterior balcony. In 1995, the second story was extended outward over the cafeteria to be flush with the first story.

Northeast Auditorium and Lobby Wing (1950)

At the northeast end of the classroom section is the auditorium and lobby wing which is set on an angle. The trapezoidal shaped lobby serves as the hyphen between the auditorium and central classroom building. The north elevation of the lobby is two stories in height and features a four-bay covered central entry. The porch consists of a flat roof supported by steel posts. The northeast bay of the porch is enclosed. The second story of the lobby features a narrow horizontal band of eight-light windows with unmolded limestone surrounds and sills. The north elevation of the auditorium features five twelve-light fixed windows on the second story and six large windows on the basement story.

The two-story east elevation of the auditorium features a five-bay wide section on its northern end and a recessed four-bay wide section on its southern end. On the first story of the five-bay wide northern section, a central garage/loading dock entrance has been infilled with brick.³ Above the infilled opening are small paired four-light fixed windows. Flanking the opening are paired eight-light fixed windows over hinged four-light windows with limestone sills. The southern end has a single eight-light window over a hinged four-light window and the northern end has a double-leaf metal door with an overhanging canopy. Above the canopy is a six-light fixed window. The second story has a covered central metal entry wide enough to facilitate the movement of props into the auditorium. Similar to the first story, above the entry are small paired four-light fixed windows and flanking the entry are paired eight-light fixed windows over hinged four-light windows with limestone sills and lintels. The northern and southern ends feature single six-light windows.

The southern recessed four-bay section of the east elevation of the auditorium features a double-leaf metal entry door and a recessed double-leaf, single-light metal entry door with a single-light transom. The remaining fenestration on the first and second story consists of eight-light windows over hinged four-light windows with limestone sills.

Fine Arts Wing (2005)

In 2005, the Fine Arts Wing was constructed adjacent to the southern portion of the auditorium and lobby wing.⁴ The addition consists of classrooms and practice spaces dedicated to the performing arts, including spaces for band practice, choir rooms, individual practice spaces, offices and storage

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areas. The placement and design of the flat-roof addition utilizes the existing topography and allows its orientation to be nearly parallel to the central building classroom. The entire wing is set into the hill, with two stories above grade to the east and one story above grade to the west. The Fine Arts Wing is divided into three sections: 1) the glass-enclosed hyphen; 2) the primary central six-bay wide section; and 3) the stairwell and tertiary entrances.

The two-story, glass enclosed, multi-light hyphen connects the auditorium and lobby wing to the adjoining central six-bay wide section of the addition. The first story of the hyphen projects slightly and contains a two-light double entry doors, with a 5-light transom above, and multi-pane glass sidelights. The second story consists of six ribbons of large fixed windows. Two of the bands have a light-blue colored backing that contrasts with the wall of glass.

The east elevation of the central six-bay section is curved, with a veneered, rough-cut (rubble) coursed first story, and second story of tan brick. This central section is significantly taller than the flanking hyphen and stairwell sections and features a wide overhanging eave. The rubble stone face on the first floor is capped with a continuous ribbon of precast stone which runs the length of the curved elevation and terminates at an angle with the brick walls. The first story is pierced by six window openings. A pair of ganged four-light fixed windows over four-light hinged windows are located at its northern and southern extents and four single four-light fixed windows over four-light hinged windows are centered on the elevation. All the windows have precast sills and no lintels. On the second story, ribbons of paired six-light windows over hinged four-light windows illuminate the instrumental practice space. The windows are accented by unmolded precast surrounds and sills and reflect the design of the windows found on the façade of the historic school.

The southernmost portion of the new addition contains the stairwells and tertiary entrances. Faced with the same tan brick as the remainder of the addition, this two-story space contains a double-leaf steel exit door with a metal overhanging canopy supported by a single post. A large six-light fixed window is set above the canopy, illuminating the stairwell within. The south elevation of the addition is mostly a blank brick wall except for another entrance, with two, single-light steel doors, also painted red, surmounted by a six-light window set in a metal frame. This elevation has a break in this point so that the portion containing the door is stepped back from the face of the building.

Interior (1950, 1995, 2005)

The interior spaces of Stratford Junior High School are finished with materials considered to be at the forefront in the design of educational facilities at the time of its construction. The way in which the materials were used reinforced the modern design aesthetic of the building in a manner that was novel in school construction of the period, and that was unique in Arlington County. Many of the original interior spaces and finishes remain largely intact.

Entering the school, the long central hallway features terrazzo floors, a black glazed-tile baseboard and buff glazed structural clay tile on the walls up to the top of the doors with plaster above the tile. A row of clerestory windows is present above the entries to the classrooms to allow light into

the hall. The ceiling features acoustical-tile drop panels and fluorescent tray lighting. Door surrounds are metal and feature standard cavetto molding. Metal lockers are built into the walls. Original classrooms are finished with similar materials. The walls shared with the hallway are buff glazed structural clay tile and concrete while the partition walls between the classrooms are exposed concrete block. Floors are covered in linoleum, and ceilings feature acoustical-tile drop panels with fluorescent tray lighting. Chalk boards and cork boards with aluminum surrounds line the three interior walls. Built-in wood shelves and cabinets line the partition walls between the classrooms and the exterior walls, underneath the windows.

The principle stair hall, located at the middle of the classroom section across from the main entry, is separated from the hall by a metal-framed partition featuring three, metal, single leaf doors. The doors are flanked by one-light sidelights and a five-light transom. The floor of the stair hall is clad in terrazzo and the walls are sheathed in buff glazed structural clay tile. The stair hall consists of two sets of dog-leg stairs with closed stringers constructed of buff glazed tile. The two sets of stairs are separated by a buff glazed tile partition wall. A second original stair hall located at the northeast end of the classroom section features one stair. The floor is finished in linoleum and the walls in buff glazed structural clay tile.

Located on the southwest side of the main entry, on the northwest side of the hall, is the main administrative offices. The offices are contained within one long room and are separated by full-height wood partitions with a glass clerestory. An open office area between the office partitions features a long wood counter.

In the southwest wing of the school is the gymnasium. Two stories in height, the gymnasium features hardwood floors replaced just prior to 1995 and a buff glazed structural clay tile wainscot with plaster walls above. The roof is supported by steel trusses that are left exposed. Other notable features include full-height folding wood partitions that divide the room into two and built-in ceramic drinking fountains.

Perhaps the most exuberant of the interior spaces is the auditorium lobby. The triangular-shaped lobby features terrazzo floors and glazed terra cotta tile on the first-floor walls. The second-floor walls are sheathed in a combination of materials including buff brick, stone veneer, and exposed concrete. The ceiling is covered in acoustical drop tiles. Other notable features include a mezzanine balcony accessed by a corner stair with a metal balustrade exhibiting a modern design in keeping with the International style of the building. The stair wall is clad in stone veneer and an original quarter-round fountain is located at the base of the stair. The auditorium features concrete and glazed terra cotta tile walls. The original wood and metal-frame chairs have been retained, and were refurbished and upholstered in 2014.

Materials: Foundations: Cut-stone veneer. Brick.
 Walls: Blonde glazed brick veneer over concrete block. Tan block on non-historic additions.
 Roof: Flat
 Roof Materials: Concrete (structural), asphalt sheathing

Windows: Replacement aluminum, awning and fixed. Paired, fixed 8-light, paired 6-light. 4-light awning. Multiple transom and sidelight configurations. Glass block in steel frames.

Doors: Single-leaf, steel. Various light configurations, with and without sidelights.

Other: Limestone, concrete, steel, aluminum, glass, terrazzo.

6. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- A. Applicable Designation Criteria as described in Section 11.3.4.A of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance:** Stratford School meets eight of the eleven designation criteria as listed in Section 11.3.4.A.4, Establishment of Historic Districts. See Section J of this report for a detailed description.

Statement of Significance: The Stratford School is nationally historically and culturally significant as the first integrated public school in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The nationally significant event occurred on February 2, 1959, when under the protection of 85 police officers, Ronald Deskins, Michael Jones, Lance Newman, and Gloria Thompson entered the school without incident. The successful and non-violent integration of Stratford Junior High School represented the end of the Commonwealth’s policy of “massive resistance” and dealt a fatal blow to foes of school integration across the South.

The Stratford/H-B Woodlawn School is locally significant for its association with the development of public education in Arlington County in the mid-twentieth century. The building is representative of the post-World War II era in which Arlington experienced explosive population growth. The new citizens were politically active and lobbied successfully for their own elected School Board, pushed for greater investment in quality educational instruction, and demanded new, modern school facilities. Stratford Junior High School was a bold and modern design for the overcrowded school system.

Designed by lauded local architect Rhees Evans Burket Sr., the Stratford Junior High School is architecturally significant as a unique and highly successful example of the International Style applied to a school building in Arlington County. Burket designed a low-profile building that utilized the existing topography, emphasized horizontal planes through the use of ribbon windows, highlighted and manipulated the building’s volumes by means of pushing and pulling building sections, celebrated transparency through the extensive use of glass block, and avoided the use of arbitrary ornamentation.

The building is characterized by the extensive use of cut-stone, glazed brick and tile, and glass block. The form and massing of the school is dynamic and creative, using a strong vocabulary of vertical and horizontal elements that respond to the challenging topography and link different programmatic elements of the school on the site. It is a nearly pure expression of form following function, as each of the building’s elements—from the classrooms and library to the auditorium, stair towers, and gymnasium—is contained in a separate volume that is clearly expressed and articulated on the exterior.

The school is the preeminent work of Burket, and the first that he designed for Arlington County. Burket later designed three other schools for Arlington, and one major addition: Washington-Lee High School (1951 addition), Williamsburg Junior High School (1954), Wakefield High School (1955), and Yorktown High School (1960). These schools (all of which have either been demolished or highly altered) are less successful in applying the tenets of Modernism and the International Style to educational facilities. Stratford Junior High School epitomizes his implementation of International Style architecture and his understanding of Modern architecture theorem. The building is Burket's most significant architectural design and retains the highest degree of historic integrity of all of his school buildings in the County.

C. Periods of Significance: 1950-1959

D. Significant Dates: 1950; 1959

E. Significant Persons:

- (1) Michael G. Jones, Gloria Thompson, Ronald Deskins, Lance D. Newman: These four African-American students successfully integrated the Stratford Junior High School on the morning of February 2, 1959. Jones is also one of the four individuals who requested the County consider the local historic district designation of the Stratford School in March 2015.
- (2) Dorothy Hamm: Dorothy Bigelow Hamm (1919–2004) was born in Caroline County. Allowed only limited educational opportunities in her own community, she attended schools in the Washington, D.C., area. She and her husband Edward Leslie Hamm, Sr. lived in a home that he built for them in the Hall's Hill neighborhood.

Hamm and her son, Edward Leslie Hamm Jr., joined a civil action case in 1956 that sought to end segregation in Arlington schools. In 1958, a U.S. District Court judge ordered that four African American children be admitted to the all-white Stratford Junior High School the following year, making it the first white public school in Virginia to admit African Americans students. Hamm participated in a successful challenge to the Pupil Placement Act, which was designed to delay school integration while giving the appearance of compliance.

In 1963, Hamm and her husband participated in a challenge to Virginia's poll tax. That same year, she took part in a court action resulting in the desegregation of Arlington theaters, and was arrested for publicly protesting their white-only admittance policies. Hamm was politically active, serving as delegate to Arlington County and state conventions in 1964. She was later appointed assistant registrar and a chief election officer in the Woodlawn precinct in Arlington. She worked with the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) as they organized in Arlington, and participated in the 1968 "Poor People's March on Washington."

In 1982 Hamm received the first Arlington County Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. In 2002 the Virginia House of Delegates honored her lifelong contributions in a joint resolution.⁵

- (3) Edward Leslie Hamm, Jr.: The son of Dorothy Hamm, Edward, along with fellow students George Tyrone Nelson and Joyce Marie Bailey, unsuccessfully attempted to integrate Stratford Junior High School on September 5, 1957. He also participated in the lawsuit with his mother challenging school segregation in 1956.
- (4) Clarissa & Ethel Thompson: Ethel Thompson was an active member of the Arlington chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) who became involved with the court cases attempting to achieve desegregation of the schools. Her daughter, Clarissa Thompson, was the plaintiff in the Arlington case brought forward by the NAACP.⁶ This case resulted in the first ruling by Judge Albert Bryan that the schools should be integrated in 1956. Integration was foiled; however, by the Pupil Placement Act (see discussion in report). Clarissa's younger sister Gloria was one of the four students who integrated Stratford in 1959. Clarissa was the plaintiff in numerous lawsuits filed against the Arlington County School Board from 1956-1962
- (5) Barbara Marx: Local Arlington activist and parent, Barbara Marx was the only white plaintiff in the suit that ended school segregation in Arlington. She became politically active in the fight for integration, and by 1954 was Supervisor of the 7th District NAACP office.
- (6) Ellen Bozman and Mary Margaret Whipple: As members of the Arlington League of Women Voters, Bozman and Whipple publicly supported the desegregation of the county's schools.
- (7) James E. Browne: President of the Arlington branch of the NAACP, Browne led the group in numerous legal challenges to end segregation in schools and businesses in Arlington.
- (8) Mary Ellen "Nell" Henderson: An African-American school teacher in Arlington, Nell Henderson, wife of E.B. Henderson, President of the Virginia State Conference of the NAACP, worked with the local NAACP and other liberal activist groups to put forward a variety of ideas and strategies that could be used by teachers, parents, and others to facilitate the acceptance of integration in the schools in the wake of the Brown v. Board of Education ruling.
- (9) Geraldine Davis: Geraldine Davis, a white woman, personally accompanied three African American students into the school as they attempted to integrate Stratford in

⁵ From the Library of Virginia website, African American Trailblazers in History. Accessed June 3, 2015. <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/trailblazers/2010/honoree.asp?bio=5> Cite court case too.

⁶ Clarissa S. Thompson et al., v. the County School Board of Arlington County, United States District Court, 1956.

1957. She was active in the local NAACP activities that sought to integrate the county's schools.

- (10) Elizabeth & Edmund Campbell: Concerned about the quality of public education in Arlington, Elizabeth Campbell won a seat in 1947 on the County's first elected School Board. She also was the first woman to be elected to a school board in Virginia. She served three terms (1948-1951, 1952-1955, and 1960-1963), and was chairman three times. Her leadership and commitment led to: funding for seven new schools; hiring more teachers at better salaries; starting such programs as kindergarten, full-day sessions for first- and second-graders, music and art classes for African American students, and educational services for the handicapped; and launching the first countywide school bus service.

Elizabeth Campbell was appointed by the Arlington County School Board to lead the committee to study the issues involved in integrating the school system in the wake of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case in 1954. Arlington's committee included both white and black members, in addition to representatives from the NAACP, including Geraldine Davis. Campbell presented Arlington's recommendation to the statewide Gray Commission, which had initiated the study, in Richmond.

Edmund Campbell served as chairman of Arlington County's first public utilities commission and as a member of the Arlington County Board (1940-1946). He was chairman of the County Board in 1942 and 1946. In 1946, he helped found Arlingtonians for a Better County (ABC), a nonpartisan group that became a powerful political force in the county.

During the mid- to late-1950s, Edmund Campbell and his wife Elizabeth were instrumental in forming the Save Our Schools Committee, organized to fight Virginia's policy of "massive resistance" to the U.S. Supreme Court desegregation decisions. In 1958, he argued the case in Federal court which resulted in Virginia's massive resistance laws being declared unconstitutional. This case, together with a similar case before the Supreme Court of Virginia, resulted in the reopening of public schools in several Virginia localities and the integration of Virginia's public schools.

- (11) Judge Albert V. Bryan: A native of Alexandria and a University of Virginia Law graduate, Judge Bryan heard numerous legal challenges to school segregation in the Federal District Court in Alexandria from 1947 until 1958. He ultimately ruled that the decision denying admission to Stratford Junior High School of Deskins, Jones, Newman, and Thompson, had been made solely on the basis of race, and could not be upheld.
- (12) Dr. E.R. Draheim: Chairman of the Arlington County School Board, Dr. Draheim was tasked with leading a subcommittee of citizens to draft a response to the State's Gray Commission ruling in the wake of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The committee met in 1956 and ultimately produced a policy document that was taken to the School Board. The School Board voted to adopt a policy statement on integration that would

slowly, over the course of 18 months, integrate some of the County's schools. However, provisions remained that would allow children to transfer to a non-integrated school if their parents objected to a child attending a school "in which children of both races are enrolled".⁷ This resulted in Arlington County being stripped of its right to elect School Board members by the General Assembly.

F. Cultural/Social Affiliation: African-American History, Civil Rights Movement, School Integration in Arlington County and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

G. Architect: Rhees Evans Burket, Sr.: Burket was a graduate of the University of Michigan, where he received a B.S. in Architecture in 1925. Upon graduation he worked for Smith, Hinchman & Grylls of Detroit, which specialized in school design, from 1925-31. He then worked for another firm, Pierson & Wilson, from 1931-36. In 1936 he moved to Washington, D.C. and formed Rhees Burket, Architect, which was active until 1961 throughout the metropolitan Washington, DC area. In 1962 he formed Burket-Tilghman & Associates. Burket lived in Silver Spring, MD and designed many schools in Montgomery County, Maryland. He was a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) from 1942 until his death in 1963. His work included residential, commercial, educational, health facilities, and public buildings.

Builder: Wise Contracting Company. At this time, there is no additional information available about this firm.

H. Narrative: Much of the content in the narrative is taken directly from the approved National Register Nomination for the Stratford Junior High School. Completion of the nomination was financed and directed by the Arlington County Historic Preservation Program.

Design and Construction of Stratford Jr. High School (1947-1951)

Arlington County experienced its greatest period of school construction following World War II (1941-1945). In 1945, the public school system in the county consisted of twenty six elementary, three junior high, and two high schools. By 1950, the population of the county had increased 137 percent from its pre-war number to 135,449 and continued to expand through the 1950s. The Arlington County School Board responded with a massive building campaign that resulted in the construction of twenty-four new schools and additions to thirty-seven existing schools between 1946 and 1960. The construction of a new junior high school, which would accommodate grades seven, eight and nine, was paramount among the resolutions passed by the Arlington County School Board in 1947. Population studies submitted to the School Board in 1947 projected that by 1950 the number of students enrolled in public junior high schools in Arlington County would far exceed the intended capacity of the existing junior high school buildings.' Stratford Junior High School, named for Robert E. Lee's birthplace in Virginia, was the first of four junior high schools

⁷ Minutes of the Committee to Study Problems of Integration in the Arlington Public Schools, 1.

constructed during the 1950s to accommodate this surge in student population, followed by Williamsburg in 1954, Kenmore in 1956, and Gunston in 1959.

By the end of 1948, the Arlington County School Board had selected the former Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) property in northwest Cherrydale, a middle-to-upper-class, primarily white residential neighborhood, as the location for the new junior high school. This location was determined in part by the lack of an existing junior high school in the northeast portion of the county. Residential neighborhoods in this area, including Cherrydale, Lee Heights, and Waverly Hills, were experiencing tremendous growth during the 1940s and population projections for 1950 indicated that this trend would continue.⁷ The approximately 7.6-acre site was one of the few remaining large tracts of undeveloped land along the Lee Highway and Old Dominion Drive corridors, the major thoroughfares through the area. Surrounded on three sides by 20th century residential development, the tract was the site of a summer camp of the Y.W.C.A.. Two buildings existed on the site including Vacation Lodge, a large early-20th-century wood frame building, and the one-story wood-frame caretaker's house.*

The heavily wooded tract was accessed from the east via Vacation Lane, named for the summer camp, and featured highly varied topography, steep slopes, and a creek that ran across the property, roughly along the path of the current school footprint. The challenges presented by the site were recognized and discussed by the School Board, but ultimately it was felt that these potential difficulties were offset by the convenient and desirable location. The property was subsequently purchased in 1948 from Louis J. and Anna T. Carusillo for the sum of \$47,756. The design and construction expenses incurred in accommodating the site were significant, with the grading contract alone amounting to \$49,600, or approximately 3 percent, of the actual construction cost of \$1,496,604. This caused considerable controversy among Arlington County tax payers who felt that the expense could have been avoided by the selection of a more regular site.

In 1948, the Arlington County School Board contracted with architect Rhees Evans Burket, Sr. (1899-1963) of Washington, D.C., for the design of a new junior high school to accommodate 1,000 students.⁸ Burket studied architecture at the University of Michigan and spent his early career with an architecture firm in Detroit specializing in school design.⁹ Burket moved to Washington, D.C., in 1936 and practiced architecture independently until his death in 1963. The construction contract was awarded to the Wise Construction Company of Richmond, Virginia.

In addition to Stratford Junior High School, Burket also designed Williamsburg Junior High School (now Williamsburg Middle School), Wakefield High School, and Yorktown Elementary (later High) School. Of these three, only Williamsburg remains extant. Yorktown, completed in 1950, was used briefly as an elementary school, but was transitioned to a high school by 1960. The last remaining section of the original school was demolished in 2013 when the new campus was completed. Wakefield High School, constructed in 1955, was also finally demolished with the construction of a new campus and renovations to other portions of the property in 2013. In 2013, the County Board approved an entirely new and separate elementary school to be added to the Williamsburg Middle School campus. Burket also designed a major addition to Washington-Lee High School in 1951 that has since been demolished. Of the five examples of

⁸ Footnote 13 NR nomination

⁹ Footnote 14 NR nomination

Burket's work in the County, the Stratford School remains the least altered and the purest expression of his interpretation of an International Style education building for Arlington.¹⁰

During the late-1940s and through the 1950s, school construction in Arlington County was generally inspired by an austere interpretation of the International Style, reflecting national trends in public and commercial architecture of the period. The style was felt to be appropriate for public buildings because it was perceived to be a physical expression of functionalism, an idea that took root in the United States during the Depression era. Presented as devoid of superfluous ornamentation with an exterior form that reflected the functions of the interior spaces and the physical forces and materials at work in the building, functional design was embraced as a practical and cost-efficient architectural response to the economic hardships and restrictions of the Depression and World War II. By the late-1940s, functional design as expressed in the International style and in more diluted Modern stylistic interpretations was the accepted architectural language for public buildings. This is expressed in a school planning manual produced in 1954 by the Virginia State Board of Education. The manual states that "no funds ... should be expended for extraneous ornamentation unless every desirable educational facility has been provided in the buildings." The manual further stated that the school board and architect should strive for buildings that implement the specific educational program, can be maintained economically, and are flexible and expandable."

Like their innovative predecessors in industrial design, school architects such as Rhee Burket sought to create efficient, functional buildings that fostered maximum productivity in the student body. Designs were intended to provide all of the essential specialized components of the modern educational curriculum. Burket's design for the new junior high school, prepared in 1949, consisted of a long, linear central corridor that served as the spine of the building. Standard classrooms lined both sides of the central corridor, which featured inset metal lockers, and stairs were located at the center and ends. Classrooms were designed with chalk boards and cork bulletin boards on the walls, as well as built-in cabinets, shelves and closets to conserve space. Fenestration was designed to allow the maximum amount of light into the classrooms while protecting from the heat and glare of the hotter months. On the shaded northwest side of the building, Burket specified large clear-glass fixed windows over four-light awning windows to maximize the indirect light. On the southeast elevation, which received full and direct sunlight for much of the day, Burket called for large surfaces of fixed clouded glass block over small bands of clear-glass, four-light awning windows. The glass block also helped to insulate the building. In addition to the operable windows, each classroom had several clerestory windows that allowed light into the central corridor. Small aluminum grates in the window above the door allowed for air circulation. In addition to the standard classrooms on the central corridor, Burket also provided for an office suite with a vault adjacent to the front entrance, a library with work rooms and reading rooms, and a science laboratory. The science laboratory, equipped with examination tables, was the first to be specifically constructed as such in an Arlington County public school.'

¹⁰ Principle works by Burket during his most active period include the following schools: Kensington Junior High School, Montgomery County, MD (1937, demolished circa 1987), Western Junior High School, Montgomery County, MD (1951), Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, Montgomery County (1952), Silver Spring Public Library, Montgomery County, MD (1958, closed 2015, & Robert E. Peary High School, Montgomery county, MD (1961). AIA Directory 1962.

Highly specialized functions were accommodated in the massive end units of the building, which were indicated in the plan by a break with the central axis and on the exterior by different roof heights and fenestration. At the east end of the building was the 484-seat auditorium and lobby.²⁴ The lobby exhibits several significant design elements including a mezzanine overlooking the first floor, accessed by a corner stair featuring an International-style metal balustrade, a central wood-and-glass trophy case, and a water fountain and small reflecting pool. Burket located an automobile-accessible wood working shop underneath the auditorium so that sets could be constructed in the shop and brought directly into the auditorium through large double-doors at the rear of the stage. The gymnasium, cafeteria and home economics classrooms were located at the southwest end of the building. The large gymnasium was designed to accommodate a basketball court with folding bleachers along the interior wall. The gymnasium was equipped with a full-height folding partition that divided the room in half. Water fountains were built into the exterior wall at the corners of the gymnasium. Burket also designed a smaller auxiliary gym, locker rooms, dressing rooms and shower rooms for both boys and girls. Across from the gymnasium was the cafeteria, which opened onto a covered walkway on the southwest elevation.

Above the cafeteria was the home economics suite that consisted of a series of rooms that included a "homemaking and foods laboratory," "living center," and a "living, dining, home nursing and child care area" and were intended for the teaching of such specialized domestic tasks as food preparation and presentation, cleaning, sewing, washing and ironing clothes, child care, and first aid.⁵ The rooms were equipped with the latest in home appliances for such tasks including a sewing machine, clothes dryer and both an electric and a gas range. Most notable was the dining room area, which was arranged and finished in a traditional domestic manner with wood floors, a wainscot and chair rail, crown molding, and a working fireplace with a marble surround and mirrored over-mantel. The home economics suite opened onto a wide roof deck above the cafeteria.

These modern functions and facilities were complemented by the construction methods, materials, and International-style exterior of the building. The primary load-bearing structure is concrete post-and-beam masonry construction with steel truss reinforcement in the auditorium and gymnasium wings, and in the projecting front (northwest) entrance. Non load-bearing walls are constructed of concrete, cinder block or structural clay tile. Exposed steel posts are used to support covered walkways and entrances. Modern finishing materials included glass block, terrazzo and linoleum floors, rubber baseboards, acoustical tile, and aluminum fixtures. In contrast to the diluted interpretations of the International style exhibited at other Arlington County schools of the period, Burket's interpretation of the International style at the Stratford Junior High School is particularly exemplary.

The building exhibits the characteristic rectangularity of the style in the flat roof and the projecting masses of the gymnasium, auditorium, and central entrance. A strong vertical emphasis on the facades of the building is produced by the low, sprawling plan, the combination of brick and stone veneer, the bands of windows accentuated by stone surrounds, and the roof coping. This horizontal emphasis is broken periodically by the stepped massing of the building and the long vertical sections of glass block where stairs are located. Exterior ornamentation is limited to the natural aesthetic qualities of the materials used. Also representative of the International style is the harmonious incorporation of the building into the natural surroundings. The stepped massing and plan of the building is intended to echo the slope of the site. These elements make

Dubbed "Arlington's most ambitious school building project," Stratford Junior High School was formally dedicated in March 1951 in a ceremony attended by Virginia Governor John S. Battle featuring the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dowell J. Howard, as the principal speaker.^{2b} The total cost of the project, which took over a year to complete, amounted to \$1,676,909, a sum that raised considerable public controversy." Although it was widely acknowledged that the school was aesthetically pleasing and offered the most modern of school facilities, tax payers wondered whether, "Arlington can afford to continue to build gold-plated schools" while faced with the obligation to provide classroom space for the county's ever-increasing student population.-".

Burket was called to testify to the School Board about the costs incurred, to defend the use of materials on the interior and exterior, and to explain several of his design choices. The fish pond in the stairwell by the auditorium caused much controversy, with school defenders noting that though it was plainly a frill, an ornament, and it likely cost only a few hundred dollars out of a \$1.5 million project. Critics used the fish pond as an example of waste endemic of the entire project. Burket, the School Superintendent and members of the community pushed back, defending the material choices as thoughtful planning that would create a school that would incur fewer maintenance costs over time. Specific items that some found objectionable included: the lighter, buff colored brick on the exterior; the extensive use of glazed tile wainscoting; the much-maligned fish pond; and even the inclusion of an auditorium, which though necessary and desirable, was a rarity in the region as school populations exploded along with construction costs.¹¹ A 1951 study completed by the University of Virginia concluded that Arlington County School construction compared favorably with costs incurred by other urban school districts, including Richmond, Norfolk, and Alexandria.

¹²

African-American History, Civil Rights Movement; Massive Resistance to School Integration in Virginia; and the Integration of the Stratford School 1946-1971

Prior to the ruling on *Brown vs. Board of Education* (1954), school systems in the United States operated under the 1896 *Plessy vs. Ferguson* Supreme Court ruling which determined that it was lawful for state legislatures to provide "separate but equal" schools for African Americans and whites. The ruling reasoned that segregation in itself was not in violation of the "equal protection" clause of the Fourteenth Amendment provided whites and non-whites had access to equal accommodations. Considered a victory for the African American community at the time, racial inequality did not diminish, as hoped, but rather increased. Although specifically handed down to address the issue of segregated schools, *Plessy* was cited as the legal justification for enforced segregation in virtually every aspect of social interaction between whites and non-whites. For the next 50 years, advocates of racial equality worked within the limits established by the *Plessy* decision and pursued measures in the segregated American public school system directed towards the equalization of facilities, budgets, and teachers' salaries.~'

¹¹ *The Evening Star*. "Schools vs. Dollars. Arlington Building Costs Raise Question: What is a Frill?" December 18, 1950.

¹² Bureau of Public Administration, *Report of The Arlington County School Survey* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia, 1951), 25.

In the mid-twentieth century, African Americans comprised less than six percent of the total population of Arlington County and lived primarily in three well-defined areas surrounding the only four African American public schools in the county.¹³ Nauck, located in southwest Arlington, included Kemper and Drew Elementary Schools. Hall's Hill or High View Park, located in northwest Arlington, included John M. Langston Elementary School. The third African American neighborhood was located at the southwest corner of Columbia Pike and the George Washington Memorial Parkway and included Hoffman-Boston, the only public African American secondary school in the county. Because of the limited number and locations of these African American public schools, many students had to travel long distances to attend classes. This was particularly true for high school students living in the Hall's Hill/High View Park neighborhood, which was a considerable distance from the Hoffman-Boston School, but relatively close to Stratford Junior High School and Washington and Lee High School.

The rapidly changing demographics of Arlington and the region aided the fight for school integration in ways that were unique from other regions of the Commonwealth. Many of the thousands of new residents who flocked to the Washington, DC region and Arlington County in response to the massive buildup of the Federal workforce during the years immediately preceding and after the second World War came from other urban areas where communities were more integrated and, crucially, where the school systems were better funded and run.¹⁴ This new population of educated, moderate civil servants, both white and black, desired the best school system for their children. The state of Arlington's school system in the mid-1940s has been described as inadequate and inferior. Many of the newcomers, as well as long-settled Arlingtonians of both races, decided to avoid the Arlington schools altogether, and used a patchwork of laws that allowed children to attend schools in the District of Columbia. However, by the mid-1940s, thousands of school children were being educated in the District, coming from both the Virginia and Maryland suburbs.¹⁵ All jurisdictions were dealing with school overcrowding issues, and by 1946, the District closed its schools to most children who did not reside in the City. Some small exceptions were made for certain students, such as those who had spent a certain number of years in the District's public schools already, or those willing to pay tuition fees, but the School Board quickly found that any exceptions rendered the entire system untenable and subject to abuse. By 1949, no children from Arlington were allowed to attend public schools in the District, except for a very few under limited and expiring circumstances.

The influx of students back to Arlington County exacerbated overcrowding for both white and black schools. Hoffman-Boston School, which was the combined black junior high and high school at the time, was hit with an increase in the student population of nearly 75% as the enrollment in grades 8-12 increased from 86 to 150. Already underfunded, this increase acutely affected the segregated facilities. In a local news article the Principal notes that, "the chief problems which we have at Hoffman-Boston are overcrowding and adjustment, which arise from the fact that we have pupils in all grades from the first through the twelfth in the one building.... We have no lockers, no gymnasium, and no place for the pupils to eat." Similar overcrowding at the white schools created classroom crowding, single-tracking in the hallways, and other facilities issues. Forced to confront the inadequacies of their local school system, Arlington parents became

¹³ 1950 U.S. Census shows the total Arlington population at 135,449. Total 'Black' population shown as 6,517.

¹⁴ In 1950, Arlington County had the highest median school years per resident in Virginia at 12.7. Arlington also has the highest median income of any county in Virginia.

¹⁵ In 1947, 947 students from Virginia attended D.C. public schools.

politically active, lobbying for the right to directly elect their own School Board members, and for more money to be allocated to build modern, commodious schools for the ever-growing population¹⁶.

With the first restrictions set in place by the District in 1946, Arlington's white parents began their campaign for a better school system. They created the group Arlingtonians for a Better County (ABC), which immediately began advocating for the right to directly elect the School Board. At the time, Arlington's School Board was selected by a circuit court judge, who in turn was appointed by the Richmond legislature. After a successful petition drive in 1946 that collected more than 5,000 signatures, Arlington became the only locality in the Commonwealth with the right to directly elect the School Board. In November 1947, ABC candidates won all five seats on the Board. After an unsuccessful legal challenge by the prior appointed Board, whose members refused to give up their seats, the new School Board began their reform efforts in 1948. Shortly thereafter voters approved bond issues for new school construction. And while these efforts were supported by the local African American community (the Arlington NAACP participated in selecting the ABC School Board candidates), they did not result in immediate improvements in the local segregated schools.

At the same time that the ABC members were petitioning for local control of the School Board, the County's African American parents began their efforts to improve school quality at the African American schools by filing lawsuits and petitioning for equal educational opportunities for their children. Once the District closed its borders to all Arlington students, African American parents found new legal grounds to challenge the separate and unequal education their children were receiving in Arlington County. In *Carter et al v. School Board of Arlington County, Virginia* (1950), a detailed case was presented that showed the wide discrepancies in facilities, course offerings, and electives at Hoffman-Boston as compared to the all-white Washington-Lee High School. For example, Washington-Lee had four science laboratories, one for physics, chemistry, and two biology labs with adequate furniture and equipment. Hoffman-Boston had only one general science room. Washington-Lee had two rooms especially equipped for music instruction, an auditorium, stage, music stands, and storage room for fine arts equipment. Hoffman-Boston had no special auditorium or rooms for musical instruction. Every feature of the schools, when compared, showed that Hoffman-Boston was clearly not on par with Washington-Lee, from the machine shops, to gymnasiums, locker rooms, cafeteria, infirmary, specialized staff and instructional equipment, libraries, the list of subjects taught, and the extracurricular activities available to students.

The case details each of these deficiencies "to demonstrate by illustration that discrimination in the treatment accorded the students of the two races undoubtedly prevails.The differences between the two schools are not merely unimportant variations incident to the maintenance of separate establishments, but constitute unlawful discriminations against pupils of the colored race; and it is no defense that they flow in part from variations in the size of the respective student bodies or locations of the buildings. The burdens inherent in segregation must be met by the state which maintains the practice."¹⁷ Though this case was remanded for further proceedings, and did not upend the County's well-entrenched policy of school segregation, the act of filing it and gathering information for the suit galvanized the County's black community as they repeatedly tried, and failed, to enroll their children in the white schools.

¹⁶ Evening Star, "Hoffman Boston May Be Accredited in 1948, Principal Says," Evening Star, October 23, 1948, Newsbank.

¹⁷ *Carter v. School Board of Arlington County Virginia*. 1950.

By the early-1950s, however, advocates of racial equality were no longer satisfied with the inevitable inequality sheltered under *Plessy vs. Ferguson*. Under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, a Howard University School of Law graduate and influential legal director of the NAACP, African American activists sought the abolition of the segregated school system altogether through a planned series of legal challenges at the state and Federal level that culminated in the U.S. Supreme Court case *Oliver L. Brown et. al. vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*. The suit was filed in February 1951 by the NAACP representing thirteen parents of African American children, including Oliver Brown, who had been denied admission to white elementary schools in Topeka, Kansas. The case was ultimately grouped together with five other school desegregation heard by the U.S. Supreme Court in the early 1950s. The other cases included: *Belton v. Gebhart* and *Bulah v. Gebhart* in Delaware; *Bolling v. Sharpe* in Washington, D.C.; *Briggs v. Elliot* in South Carolina; and *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* in Virginia. The ruling, delivered on May 17, 1954, stated that the separate but equal school system was inherently unequal and thereby in violation of the constitutional rights of the plaintiffs.³²

Commonwealth officials had little intention of implementing any desegregation program pursuant to the *Brown* ruling. Virginia Governor Thomas B. Stanley echoed the sentiments of many white Virginians in June 1954 when he boldly stated that he "would use every means at my command to continue segregated schools in Virginia." In May 1955, the U.S. Supreme Court followed up its previous ruling with a directive for school authorities to exhibit "good faith compliance ... at the earliest practical date." The Virginia General Assembly responded with the passage of a referendum in January 1956 that put the power of student placement in the hands of the local school boards, assuming that the local boards would be opposed to desegregation. The Assembly reserved the Commonwealth's right, however, to close any school at which integration occurred. This referendum was, in effect, a state endorsement and facilitation of the policy of "massive resistance" in Virginia. Arlington County, somewhat liberal during the period and less than six percent African American, went against the referendum by a vote of 10,306 to 8,001.

The Arlington School Board interpreted the actions of the General Assembly to mean that white students were not to be forced to attend public schools with African American students, but that black students may have been able to attend white schools at a future time once new policies were in place. As a result, the Board set about creating what was described by NAACP President E. B. Henderson as a "triple school system with no enforced integration." They approved a gradual and limited desegregation plan that would permit integration at only a few elementary and junior high schools and one senior high school over the course of three academic years, from 1956 to 1958. News of this plan inflamed segregationists in Richmond and across the Commonwealth. Arlington had erred in the assumption that integration policies could be decided at the local level. In response to Arlington's new policy, which gave some quarter to the desire of the school system to accommodate integration on a limited and piecemeal basis, the Virginia General Assembly voted in 1956 to strip the county of its right to an elected school board and replaced it with a more conservative county-appointed board.¹⁸ The first tentative steps towards an integrated Arlington school system were abruptly ended.

So it was that by May 1956, a year after *Brown v. Board of Education*, not a single African American student had been admitted to a white school in Virginia. In response to this complete intransigence, the

¹⁸ Notes from the General Assembly.

NAACP filed a series of law suits in Federal court demanding desegregation in Arlington, Front Royal, Charlottesville and Norfolk, Virginia. The law suits were part of a planned strategy on the part of NAACP leaders to attack massive resistance in areas that contained small African American populations and were therefore less likely to be threatened by desegregation.⁴⁰ In July 1956, Federal Judge Albert V. Bryan ruled in favor of the plaintiffs in the Arlington suit and issued a directive that Arlington schools desegregate. The Virginia General Assembly responded to these suits by passing a series of massive resistance laws in September 1956 that reinforced the governor's power to close any school system that desegregated and to cut off state funds to those schools. The Commonwealth established the Virginia Pupil Placement Board, which removed the power of student placement from the local school boards in a covert effort to ensure that no African American students were admitted to white schools.

As expected, the State Pupil Placement Board denied all applications of African American students who desired to attend white schools for the 1957-1958 academic year. On the first day of school, September 5, 1957, three Arlington students, Edward Leslie Hamm, Jr., Joyce Marie Bailey, and George Tyrone Nelson, arrived at Stratford, accompanied by Geraldine Davis, a white woman who was also active in the Arlington NAACP. Word of their arrival had spread in the community, and nearly 300 of the school's 1,000 white students had gathered at the front of the school to see the trio enter. Police were in the crowd, but the incident passed without violence. The students and Davis were escorted to the Principal's office where the three were turned away without admittance. Stratford was not the only location in Arlington where students tried to integrate that September morning; four other students had also arrived at four other all-white schools and were also refused admittance.

In an odd historical coincidence, Virginia's Attorney General J. Lindsay Almond, Jr. began his campaign for governor that very morning with a speech and press conference in downtown Clarendon. Almond himself had argued in court many times in favor of the State's segregated school system, and would continue to support the policy of "massive resistance" to school integration once elected Governor.

A law suit challenging the decision not to admit the students to Stratford and the four other Arlington schools was again brought before Judge Bryan of the Federal District Court in Alexandria shortly thereafter. Almond represented Arlington County in his role as Attorney General, and repeatedly sought to discredit and quiet Geraldine Davis, the white NAACP activist, on the witness stand. Davis, "sought to explain to the court that she felt this was an opportunity for whites to show that they were Christians, but Almond continually cut her off. But she embellished each answer to his questions in a way to get her point across. She told the packed courtroom that she decided to accompany the children after reading about threats of bloodshed if they showed up at Stratford. 'I thought is there was any bloodshed that it should be white blood and mine if necessary,' Davis said."¹⁹ Bryan ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and ordered that seven of the eight African American students denied admission to white schools be admitted for the 1958-1959 academic year.⁴²

The following summer, the State Pupil Placement Board and the Arlington County School Board interviewed these and twenty-three other African American applicants to white schools and rejected them all. NAACP attorneys filed another law suit in federal court on the grounds that the Pupil Placement Act

¹⁹ Trial proceedings, Clarissa Thompson, et al v. County School Board of Arlington County, 11 September 1957, 310-312. Account taken from *A Chink in the Armor*. 350.

was discriminatory. In September, Judge Bryan determined that the Pupil Placement Act was not inherently discriminatory, but that the two boards had unfairly denied admission to four of the thirty African American applicants.⁴³ The four students were Ronald Deskins, Michael Jones, Lance Newman, and Gloria Thompson, all residents of North Arlington. They had applied for admission into the seventh grade at Stratford Junior High School, considerably closer to their homes than Hoffman-Boston High School and widely held to be one of the best school facilities in the county. All four students had superior academic records and had been denied admission by the state and county boards based solely upon the opinion that the students would not "adapt" well to the new school."²⁰ Bryan ordered that the four students be admitted to Stratford Junior High School at the start of the spring term.

While many in Arlington were cautiously optimistic about the ruling, there were strong segregationist sentiments in the community, a feeling held by a number in public office and other positions of power and influence. Tenth District Congressman Joel T. Broyhill tried to personally intervene to prevent the four students from attending Stratford. He asked for a meeting with their parents in December. The parents agreed, and asked that attorney Frank Reeves act as their spokesman at the meeting. The gathering was held at the house of Audrey Newman, where Broyhill suggested that the four students should delay attending Stratford until at least September of the following year. Frank Reeves asked if the parents agreed to wait, would Broyhill himself guarantee that every child in Virginia would be able to attend the school of his choice. Angered, Broyhill stated he could do no such thing and ended the meeting. Ronald Deskins also recalled Broyhill making veiled threats against his father, alluding to "the fact that my father worked for Arlington County and this could have an impact."²¹

Similar Federal rulings in Norfolk, Charlottesville, and Front Royal law suits had resulted in the closure of public schools in those districts. Subsequent law suits brought before state and Federal courts in these areas challenged the constitutionality of public school closings. Judge Bryan's court heard motion after motion as integration supporters worked furiously to press the advantage. The arguments against integration ranged from the supposedly practical, noting the severe school overcrowding that already existed at the white schools, to the purely emotional and blatantly race-based. Arlington County School Board Attorney Frank Ball appealed, at one point, to the idea that "love is essential in school and that white teachers would not be able to love these colored youngsters."²² The Courts were not convinced.

A pivotal ruling came in January 1959 by the Virginia Supreme Court. The court declared the school closings to be in violation of the right to public education as stated in the state constitution. This ruling was supported by a panel of Federal judges in Norfolk who determined the school closings to be in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment. On January 25, 1959, at an emergency session called by now Governor J. Lindsay Almond, the Virginia General Assembly voted to repeal the massive resistance laws by a vote of 20 to 19. \$7

²⁰ Judge Bryan notes in his determination that "the point made by the Superintendent is that these students would, respectively, be injured by placement in Patrick Henry or in Stratford Junior High School. His reason is that they would lose their present position of school superiority and leadership. . . . They will not be among the leaders. . . . The Superintendent feels that this would be discouraging and possibly emotionally disturbing to them. Race or color is not the basis for his opinion, though, he owns, the necessity for his decision is occasioned by the removal of racial bars." E. Leslie Hamm, Jr., et al v. County School Board of Arlington County, Virginia.

²¹ *Our Struggle for Equality. Video at Center for Local History.*

²² *A Chink in the Armor.* 356.

In preparation of desegregation at Stratford Junior High School, NAACP activist Barbara Marx, a white woman, organized social events at which white students and their families would have the opportunity to meet the four African American students and their families.⁴⁸ Individuals opposed to desegregation, including members of the American Nazi Party headquartered near Ballston, passed out flyers at Stratford instructing white students to "do your part to preserve your Constitution, your race and your white culture by taking your books home and continuing your studies there until the emergency has passed."⁴⁹ On Monday morning, February 2, 1959, under the protection of approximately eighty-five Arlington police officers, Ronald Deskins, Michael Jones, Lance Newman, and Gloria Thompson entered and were admitted to Stratford Junior High School without incident, making Stratford the first public school in the Commonwealth of Virginia to desegregate. Fifteen minutes later, seventeen African American students entered and were admitted to white schools in Norfolk. The successful integration of Stratford Junior High School marked only the crucial beginning of the desegregation movement in Arlington County, which continued until the adoption of a unitary non-racial pupil placement system in 1971. It took twelve years to fully integrate approximately 1,200 African American students with less than 25,000 white students.^{s2} The pivotal event at Stratford Junior High School signified the end of segregated schools in the Commonwealth of Virginia and dealt a powerful blow to the opponents of racial equality.

Stratford Junior High School since 1971

Stratford Junior High School was closed at the end of the school year in 1978 following the Arlington County School Board's decision to abandon the junior high system in favor of intermediate (or middle) schools for grades seven and eight. This appears to have been due in part to a significant decline in student population in the county. Following neighborhood outcry to keep the school open, it reopened in the fall of 1978 as the H-B Woodlawn School, accommodating an alternative public education program for grades six through twelve that continues to operate in the building to the present day. Named for the former Hoffman-Boston High School and Woodlawn Elementary School, the H-B Woodlawn School, now known as the H-B Woodlawn Program, is an innovative public school for independent, motivated students that provides highly personalized teaching and guidance, and less formal control of students' time than conventional public schools. The school is governed by a weekly "town meeting" of teachers, students and parents led by the Principal.

I. Areas Exempt from Designation:

There are no exempt areas as all of the school property within RPC 05-039-021 is included in the proposed local historic district boundary.

J. Designation Criteria:

The Stratford School meets Designation Criteria A, B, C, D, E, G, H, and K as listed in Section 11.3.4.A.4 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance.

A) The property is listed or is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

The property was listed to the Virginia Landmarks Register on December 3, 2003, and in the National Register of Historic Places on February 26, 2004.

B) The property has character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the county, state, or nation.

The design and construction of the original Stratford Junior High School represents a critical moment in the development of Arlington County's public education system in the mid-twentieth century. The building was constructed as a direct response to the unprecedented population growth that the County experienced as a result of the expansion of the Federal work force leading up to World War II and in the following decade. This tremendous increase in the school age population, particularly in the Lee Highway corridor in the neighborhoods of Cherrydale, Maywood, Waverly Hills, and Donaldson Run, led to numerous school construction projects by the County, including Stratford Junior High School. Similar to other post-war educational facilities throughout the country, the design of Stratford Junior High School adhered to the ideals of Modernist architecture allowing for an efficient and economical school building.

C) The property was the site of a significant local, state, or national event.

The Stratford Junior High School reflects the advancement of the Civil Rights Movement in Arlington County, Virginia, in the Southern states, and in the nation at large. Following the landmark United States Supreme Court Case *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), government officials, citizen organizations, and other councils throughout the South vehemently opposed the desegregation of the public school system. Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia campaigned for "massive resistance" that urged a no-compromise line against integration. Three African-American students attempted to integrate Stratford Junior High School in 1957, but all were refused admittance and sent to Hoffman-Boston. By means of continued litigation by the NAACP, on February 2, 1959, Stratford School was the first public school in the Commonwealth of Virginia to be desegregated. The successful integration represented the end of the Commonwealth's policy of "massive resistance" and dealt a fatal blow to foes of school integration across the South.

D) The property is associated with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the development of the county, state, or nation.

The integration of Arlington's Public Schools involved many committed civic activists, most notably Dorothy Hamm, Edward Leslie Hamm, Jr., George Tyrone Nelson, Joyce Marie Bailey, Clarissa & Ethel Thompson, Barbara Marx, Ellen Bozman, Mary Margaret Whipple, James E. Browne, Mary Ellen "Nell" Henderson, Geraldine Davis, and Edmund and Elizabeth Campbell. Others included School Board Chairman Dr. E.R. Draheim, and Alexandria Federal Court Judge Albert Bryan. Most

importantly, the brave actions of the four African-American children who integrated the school -- Ronald Deskins, Michael Jones, Lance Newman, and Gloria Thompson - - changed history in Arlington County and the Commonwealth of Virginia, and reverberated through the South. The students were admitted without incident, but the struggle for civil rights continued within the school system and within Arlington County. Detailed information on the actions of all the above named individuals can be found in the *Statement of Significance* section of this report.

E) The property embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style valuable for the study of a period, type, or method of construction.

The Stratford School Historic District encompasses a distinctive and architecturally significant International Style building and campus. The site is the best and most intact work of prominent regional architect Rhees Burket, Sr., and represents his expressive interpretation of the International Style for a public school facility. The building is characterized by the extensive use of cut-stone, glazed brick and tile, and glass block. The form and massing of the school is dynamic and creative, using a strong vocabulary of vertical and horizontal elements that respond to challenging topography to link different programmatic elements of the school on the site. It is a nearly pure expression of form following function, as each of the building's elements—from the classrooms and library to the auditorium, stair towers, and gymnasium—is contained in a separate volume that is clearly expressed and articulated on the exterior.

The high quality of design embodied in the district is not limited to the school building, but extends into the landscape and site elements of the property. The design of the retaining walls, as an example, and the manner in which they use materials directly from the building form an extension—a bridge between the building and the landscape that recalls the design philosophy of Frank Lloyd Wright that might not otherwise be apparent. The athletic field and courtyards are integral parts of the overall campus design and were conceived as an extension of the architectural design of the school. The athletic fields are the most significant element of the school's campus landscape. It is the outdoor 'heart' of the property, the space where teams practice and compete, and where the school and community join together to observe and participate in athletic pursuits. The visual and physical connections between the fields and the school are made indelible with the dramatically sloping topography, and the bold modern design of the school serving as a fitting backdrop for the turf proscenium below. The courtyard at the rear of the school, originally delineated by lawns criss-crossed by pedestrian paths with the flagpole marking its definable center, remains an active landscape, one that is clearly part of the immediate academic setting of the building. This tableau presents an iconic, readily identifiable picture of the entire property.

G) The property embodies elements of design, detailing, materials, and craftsmanship that render it structurally or architecturally significant.

The materials utilized on the original Stratford Junior High School reflected the architect's and School Board's preference for Modern architecture within a vernacular building palette. These elements include the ribbon windows with unmolded limestone accents, glass block placed directly above metal framed windows, limestone veneer, glazed brick, and tile. In particular, the repeated use of glass block to accentuate both vertical and horizontal buildings elements, such as the stair towers and the ribbon windows, highlight the craftsmanship of this versatile mid-twentieth century building material. The school is also unique in the Arlington Public Schools facilities portfolio as the best and most intact example of an International Style school.

H) The property has a distinctive location, or singular physical characteristics that make it an established or familiar visual feature.

The Stratford School is located on a distinctive piece of property with varied topography. The school was constructed to take advantage of the steep grades on a triangular shaped parcel. The building is set into the hillside with wings stepping down the grade to the low point of the property containing the athletic fields. As a result, the school is highly visible from numerous vantage points, including that of Old Dominion Drive where the majority of travelers (not attending the school) view the rear of building by means of automobile and/or pedestrian traffic. This viewshed has become iconic as it is the most easily recognized, as the rear of the school and playing fields were the areas most photographed after construction and later highlighted on newsreel taken during the school's integration. This viewshed, paired with the International Style design of the rear elevation, establishes the school building as a distinct visual feature in Arlington County's built environment.

All three elements, the building, the courtyards, and the athletic field, are most visible from the approach on Old Dominion Drive, and it is this view that has been featured repeatedly in promotional literature celebrating the school's opening and in historic newsreel footage and photographs that captured the bustle of the campus during the first week of integration. The rear elevation, courtyards, and athletic field collectively present a second façade to both the community and to the students who have approached the school from the neighborhoods to the west, south, and east on their walk to class. It is clear from the prominent and unified design of all elevations, but particularly the main front elevation and rear elevation, that the architect acknowledged and celebrated the fact that this school would be approached and identified from all vantage points.

K) The property is suitable for preservation or restoration.

The Stratford School is suitable for preservation as the building and grounds retain ample integrity to convey its period of significance. The building has undergone two expansions since its initial construction, but both have been minimal in scale and both

took care to use a similar vocabulary and materials as the existing building. While additional parking areas have been added, they do not encroach onto the athletic fields and grounds, nor do they detract from the overall integrity of the design of the school campus.

The Stratford School retains its integrity of location and setting, including its initial location on Vacation Lane and its originally designed circulation patterns. The main bus drop-off and pick-up is still located along the small traffic circle in the front of the building. The side entrances and other ingress/egress points all maintain the original access points to the school. While the culvert under Old Dominion Drive has been closed off, and will likely be removed in the future, all other access points via sidewalks remain as originally designed.

The Stratford School retains its integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. The massing and form of the building remains intact with only minor additions that do not alter the character and aesthetics of the building. Few alterations have been made to the overall design, materials, or fenestration pattern, and minimal changes have been made to the overall circulation network, with the planned athletic fields and courtyards still extant.

The Stratford School retains its direct association with Arlington Public Schools as the building continues to serve as a school housing both the Stratford Program and the H-B Woodlawn Program. In addition, the design of the school remains largely intact and continues to reflect its mid-twentieth century period of architectural significance. Therefore, the building retains its integrity of feeling and association.

K. Conclusion

The Stratford School retains sufficient historical, cultural, and architectural integrity to be recommended for local historic district designation by Arlington County. The School's listing to the Virginia Landmarks Register and to the National Register of Historic Places shows that it has retained sufficient integrity and historic merit to be awarded both state and national distinctions for historic properties. The school is significant as a unique example of International Style architecture as applied to a school facility in Arlington County, its association with the post-war housing boom that led to the explosive growth in Arlington's population, and for its distinction as being the first integrated public school in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The story of the Stratford School is the story of the modern evolution of Arlington County writ large. Today, the Arlington County vision states that "Arlington will be a diverse and inclusive world-class urban community with secure, attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable

community in which each person is important.”²³ The County has spent years perfecting that vision; the fight for school integration was only one of many struggles that ordinary people undertook to achieve a better life, in a better Arlington, for themselves and for their families. The people who fought for school integration were largely civil servants and parents who became politically active at a time when nascent civic organizations first began to articulate a vision for a new County, one that would be responsive to and representative of the myriad voices uniting to achieve parity and inclusivity for all Arlingtonians. The first real test of this civic activism was centered on schools, but it did not end there. The battle won at Stratford was only the beginning, and the work continues today.

7. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: 8.8 acres

RPC Number: 05-039-021

Verbal Boundary Description: The proposed Stratford School Local Historic District is bounded as follows: Old Dominion Boulevard to the south; Stratford Park to the southwest, and Vacation Lane to the north and northeast.

Boundary Justification: The proposed historic district includes all of the building and site elements location within the historically significant school property and is compromised of the current legal property boundaries.

8. PROPERTY OWNER

The Arlington County School Board is the owner of the Stratford School.

9. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Titles Rebecca Ballo, Arlington County Historic Preservation Planner
 John Liebertz, Arlington County Historic Preservation Planner
 June 2015

10. MAJOR SOURCES CONSULTED (This section is not complete at this time.)

Arlington County Land Records, Arlington County Courthouse, Virginia.

Arlington County Probate Records, Arlington County Courthouse, Virginia.

EHT Traceries. *DC Architects Directory*. District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office.

Evening Star [numerous].

²³ <http://departments.arlingtonva.us/cmo/county-vision/>

NR nomination Stratford.

NR Nomination form Cherrydale

NR nomination form Waverly Hills.

Washington Post [numerous].

Washington Times [numerous].