

HISTORY OF SCHOOL NAMES IN FAUQUIER COUNTY

“In the year 1871 the public free schools were put in operation in Fauquier County,” according to a school history report written in 1885 by William H. Strother, Fauquier County superintendent. By 1872 Fauquier County had a school population of 5,949, enrollment of 2,528 and a total of 57 schools. The report also notes these statistics: “Number of months taught, 4.93; value of school property, \$2,618; amount expended for public education, \$11,652.74.”

Fauquier High

In the early 1960's, the School Board decided to have a consolidated high school for Fauquier County. Fauquier High School opened in 1963. The year before, there were three Caucasian high schools in Fauquier County, a part of the practice of racial segregation to which FCPS subscribed in those days. They were Marshall High School (known for basketball prowess), Warrenton High School (known for football prowess) and Cedar Lee High School (known for baseball prowess). Prospective students from those three high schools voted on school colors for FHS – red, white and gray – and on the mascot – the Falcon. *(A note of interest: Current faculty member Coach James Pulchine was a member of the Class of 1964, the first graduating class of Fauquier High School; he came from Warrenton High School.)*

Liberty High

Liberty High School opened in 1994. After a public hearing and several debates among its own members, a committee appointed by the School Board to name the school chose “Liberty.” Liberty had been the name of a community that was located one mile from the site of the school, halfway between Opal and Bealeton in the 1800's. Only the church, Liberty Methodist, remains. The rationale behind choosing the name Liberty was that it is representative of the area without singling out one area of the Liberty attendance zone or naming the school after an individual.

Kettle Run High

Kettle Run High School will open in the fall of 2008. The Fauquier County School Board voted on Sept. 11, 2006, to name Fauquier's third high school “Kettle Run High School.” The School Board expressed its desire to name a high school or middle school for a geographic location. The school borders Kettle Run, and the Kettle Run name appeared on land records in the area as far back as 1724.

Southeastern Alternative School

The building in Midland housing Southeastern Alternative School originally opened in 1963 as Southeastern Elementary School, the “Southern School” constructed during the days of segregation for the African American students of that area of Fauquier County. In January 1979 Southeastern became the kindergarten center/annex for Pearson Elementary School. In 1990 Southeastern was converted from school to office, housing Student Services Administration, Special Education and various school division offices over the next four years. In 1994 the School Board approved a restructuring of the alternative education program, and Southeastern Alternative School opened to students in 1995.

Auburn Middle

Auburn Middle School opened in the fall of 2004. It is named for the historic colonial village of Auburn, which was established in approximately 1831; at the center of the small community of farms was the Auburn Mill, which is still in existence. The village of Auburn saw the passage of British prisoners of war and of American troops fighting for independence; the development of the McCormick plow, a tool which would change American agriculture forever, at Stephen McCormick's Iron Foundry; and in October 1863, Union and Confederate soldiers battling in and around Auburn. These historical references reflect that the village of Auburn sat as a silent witness to the events which helped to shape the America of the 21st century.

Cedar Lee Middle

The first Bealeton School opened at the site of the current CLMS around 1905, combining several one- and two-room schools that served adjoining farms in the area throughout the 19th century. The building that was built in 1911 (the 1905 building having been outgrown) burned to the ground in 1924 and the third building was opened in 1925. School met at the Baptist Church during that time. Cedar Lee High School was converted from the Bealeton School in 1956 and was named for the two districts it served – and continues to serve – Cedar Run and Lee. Cedar Lee High School became Cedar Lee Junior High School in 1968. It changed to a middle school in 1995.

Marshall Middle

Marshall Middle, previously Marshall Junior High School, was named after Fauquier native and U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall. A fire destroyed the Marshall Junior High facility in 1969; the current building opened as Marshall Junior High School in 1974 as an open school or school without walls. Eventually walls were built to separate the classrooms. A new wing was added in the late 1980's. The school became a middle school in 1995 when FCPS transitioned from the junior high to middle school configuration. A major construction and renovation project was completed in August 2002.

Taylor Middle

W.C. Taylor High School opened in September 1952 when schools were segregated by race. Taylor was the Negro high school for Fauquier County touted in *The Fauquier Democrat* as “a model of its kind. Without unnecessary frills, it still contains every modern feature that the latest in school design can incorporate. And according to School Superintendent Carson M. Bradley, it is built to last.” Construction cost for Taylor was one million dollars, and the new school was named for Mr. William C. Taylor, who taught in Fauquier County schools for 65 years. Mr. Taylor was still living when the school was named for him. When Fauquier County schools integrated in 1969, Taylor became a junior high school, housing students in grades 8 and 9; seventh grade was added later. In 1995 the school changed grade configurations again and now houses grades 6-8 as W.C. Taylor Middle School.

Warrenton Middle

Warrenton Middle School first opened in September of 1936 as Warrenton High School with Mr. P. B. Smith as the principal. In 1963, when Fauquier High School opened, the last senior class graduated from Warrenton High School, and it became Warrenton Junior High. In the early 1980s, construction was completed to additions that nearly doubled the size of the school. In the mid-1990s with the county's adaptation of the middle school concept, Warrenton Junior High (grades 7-9) became Warrenton Middle School (grades 6-8).

Bradley Elementary

Bradley Elementary is named for Carson Mason Bradley, who served a record 29 years as school superintendent here from 1941 until 1968. He came to Fauquier first as principal of Upperville High School and subsequently became principal at Calverton High School. In 1967 as the school board was planning a new elementary school, they voted to name it for Mr. Bradley. Before coming to Fauquier County, Mr. Bradley had served at various Virginia schools as a teacher, coach, assistant principal and principal.

Brumfield Elementary

Built in 2000 to replace the aging Central Elementary School, the school is named in honor of James Gilbert Brumfield, who first came to Fauquier County as the pastor of Marshall United Methodist Church. He later became an educator, first as a teacher at the old Marshall Elementary School and later as the director of elementary education for the school division. When he retired in 1991, Mr. Brumfield was the deputy superintendent of Fauquier County Public Schools. In November 1991 he was elected to the Fauquier County Board of Supervisors and served as the Center District representative until his death. He was dedicated to community service and actively served in a number of civic and professional organizations. Mr. Brumfield was instrumental in the decision to build a new school to replace the old one at Central, and because of his advocacy, the school was given his name.

Coleman Elementary

Coleman Elementary School is named in honor of Mr. William Garland Coleman, a longtime teacher and administrator in the Fauquier County Public School System. For many years he served as the Principal of Marshall High School and Marshall Elementary School. Coleman opened to students in August 1969.

Greenville Elementary

At its May 14, 2007, meeting the Fauquier County School Board approved the name "Greenville Elementary School" for the school division's 11th elementary school. School Board member Bob Sinclair advised that years ago there was an African American community within a two-mile range of the school site. There was a school on the site named "Greenville" after Mr. Silus Green, a farmer and freed slave who helped establish the community and school after the Civil War. The old Greenville school is now the property of Little Zion Baptist Church.

Miller Elementary

Opened in 1990, Grace Miller Elementary School was named in honor of Mrs. Grace Clark Miller, a teacher for 40 years in Fauquier and neighboring counties. Mrs. Miller sold the property where her namesake school is located, which was part of the family farm, to the Fauquier County School Board. When Mrs. Miller started teaching public school in Fauquier County in 1922, she earned \$85 a month and got to her Bealeton classroom by horse and buggy. Many of her students were the children of dairy farmers and would come to school after having been up for hours milking the cows and doing farm chores. If they were tired, Mrs. Miller would let them sleep; after an hour, however, it was time to learn.

Pearson Elementary

Built in 1968 and expanded in 1990, Pearson Elementary at Calverton was named for Harry Marvin Pearson, who was associated with the Fauquier County Public School system for 40 years. Joining the Fauquier school system in 1925, he served as principal of Bealeton High School, then supervisory principal, county elementary supervisor, supervisor of instruction, and director of instruction, the position from which he retired in 1965. In 1971 the Pearson Elementary PTO presented Mr. Pearson with a citation recognizing his 44 years in education (four in another division). A plaque bearing the same wording hangs in the school lobby.

Pierce Elementary

M.M. Pierce Elementary School is named after former Principal Margaret Mason Pierce. The school opened in 1932 as the John Barton Payne High School and later became Remington Elementary. In 1980 a new wing was added to the original structure, and the School Board renamed the entire complex in honor of Miss Pierce while she still served as principal. She worked in Fauquier County for 48 of her 49 years in education; however, her health declined and she retired prior to her 50th year. In 1997 two new wings were added to Pierce Elementary to replace the 1932 building.

(A note of interest: The bell located on the roof of the lobby was originally mounted on top of the first Remington High School, built in 1906. After the school burned, the bell was in the possession of Mrs. Evan Ashby. The bell was then placed on the roof of the 1932 school. In 1980 it was placed on the roof of the new addition. It now rests on the roof of the 1998 addition. The bell represents a continuity of excellence in education in Remington.)

Ritchie Elementary

C. Hunter Ritchie was a school board member for several years during the 1970's and 1980's, serving as chairman of the Board for several years in the late 80's. A carpenter and builder by trade, Mr. Ritchie was known for his well-constructed custom homes in southern Fauquier County. Many who knew Mr. Ritchie would often refer to him as a "true Virginia gentleman." Ritchie Elementary School was built in 1990.

Smith Elementary

Named for Peter Bartow Smith, a longtime educator in Fauquier County, Smith Elementary opened its doors in the fall of 1969. Because the building was not certified for occupancy until after the beginning of the school year, students, supplies and teachers were housed in other schools in the county until they could move in. When occupancy was officially granted, over the course of a weekend Smith parents worked tirelessly to move all of the stored supplies and furniture into the new school. School administrators decided to honor their superhuman efforts by choosing the roadrunner for the school's mascot. Smith underwent renovation in 1990.

Thompson Elementary

Named for the region where it was located, Northwestern Elementary School first opened its doors to the African American students of Northern Fauquier County in February 1963, replacing a number of dated and smaller community schools throughout the area. Because of needed repairs and a problematic water source, the prospect of closure loomed for Northwestern Elementary during the 1990's, but citizens of the community rallied to keep the school open. In 2002 the School Board changed the school's name in honor of Claude Thompson, who served as principal of the school from 1973 until 2001. Due to health and safety concerns Thompson students and staff were temporarily housed at Coleman Elementary School for school years 2004-2005 and 2005-2006. After extensive renovation and an addition, Claude Thompson Elementary School reopened in 2006.

Walter Elementary

Located in the southernmost section of Fauquier County, Mary Walter Elementary School in Morrisville was dedicated and opened in 1980 in honor of Miss Mary Walter, who was a teacher and lifelong resident of Fauquier County. Miss Walter began teaching at 18 years of age and spent 52 years in the classroom. The modest educator was also a poet, artist, pianist, historian, needlewoman and gardener. For more than half a century she taught children, mostly in elementary school, in Prince William, Nokesville, Southampton and Fauquier counties. She retired in 1970, and a decade later the school bearing her name opened to continue her legacy of education in southern Fauquier County.

*Compiled by Karen Parkinson, Coordinator of Information, FCPS
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