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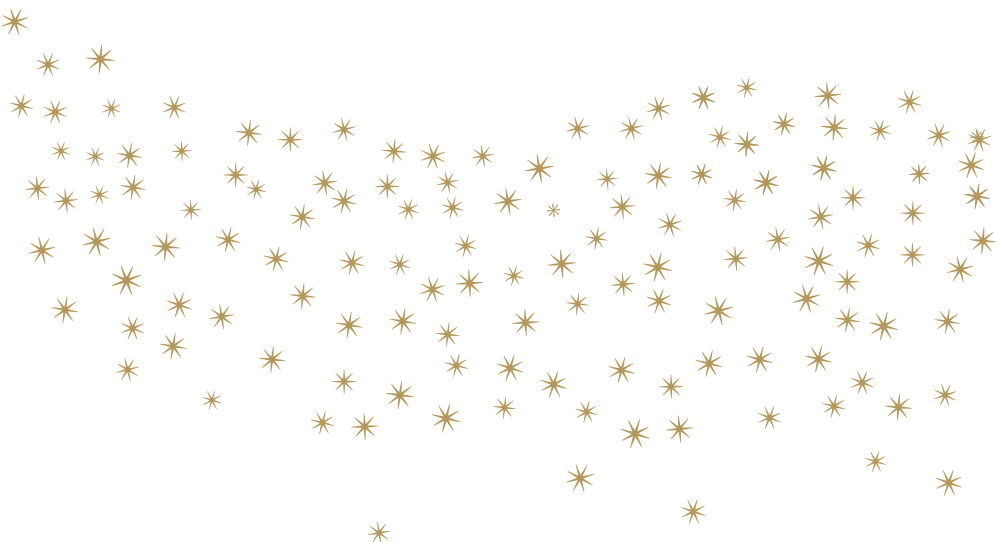
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*Unbound*

*We may observe, with as much sadness as irony that outside of Africa... where education is still a difficult challenge, the only places on earth known not to provide free public education are Communist China, North Vietnam, Sarawak, Singapore, British Honduras—and Prince Edward County, Virginia.*

Robert F. Kennedy, Attorney General, 1963



In the fall of 1959, the public schools in Prince Edward County, Virginia were closed in response to a court order to desegregate. The schools remained closed for five years.

Many white children began attending a system of private schools established by the Prince Edward School Foundation. As permitted by state law, tuition for these schools was almost completely subsidized by the government.

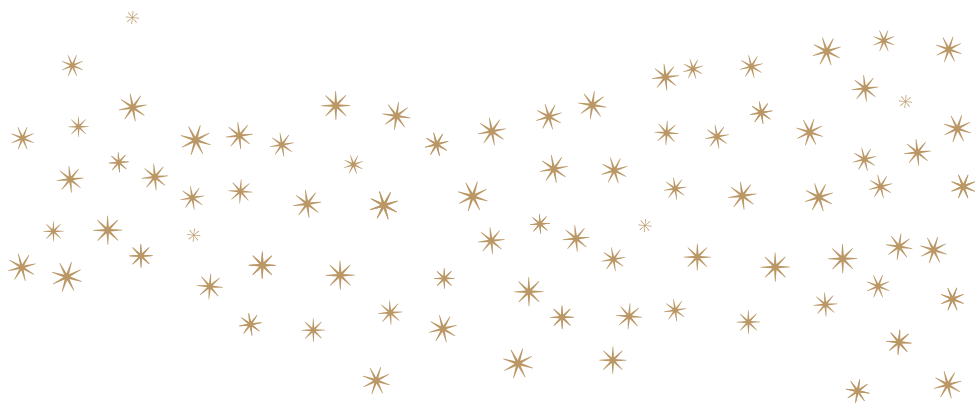
No one elected to attend the private academy for black students organized by the same group of white leaders.

Approximately 4,000 children in Prince Edward County waited five years for the public school system to open, as lawsuits about the intersection of public education and race circulated through the state and federal courts.



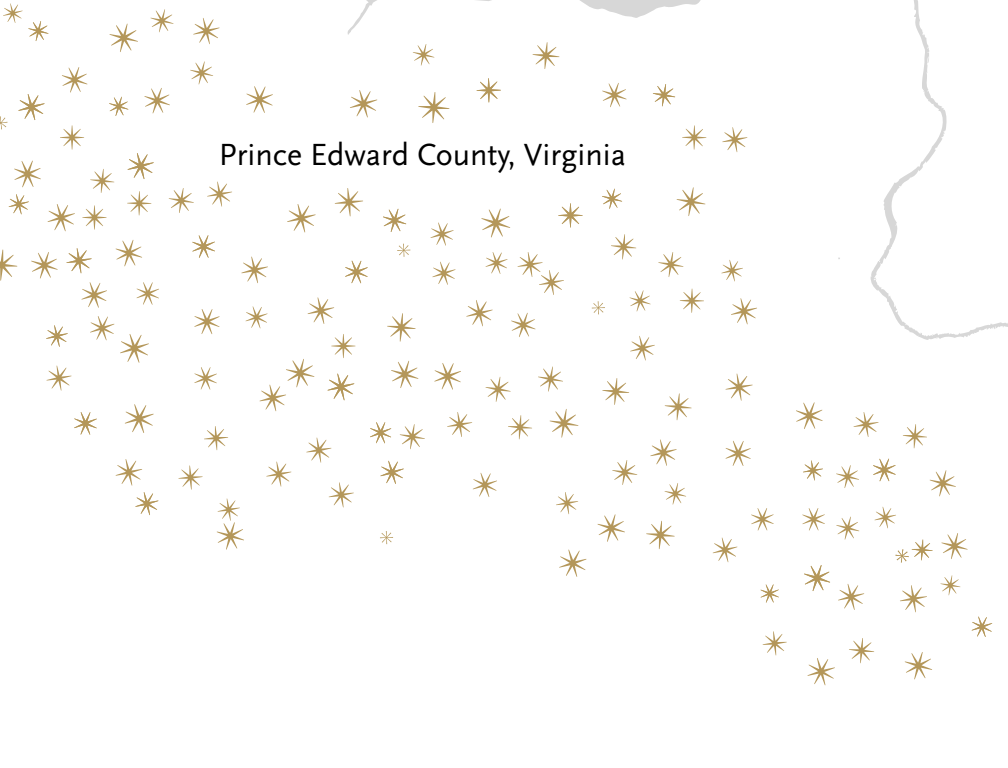
*For five years, our community was without any public schools, and because of this a generation of our children are permanently crippled and disabled educationally. For years, we have suffered the ways of peace and sought from the law the justice we have been denied so long. We suffered our children to be destroyed in order that the law might speak.*

Reverend L. Francis Griffin, First Baptist Church of Farmville, 1964



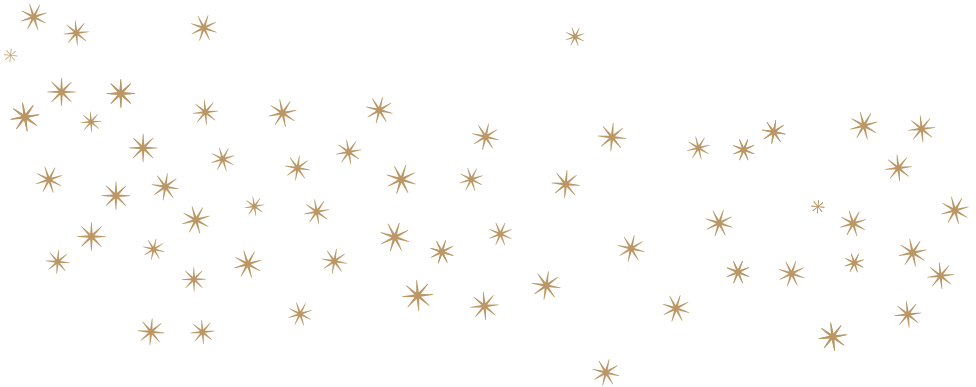


**Prince Edward County, Virginia**



*We, the undersigned citizens of Prince Edward County, Virginia, hereby affirm our conviction that the separation of the races in the public schools of this county is absolutely necessary and to affirm that we prefer to abandon public schools and educate our children in some other way if that be necessary to preserve separation of the races in this county. We pledge our support to the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County and their firm maintenance of this policy.*

A petition signed by 4,184 Prince Edward County citizens, May 1956



In the eight years before the schools closed, Prince Edward County students were the plaintiffs of many lawsuits.



IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA  
RICHMOND DIVISION

DOROTHY E. DAVIS, BERTHA M.  
DAVIS and IREZ D. DAVIS, infants,  
by John Davis, their father and  
next friend,

ANDREW LEWIS WOOLRIDGE, WILBERT  
ALEXANDER WOOLRIDGE and AUBREY  
LESLIE WOOLRIDGE, infants, by  
Leslie Woolridge, their father  
and next friend,

ROBERT GOODE, JR., AND MIRIAM  
O. GOODE, infants, by Amanda Goode,  
their mother and next friend,

ROOSEVELT OWENS HICKS, an infant,  
by Inez O. Hicks, his mother and  
next friend,

ALPHONZO S. BIGGER, an infant, by  
Katie H. Bigger, his guardian and  
next friend,

JOY ANNETTA CASARRUS, an infant, by  
Eura H. Morton, her guardian and next  
friend,

GRACE ELIZABETH BROWN and WALTER M.  
BROWN, infants, by Carrie Brown, their  
mother and next friend,

WARREN LEE DAVIS and WILLIE H. DAVIS,  
infants, by Rosa Bell Davis, their  
mother and next friend,

MARY REBECCA HALL, an infant, by Harry  
S. Hall, her father and next friend,

DOROTHY ELIZABETH BERKELEY, an infant,  
by Frankie Louise Berkeley, her mother  
and next friend,

LOTTIE CELESTE WILLIS, DAISY M. WILLIS  
and ROBERT A. WILLIS, infants, by Louise  
Willis, their mother and next friend,

AVIS SCOTT and EVELYN SCOTT, infants, by  
Thomas H. Scott, their father and next  
friend,

ELRIDGE MOTON and JACOB MOTON, infants,  
by Mary Moton, their mother and next  
friend,

FILED - MAY 23 1951  
Walter E. Johnson, Clerk  
*Carolin H. Morrison*  
Deputy Clerk

CIVIL ACTION NO. 1333

(FILE ENDOSEMENT OMITTED)

May 23, 1951

Hearings begin for *Davis, et al. v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*. This is the first federal court case to challenge the constitutionality of segregated primary and secondary public schools on behalf of 117 black students and their parents from Farmville.

March 7, 1952

The U.S. District Court rules against *Davis, et al.*, upholding the constitutionality of segregated public schools as long as black and white schools are physically equal to each other.

December 1952

The U.S. Supreme Court begins hearings for *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. *Brown* is actually five school desegregation cases bundled together under one name. Seventy-five percent of the plaintiffs in *Brown* are from Prince Edward County; 136 students from Farmville.

May 1954

The U.S. Supreme Court rules in favor of *Brown*. The segregation of public schools is now unconstitutional. From Earl Warren's decision: "*To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in ways unlikely to ever be undone.*"

May 1955

In an attempt to address the lack of guidelines about how schools should be desegregated, the U.S. Supreme Court issues a ruling that all parties involved work toward this goal "*with all deliberate speed.*"

July 1955

The establishment of timetable for desegregation in Prince Edward County schools is sent to a three-judge District Court panel. The panel calls for the county to begin the "adjustment and re-arrangement" necessary to end segregation.

Summer 1956

The District Court panel overseeing the Prince Edward case decides to dissolve itself. The case is given to Judge Sterling Hutcheson's court.

January 1957

Judge Hutcheson rules that there is no need to fix a set time or plan for the desegregation of Prince Edward County schools because the conditions in the county are unfavorable for desegregation.

November 1957

The Circuit Court directs Judge Hutcheson to enter an order requiring the county to comply with desegregation. However, a stay on this ruling is granted, pending an appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court.

March 1958

The U.S. Supreme Court refuses to review the decision, and the case is sent back to the District Court presided over by Judge Hutcheson.

August 1958

Judge Hutcheson hands down a decision which grants a seven year delay for Prince Edward County to desegregate its schools.

May 1959

The U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals overturns Judge Hutcheson's seven year deadline for desegregation, setting a new deadline for the beginning of the school year, September 1959.

June 26, 1959

In response to the ruling by U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals to desegregate the schools, Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors votes to avoid desegregation by not funding public schools in the 1959-1960 school year.

No one thought the schools would stay closed for five years.



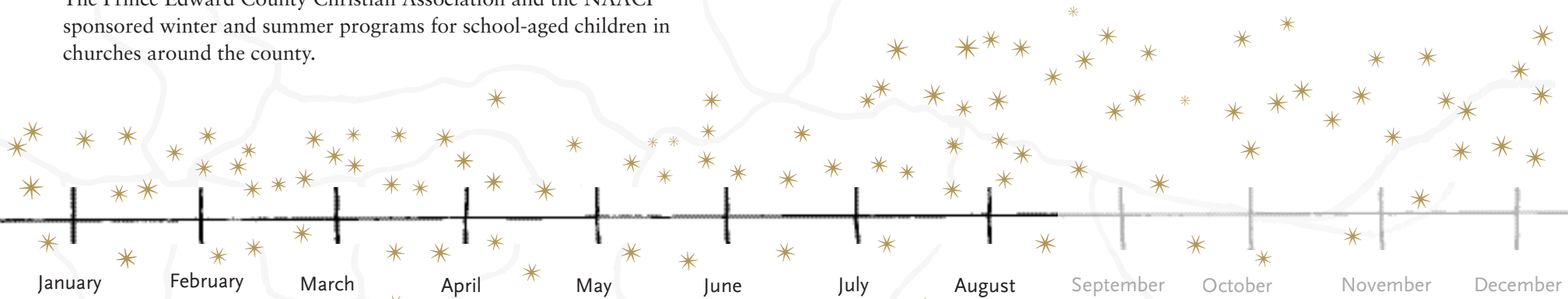
There is no formal record of what happened to the children once schools closed.

Flossie White Hudson operated a school for fifty children in her basement in Prospect, Virginia for four years.

Some former teachers opened schools around the county and provided lessons for free. Beatrice Davenport and Elizabeth Watkins opened a school in the basement of St. James AME Church. Alberta Sim and Cula Berryman opened a school in a back room of Womack's Grocery. Leola Womack Hill opened an educational center in former School #22.

The Prince Edward County Christian Association and the NAACP sponsored winter and summer programs for school-aged children in churches around the county.

Some children were taught by volunteers in homes and churches.



Organizers stated, *“While the whole program is principally for morale building, it is designed to keep the minds of the children alert and sharp so that they will not be too far behind other children of the same age level who are receiving formal training.”*

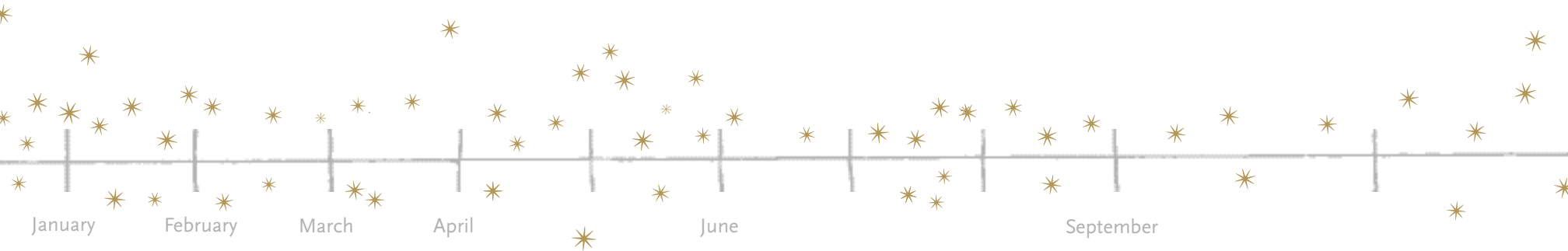
- Beulah AME
- First Baptist Church
- Forest Baptist
- High Bridge Baptist
- High Rock Baptist
- Mercy Seat Baptist
- Mt. Moriah Baptist
- Mt. Zion Baptist
- New Hope Baptist
- Triumph Baptist
- Zion Baptist

1959

One Prince Edward father purchased an abandoned farmhouse in the next county so his children could go to school. Children traveled from their homes in Prince Edward to be picked up by the school bus in front of the farmhouse every morning. By 1963, sixteen children from different families were gathering in front of the house to get on the bus. In 2005, Dorothy Holcomb recounted, *“The only thing we were taught was you don’t discuss this with anyone. You go from behind the house; you get on the bus; you don’t explain what your relationship is with these children; you don’t know anything. You just come home in the afternoon; you go behind the house, and you wait for someone to pick you up. And we did it. We wanted to go to school that bad.”*

Some families left the county.

Some children were sent to other cities and states to go to school.



The American Friends Service Committee, a Quaker organization, arranged for about sixty children to live with host families in other states so they could attend school. As a result, many of these children experienced integrated public life for the first time in communities in Iowa, Maryland, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

Another sixty children were sent to Kittrell College in North Carolina to attend junior college.

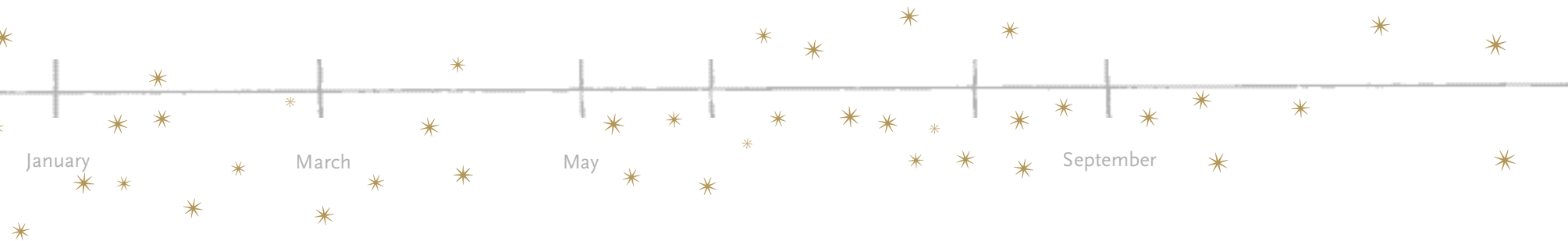
*There is no comparsion to the sadness of a young girl being taken away from her parents, family, friends and town in order to obtain an education. But with time, forgiveness and perservance, any obstacle can be overcome.*

Rita Moseley, 2014

1960

*We daily exchange all of the pleasant courtesies as we meet in the stores, post office, or on the street. These pleasant greetings and our menial contacts in service are our only points of contact, so that there is absolutely no communication between the races about any of the problems which have thoroughly upset our lives here. We laugh in passing about the weather as if we are each unaware of the loads in our hearts because of the children's absences. We buy and sell and bargain together forever pushing back the truth—pushing back the bridge that might unite us: the suffering, the yearning in the hearts of all the people in this country to find a real solution to this crisis.*

Helen Baker, Community Relations Director in Farmville for the American Friends Service Committee, 1961



Many children stayed at home.

More than 1,000 children received no formal education.

1961



For four years.

1962

# Prince Edward Negroes Given Wide Support for Free Schools

By BEN A. FRANKLIN

Special to The New York Times.

FARMVILLE, Va., Oct. 19— The emergency school system for Negroes established here a month ago with Federal initiative and assistance is making a major impact on this community. It is an educational impact in the broadest sense.

Trustees and officials of the Prince Edward County Free School Association, which has been giving the Negro children of this rural, Southside Virginia county the first education they have had in four years, today pronounced the effort a financial, technical and moral success.

This much had been expected. In fact, any well-organized effort to tackle this country's racial crisis would probably have been labeled a relative success.

Prince Edward County abolished public education in 1959 rather than obey a Federal court order to admit Negroes to white schools. It thus became the only jurisdiction in the United States without some system of free public education.

## Negro Children Affected

Because there were well-prepared plans to establish a segregated private academy for white students, the effect was to deny more than 1,700 school-age Negroes of formal schooling.

Negro leaders rejected in 1959 the offer of a group of white citizens to form a similar, segregated academy for Negroes.

Most observers believe the courts have been uncommonly slow in resolving the tangled issues of equity and constitutional law here. But other agencies of government moved this fall with unusual effectiveness to meet the problems of Prince Edward County's "lost generation" of Negro children, many of whom are illiterate at the age of 12.

The biracial board of trustees of the free schools met here today to make a one-month assessment. The board is headed by Colgate W. Darden, an influential Virginian who is a former United States Representative, former Governor and former president of the University of Virginia.

Mr. Darden and his board, which consists of distinguished educators of both races, have had the support of the present Governor, Albert S. Harrison Jr., and the cooperation of a number of Prince Edward County's influential white leaders.

The free schools have also had equally important backing from Washington and from across the country.

The idea of a privately financed, desegregated public school system was formulated in the Justice Department last July. Figures made available here today disclose that it has had unusually broad public endorsement, particularly from public school teachers throughout the country.

## Funding Almost Complete

A \$1,000,000 budget, settled on only two months ago, has already been funded with \$750,000 in cash receipts from philanthropic foundations, corporations, public school teachers solicited by the National Education Association, and from concerned private citizens.

The balance is "in sight," officials said, in the form of pledges and other commitments.

It was learned that the Ford Foundation had donated \$250,000, the largest single contribution.

Other foundation grants, totaling more than \$500,000, included \$100,000 from the Field Foundation, Inc., of which Adlai E. Stevens, chief United States delegate to the United Nations, is president; \$50,000 from the Danforth Foundation of St. Louis; \$50,000 from the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation of Winston-Salem, N. C., and \$50,000 in smaller grants from other private philanthropies.

These were the first such private grants made directly to public elementary education.

In addition, corporations, including major industries in Virginia, gave \$125,000. These corporations chose to remain anonymous.

Individuals have contributed \$75,000—a public response that officials found most heartening. The gifts ranged from a \$10,000 donation by John Hay Whitney, publisher of The New York Herald Tribune, to pooled contributions of \$1 each from public school teachers across the country.

Teachers in the state of Washington, for example, raised \$30,000. Southern California teachers contributed \$15,000, and there were gifts of \$10,000 from teachers in Cleveland and \$20,000 from teachers in Minnesota.

More than \$30,000 has been received at a post office box (No. 2000) opened in Washington by the Justice Department.

## Equipment Donated, Too

The free schools have also received donations of equipment and textbooks. The Institute of Textbook Publishers arranged for the gift of 40,000 textbooks. There were gifts of audio-visual equipment, including motion picture projectors and 30 specially equipped educational television receivers contributed by the General Electric Company.

William vanden Heuvel, special assistant to Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, underlined another dividend of the free-school operation here in a speech Thursday at Hampden-Sydney College, a nearby Presbyterian college.

Mr. vanden Heuvel stressed the precedent of voluntary cooperation as one that could bring further good results.

His appearance marked the first public discussion here of what Mr. vanden Heuvel called the "terrible questions" raised in the Prince Edward County case.

Publicly and privately he has been urging preparations for the reopening of desegregated public schools next fall. He predicted this would be ordered by the courts before June.

"There is a profound need during the civil rights struggle to keep open the channels of communication," he declared.

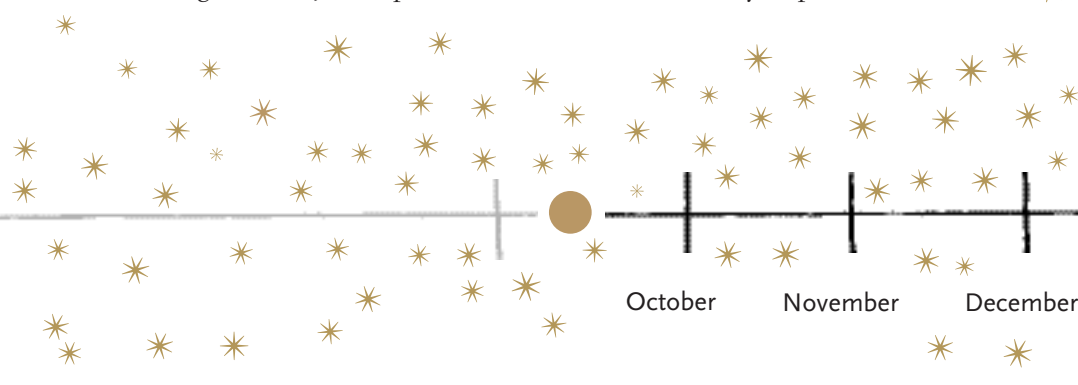
Segregation leaders support his view that the debate over the free-school system and the kind of education that is to succeed it next year is keeping the channels open.

The debate, it can be said, is causing some influential white citizens here to re-examine their convictions. It is educational in that sense.

Then, during the summer of 1963, the Kennedy administration organized a federally-sponsored and privately-funded integrated school system for all children of Prince Edward County.

The Free School Association was spearheaded by Robert Kennedy and William vanden Heuvel. The Board of Trustees was an integrated group of political leaders and college presidents from Virginia, chaired by Colgate Darden, the former governor of Virginia and former president of the University of Virginia.

Dr. Neil Sullivan was hired as the superintendent. An expert in non-graded schools, he oversaw the organization of this school system in a single month, an unprecedented event in the history of public education.



The Free School Association hired teachers, bus drivers and administrators. Teacher were hired from all over the country. It was the most integrated school system in the state at the time.

In a single month, four abandoned school buildings were opened and cleaned. Textbooks were donated from publishing houses and private collections. School bus engines were started for the first time in four years. The Association also received one million dollars in donations for the operation of the schools from sources all over the country, including a personal donation of \$10,000 from President Kennedy.

# 1963



The Free Schools opened on September 16, 1963.

September 16, 1963 was also the first day of integrated public schools in Birmingham, Alabama. After hearing the news from Birmingham on the night of September 15, Dr. Sullivan wrote: "I was crushed and saddened as never before. Suddenly, for the first time, I was deeply worried—not only about our tomorrow in Prince Edward County, but for the future of mankind as well."

**NATIONAL NEWS SUMMARY**  
By H. V. LANCASTER, JR.

- BOMB BLAST
- QUINTUPLETS
- SOUTH VIET NAM

**FOUR NEGRO GIRLS** were killed and scores of others injured when a Negro Baptist church was bombed in Birmingham Sunday morning. The church had been a headquarters of integrationist activities, and the victims were attending Sunday School in its basement. Police said that 10 sticks of dynamite were apparently thrown from a passing car. Word of the bombing spread quickly through the Negro community, and 2,000 angry Negroes gathered at the scene. It took nearly two hours to disperse the mob which threw rocks at white policemen. At the mayor's request Gov. Wallace sent state troopers to the city and alerted units of the National Guard for possible duty there. The FBI dispatched 25 agents to investigate the bombing.

**QUINTUPLETS**, four girls and a boy, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Fischer at St.

**VOLUME 78**  
**13 Jinx Hits Quota Of 100 For Blood Bank**  
**New Donors Lead In Bloodmobile Program Here**

Thirteen was an unlucky number for the bloodmobile visit here on Thursday. With a quota of 100 pints of blood, the Prince Edward Red Cross fell short by 13 pints of meeting its quota, according to Mrs. John G. Grazioplene, chairman of the local program.

Of the 87 donors, 14 were from outside the county — one from Whitesville, W. Va., four from the George Clyde Smith Show at the Five County Fair, Arlington, one; Burkeville, one; Chase City, one; Pamplin, three; Buckingham, two; Phenix, one. Only 19 donors turned out from the county, the balance were Farmville residents, according to the report.

First time donors were the

Established 1898  
Single Copy, 5 cents

FARMVILLE, VIRGINIA, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1963

Honor for the Past, Hope for the Future  
Hope for the Future

No. 95

# The Farmville Herald



Teachers at R. R. Moten High School, one of the three schools opened Monday by the Prince Edward Free School Association, welcome a busload of Negro student on opening day. The school, built by the county in 1953 for Negro high school students, was closed in 1959 and has remained closed since. All "Free School" children 15 years of age and up will attend R. R. Moten.

## First Groups Of Students Enroll In Free Schools

**More Pupils Than Anticipated; Opening Ceremonies Conducted**

The Prince Edward Free School Association opened its system of schools today (Monday) as scheduled. Only those student 6-9 and over 16 years of age reported for school today. The 10 and 15 year olds will report Wednesday (instead of Thursday as previously announced), and the 11-14 age group will report Friday.

Dr. Neil V. Sullivan, superintendent of the school system, said more student reported today than had been anticipated. He predicted that the final enrollment after Friday would exceed 1,700. The number of white students in the school system is exactly double what had been expected, four instead of two. George Abernathy, 7, and Brenda Abernathy, 16, reported for school along with Richard Moss, 17 and Letitia Tew, 7, both of whom had registered previously.

## Prizes, Premium Claiming Make

judges as "best specimen" entry.  
Miss Page Godsey, of Cumber-

On hand for the opening were a number of visitors and about 25 members of the press, radio, television, newspapers and of the R. R. Moten School, with Miss Willie Mae Watson, supervisor of elementary schools, con-

The Free School's non-graded program of education meant that children were grouped by ability, rather than age or prescribed grade.

Dr. Sullivan described the system to teachers during the first staff meeting of the Free Schools Association. "We will form compatible classroom groups which take into account the needs, abilities and achievements of each individual child rather than mere chronological age. Children will be moved from group to group as they progress and they may move more rapidly in one subject than another. Nothing will be fixed."

After the first month of school, Free Schools teachers were asked to fill out a survey documenting their experience.

### *Question #5: What was the most unusual incident you observed during the first three weeks of schools?*

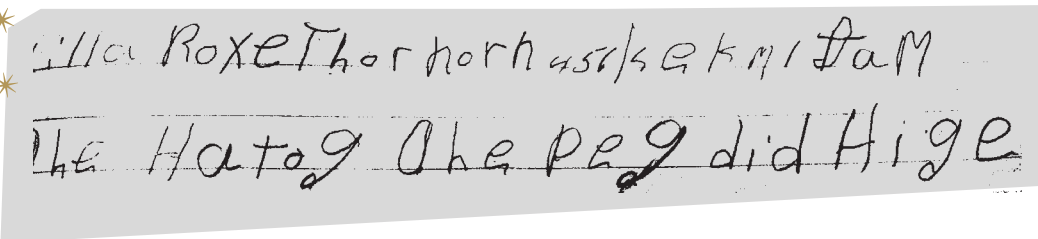
'Some of the most unusual incidents that I observed was the fact that some children did not know how to write their names, where they were from and when they were born.'

'Students (15 years old) were not even able to write their name; therefore, they were unable to copy material which I had written on the board.'

'In observing a group of children, I realized that they had learned to substitute the unreal for the real and have in many cases highly dramatized their activities in their homes to compensate for the lack of schools. They daydream at times.'

'The most unusual reaction I observed since school opened happened during the first week. One girl, who had not been to school during the four years, when asked her name, replied "Here it is" and showed me a piece of paper with her name and some of the alphabets all together. The sheet she gave me is clipped to this bulletin.'

'A student in my general science class told me that he couldn't think. He was quite serious about it. As a result, I gave him some exercises which proved to him that he was capable of thinking.'

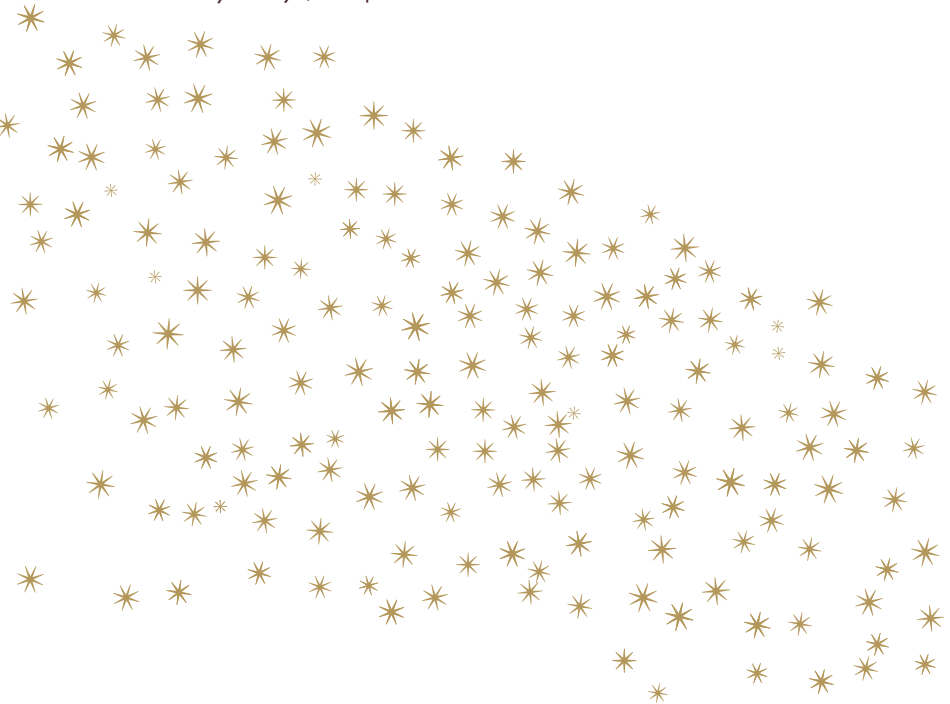


Almost fifty years passed before some of the students shared their stories of the school closings.



*We are never our condition or situation.  
We may find ourselves in it, but it is not us.*

Everett Berryman Jr., 2014



\* In 1959, when I was nine years old and in fifth grade, all public schools in my county were closed. As a result, most black students received no formal education for four years, and no public education for five years. In September, 1963, when I was thirteen years old, the Kennedy Administration opened the privately funded Free School.

On that first day of the Free School opening, I had two frightening experiences. First, I had never been more than a city block without my mother. Secondly, I had never ridden a school bus. However, after a few weeks, all my fears were gone, and I was happy to be back in school.

I have forgiven and overcome most of my hatred and resentment for those at fault. I continue to grow spiritually and now try to live my life in the way God has commanded. "This is my commandment: that ye love one another, as I have loved you." John 15:12, King James.

Alejia "Mickie" Pride Carrington, 2014

\* I could not believe that schools were actually being closed. I felt despair. I resented the whites and those who were able to continue their education. I married at age 19, and my 16-year-old wife became my mentor and friend. I obtained my GED, graduated with a BA in Business from St. Paul's College (made possible through the Brown's scholarship). I put both of my daughters through college and retired after 29 years of service from the Virginia Department of Corrections.

I now believe that the closing of the schools and the fact that I was denied the opportunity to go to school in my earlier years was the driving force in my life. I guess you could say I had something to prove. I have just recently come to grips with the fact that the school closing was a necessary evil. It was a sacrifice for many but for the betterment of many more.

Douglas M Vaughan, 2014

\* I was 12 years old when the schools closed, and I am not sure I understood the full consequences of what it meant at first. I went to Charlotte County Public Schools for a while; however, when the free schools opened in 1963, I did not skip any grades. Although I was 21 when I graduated from high school, I never had a desire to give up. I graduated high school and went to the military for three years, took an early release from there to attend college, and came back to Prince Edward to teach where I remained for 32 years before retiring.

James E. Holcomb, 2014

✧ I was 10 years old when the public schools closed. At the time, it was pretty unsettling to be a fourth grader and not know if you would ever get to go to the fifth grade. I attended a “make-shift” school called a training school in the basement of a church for the first two years. After that, I attended schools in Appomattox. I often refer to the school closing as a “man-made disaster” which left thousands of children stranded, and no relief was sent to rescue us for five long years.

Due to the strength and sacrifices of my parents, I was able to finish high school and college in spite of the circumstances.

Dorothy Holcomb, 2014

✧ I took the school closings personally. I was only six years old in 1959 and had not attended any public school. Somehow I felt like I had done something to create this problem. That it was my fault I was not going to school. I think in my young mind, I felt inferior, not good enough. Yet, I wanted to go to school so badly. It was five years before my dream of going to school became a reality.

I would walk to the end of my driveway, stand at the mailbox by the road, and pretend to wait for the school bus that picked up the white children in my neighborhood to pick me up and take me to school. After the bus pulled off with the children, I would lie on my back, gaze into the sky, and then would begin to read the one or two books, which my mother was teaching my brother and me to read. I felt lonely and left out due to my desire to be on that school bus with those happy, laughing children.

Finally, September 1963, the county opened the doors to the Prince Edward County Free Schools. I was floating on air. I could stop pretending to go to school. The first day of school I was placed in the third grade for about 1-2 hours, on the second day, I was placed in the fourth grade, and the third day, I was placed in the fifth grade. I remained in the fifth grade until the end of the 1963-64 Free School year.

Telling my story has never been easy for me. The first time I told a group of college students about my “school closing” experiences, I cried. I could barely speak because of the overflow of emotions. Yet, I have been liberated by opportunities to share with others what some still cannot believe.

Shirley Eanes, 2014

✧ The Prince Edward County Christian Association, in cooperation with the American Friends organization, assigned me to attend school in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania. I was around the age of 17 when I left home and then had entered into retirement before I returned to Virginia in 2013. While the closings of the schools resulted in a negative impact in the lives of many, my leaving Virginia gave me many positive life-enhancing experiences. This is not to say that by God's providence and provision I would not have encountered equally positive experiences in Virginia. Rather, that God causes all things to work together for the good of those who love him.

Florence Edwards, 2014

✧ I began first grade in 1961 at Worsham Baptist Church which was deplorable at times particularly in the winter. It was so cold sometimes that we were sent to sit on a school bus which was not any warmer. Looking back on the entire Worsham experience, I am now convinced that I was sick so often with multiple respiratory infections due to the coldness of those Sunday School classrooms. I missed 42 days from school in the third grade alone.

Finally, I was able to attend "real school" for grades 6-12 at Prince Edward Academy. I do not recall that we students discussed the fact that we were attending a private white school. We did not have the best of resources there either. And, we studied some black history. There was an emphasis on Thurgood Marshall. I remember playing with Leticia Tew, whose parents were friends of our neighbors. I could not understand why she went to a different school from mine.

I taught the last 16 years of my educational career at Prince Edward County High School. My experience at PECHS helped me to gain a better understanding of the plight of ALL of the Prince Edward County children during the school closing period.

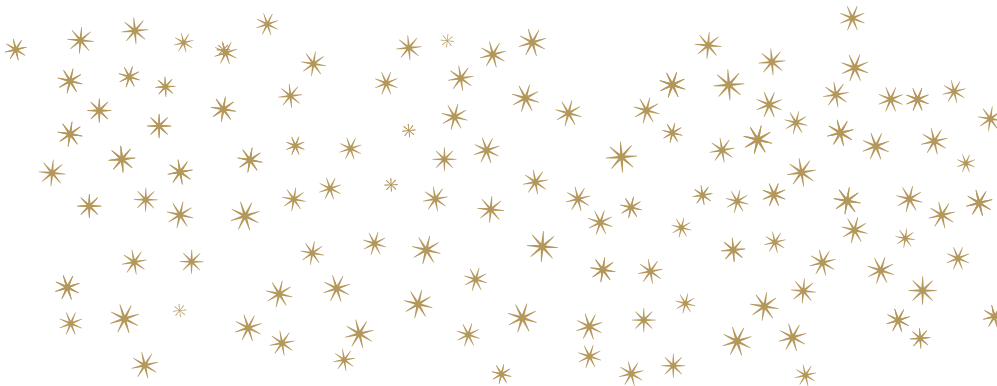
I have never believed that the majority of the Prince Edward County citizens ever wanted this to happen. There seems to be a misconception still among a few that all white citizens approved of this.

The school closing situation never should have happened. God does not see black or white. He only sees our hearts! This was indeed a tragic example of a few dictating their whims to the masses!

Rhonda Stockton Rowland, 2014

*At least one generation of children in Prince Edward County will always carry the scars of the conflict that closed their schools.*

Robert F. Kennedy, Attorney General, 1965



June 1960

NAACP lawyers file *Griffin et al. v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* in U.S. District Court which states that the county superintendent and school board are deliberately circumventing the federal court's orders to desegregate. It also asks that county officials be prevented from transferring public school property to private corporations.

September 1960

U.S. District Court judge Oren Lewis grants the motion of NAACP and hears the case in October. His decision is announced almost a year later.

January 1961

NAACP lawyers file another supplemental complaint asking Judge Lewis to prohibit the use of public funds for the support of any private segregated school or tuition to any private segregated school.

August 1961

Judge Lewis rules that neither public funds nor tax credits can be used for the support of private schools as long as public schools remain closed. He refuses to rule on whether federal laws required maintenance of public schools until the Virginia Supreme Court rules on the matter.

September 1961

NAACP lawyers petition the Virginia Supreme Court to order the Prince Edward Board of Supervisors to levy taxes to operate public schools. The court decides that the power to levy taxes to fund public schools is discretionary and not required by the state constitution.

November 1961

Judge Lewis enters a formal order which makes it illegal to use public funds to pay tuition for private schools.

March 1962

NAACP lawyers appeal the Virginia Supreme Court decision in Judge Owen's District Court. His decision is announced three months later.

April 1962

Judge Lewis extends an order preventing the use of public funds to pay tuition for private schools.

July 1962

Judge Lewis decides that the Virginia state constitution requires the operation of an efficient school system and orders county officials to reopen the schools as soon as possible "without regard to race or color."

November 1962

Because Judge Lewis's order is not acted on, the NAACP appeals to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit to "require and effectively enforce" the reopening of public schools no later than February 1, 1963.

January 1963

The *Griffin* case is argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals as an emergency appeal.

August 1963

After eight months, the U.S. Court of Appeals rules that Virginia's Court of Appeals must first rule on the issues in the case. In response, Virginia's Court of Appeals overturns Judge Lewis's order to reopen the schools.

September 1963

The NAACP appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court to stay the decision of Virginia's Court of Appeals and asks the U.S. Supreme Court to resolve the case with "convenient haste."

December 1963

The Virginia Court of Appeals, in a 6-to-1 decision, rules that the state has no legal obligation to operate free public schools in Prince Edward County.

January 6, 1964

U.S. Supreme Court agrees to hear the *Griffin* case and, in a rare decision, sets the hearing before the final resolution of the case by the U.S. Court of Appeals.



In March of 1964, five students from the Free School Association visited the U.S. Supreme Court for the opening hearings of *Griffin et al. v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*.

On May 25, 1964, the court decided in favor of *Griffin*:

*The case has been delayed since 1951 by resistance at the state and county level, by legislation, and by lawsuits. The original plaintiffs have doubtless all passed high school age. There has been entirely too much deliberation and not enough speed in enforcing the constitutional rights which we held in Brown v. Board of Education had been denied Prince Edward County Negro children.*

*The time for mere “deliberate speed” has run out, and that phrase can no longer justify denying these Prince Edward County school children their constitutional rights to an education equal to that afforded by the public schools in the other parts of Virginia.*

Judge Hugo Black, in the U.S. Supreme Court's decision.

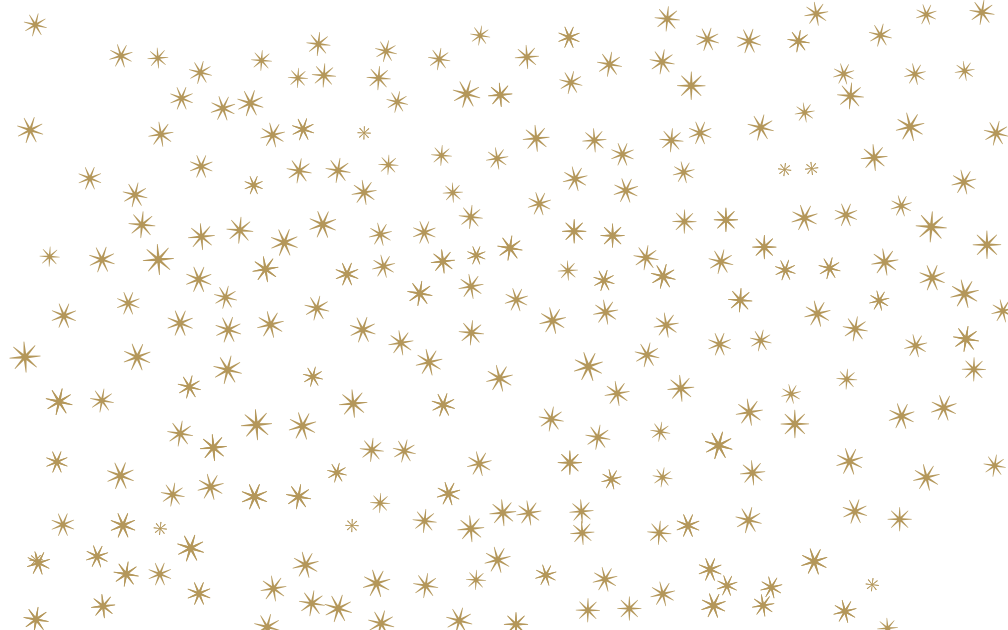


*Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

James 1:4, NIV

*Well, there's always a right way to do something and you have to do it. And you'll get smacked down sometimes. Being smacked down is not going to kill you. You get back up and try it again.*

Reverend L. Francis Griffin, First Baptist Church of Farmville, 1964



*Unbound* is a tribute to the veterans of the 1959 school lock out, individuals who have carried their scars with grace for the last fifty years, with hope that they will continue to share their stories. To learn more about this history, visit the Robert Russa Moton Museum in Farmville, Virginia ([www.motonmuseum.org](http://www.motonmuseum.org)) and read Dr. Neil Sullivan's memoir, *Bound for Freedom*.

*Unbound* was designed and produced in a single month. The typefaces are Sabon and Scala Sans. The text is letterpress-printed on handmade cotton and abaca paper. The paper was made under the direction of Kerri Cushman by Kayla Anzur, Jake Bates, Lindsay Bencick, Dean Brown, Annelle Cleveland, Laura Deale, Caitlin Foster, Morgan Glasco, Laura Kahler, Elizabeth Kocevar-Weidinger, Sophie Kocevar, Mike Kropf, Chanel Leslie, Curtis Leslie, Elyce Longnaker, Ayesha Moss, Jessica Peterson, Austin Polasky, Mary Prevo, Dallas Price, Carson Reeher, Justin Reid, Elizabeth Smith, Tonya M. Smith-Blanton, Jade Smitherman, Maya Swann Vitale, Rhonda Stockton Rowland, Claire Utzinger, Danielle M. Vaughan, JoAnn Vaughan, Isaiah Watson, Christopher Watson and Ricardo Williams.

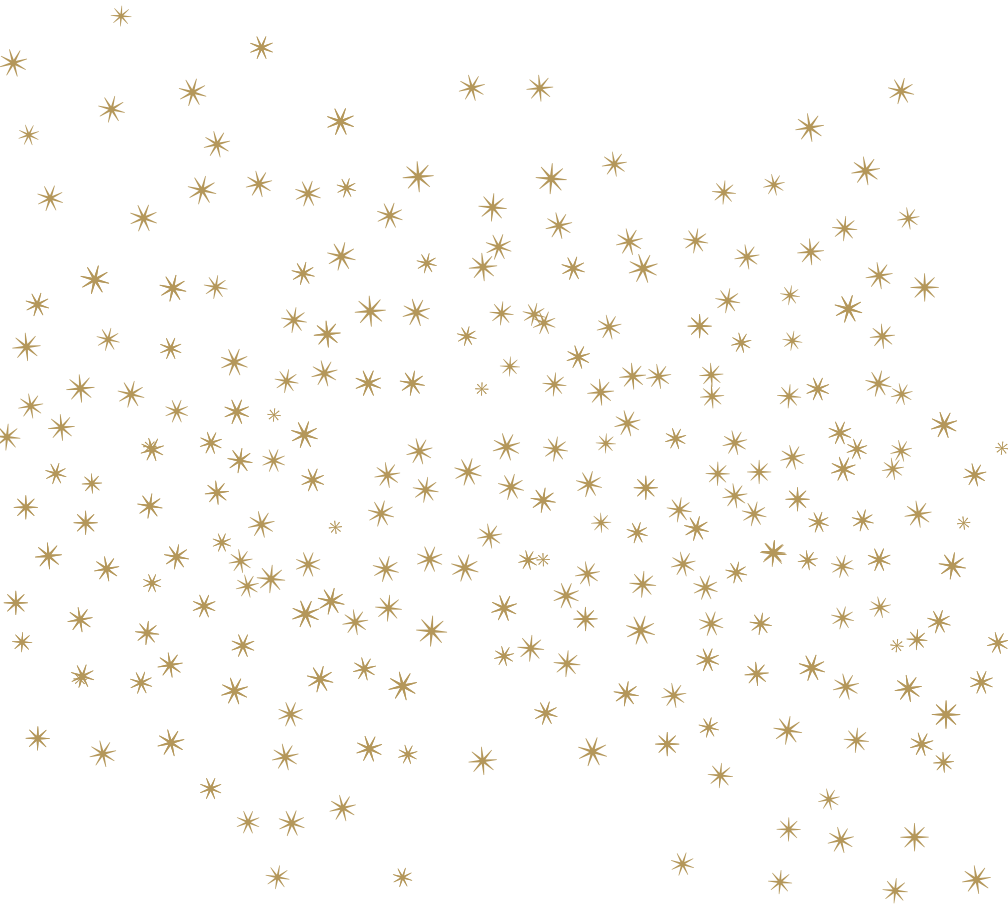
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Conceived and designed by Jessica Peterson, Paper Souvenir.

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\* a star for each student

For more:

*The Educational Lockout of African Americans in Prince Edward County, Virginia*, edited by Terence Hicks and Abul Pitre

*Educated in spite of... A Promise Kept*, Dorothy Holcomb

*Brown v Board of Education*, James Patterson

*Bound for Freedom*, Neil Sullivan

*They Closed Their Schools*, Bob Smith

*The Moton School Story, Children of Courage*, Larissa Ferguson

*A mission to a mad county: black determination, white resistance and educational crisis in Prince Edward County, Virginia*, Jill L. Oglie.

*The story of the Prince Edward free schools*, Robert Holland

*The Tragedy of Closed Public Schools: Prince Edward County, Virginia  
A Report for the Virginia Advisory Committee to the United States  
Commission on Civil Rights*, Dr. J. Morland

[www.encyclopediavirginia.org](http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org)

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The Free Schools archive at Virginia State University