

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

**1. Name of Property**

**VLR Listed: 3/16/2017**  
**NRHP Listed: 6/12/2017**

Historic name: William Byrd High School Historic District

Other names/site number: DHR Nos. 149-5013; 149-0038

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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

**2. Location**

Street & number: 100 Highland Road and 156 Highland Road

City or town: Vinton State: VA County: Roanoke County

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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

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

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

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  X   A     B   X   C     D

<p><b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u> State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Title :</b></p>	<p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

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

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Sports Facility/playing field

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

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

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

MODERN MOVEMENT: Moderne

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

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK, CONCRETE, ALUMINUM

### Narrative Description

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

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### Summary Paragraph

The William Byrd High School Historic District consists of the main building, two annexes, several secondary resources, and the associated parking and athletic field areas. The school complex sits atop a steep hill on the outskirts of the Town of Vinton, Roanoke County, on a large, nearly eighteen-acre site at the west corner of Gus Nicks Boulevard and Highland Road. It was built to replace several smaller, short-lived high school buildings and is easily the most prominent building in Vinton. William Byrd High School was designed by Eubank and Caldwell, an architecture firm based in Roanoke, and served as the only high school in Vinton until it was replaced in 1970 by a new high school of the same name, located just outside of town. Built in 1933, the large, two-story Classical Revival-inspired rectangular masonry building was constructed with a large basement and brick exterior cladding. There is a later auditorium addition on the west end of the school and a gymnasium added to the eastern end. Two notable secondary resources appear in this district and both have restrained styles reflecting derivations of the Modern Movement. The 1938 annex directly behind the school is two-stories high and one room deep. This annex building is also of brick masonry construction with its top story at the level of the main school's lower story, and the lower story the school as a result of being built on a sharp slope. There is also a 1940 one-story, brick, Manual Trades Building with mezzanines on

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the two wings. This building has garage doors at the rear and interior concrete floor space for vehicles and is located down the hill behind the main school building. North of the buildings and across the rear driveway (Washington Street) are the baseball and general athletic fields. Covered concrete stairways lead from the rear annex down to the Manual Trades Building to the west and to the site of the former Vinton High School, now demolished, to the north. The historic district features mature trees and shrubs and

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## Narrative Description

### *Setting*

William Byrd High School, one of the largest buildings in the Town of Vinton, is sited on a prominent hill at the northwest end of the town, near the corner of Highland Road and Gus Nicks Boulevard. The grassy hill site has several mature trees and shrubs, and is surrounded to the west, north, and east by later residential development. The Town of Vinton historic core is below the school to the south and southeast. Highland Road runs in front of the school complex along an east-west axis. The hill descends in front of the school down to Highland Road to the south and there is a stone retaining wall running nearly the full length of the property. The primary pedestrian access to the school is a concrete stairway which starts at the east corner of the property and runs up the hill to the 1933 school building. There is an asphalt driveway on the west side of the property which runs behind the main building and separates it from the 1938 annex directly behind the school and the 1940 one-story Manual Trades Building on the western end of the property. A separate asphalt driveway provides access to the property from Gus Nicks Boulevard below the parking lot to the north. Beyond this driveway is a large athletic field bordered by mature trees. There is a small gravel parking lot southwest of the school, and a much larger asphalt parking lot down the hill behind the school to the north.

### *Detailed Description*

Built in 1933, William Byrd High School is a masonry building constructed of concrete block and brick walls with a Flemish bond brick veneer. The notable central entry protrudes slightly from the rest of the façade and consists of a three-bay arcade providing access to a recessed entry consisting of three single-leaf doors, creating a distyle in antis portico. The three stone arches are supported by square, articulated columns and topped with a keystone in the form of a scroll. Above the arches is a stone frieze inscribed "William Byrd High School." Above the frieze are three historic window openings, with the frieze serving as a single sill below. The windows are topped by brick jack arches with flush concrete keystones. Above the entire entry is a broken pediment with dentil detailing in front of a stepped brick parapet which is capped with concrete coping. The pediment abuts a cornice of a similar design but without the dentils, which extends along the entire façade in either direction. The entry is framed on the sides by brick quoins.

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To the left and right of the entry bay are two identically fenestrated wings with four windows on each level. The eastern end has a recessed single entry bay, with a brick jack arch, which connects to two additional classroom bays, added in 1936, which match the other four flanking the main entry. The façade retains its historic fenestration with all original window openings, concrete sills, and brick jack arches intact. The original 12/12 double-hung wood sash have been replaced with vinyl three part windows with thirty-six lights. Additionally, the central two windows on each story have been covered with a large stucco panel so that a window air conditioning unit could be installed in each classroom at the bottom of one of the central window openings.

A new gymnasium and dressing rooms were added to the eastern end of the building ca 1955. This addition has few architectural features, but does invoke the Moderne style on a limited basis. The exterior of the gymnasium is simple with five-course Flemish stretcher bond. The entry features a concrete porch framing three sets of double metal entry doors, which are currently boarded on the exterior. The porch has a metal railing as well as concrete side walls and a concrete flat roof. The side of the gymnasium, facing east, features five large metal window sash, each with twelve lights. The north side of the gymnasium has another entrance with two doorways covered by a three-bay concrete porch.

Attached to the western end of the school is a ca 1955 auditorium, with essentially the same detailing and style as the gymnasium. The exterior is five-course Flemish stretcher bond, also like the gymnasium. The entry is also covered by a concrete porch which extends out from the building, but the configuration is inspired by the main entry with three bays accessing the three pairs of metal doors; it matches the rear gymnasium entry porch. On the west end are the six historic tall vertical window openings with concrete sills. The windows are visible from the interior but boarded up on the exterior. There is a pair of side entry doors accessing the stage and backstage areas. The rear of the building is solid brick with the concrete pier foundation visible as the hill recedes from the level of the façade.

The rear of the main school building is much less organized than the façade, with several small service additions protruding at irregular points, all likely part of a 1936 expansion of the school building. There is a single exterior brick chimney on the west end. The historic window openings are all intact and many original windows remain on the rear of the building. There are also some openings boarded up, and some have single-bay stucco coverings similar to the double-bay coverings on the façade. There is a covered brick arcade walkway which runs from the single-entry stairwell of the main building, at the basement level abutting the gymnasium, over to the rear annex.

The interior of the main school building connects directly with the gymnasium and auditorium additions and the three function on the interior as one building with multiple functions. The school retains many of its functional spaces, including a kitchen and cafeteria area in the basement, most restrooms are intact, and locker rooms seem largely unchanged since the school was last used. The basement has several types of floor tile and lower plaster ceilings than the upper levels. Poured concrete stairs with stucco wainscot lead to the first floor. The eastern end

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of the basement features two large locker rooms, a small hallway (which feeds out to the rear annex) and the entrance to the gymnasium. This area has glazed beige wall tiles.

The gymnasium retains its historic oak tongue-and-groove floorboards, covered in a thick layer of paint and varnish. The walls are painted concrete block and the ceiling is a series of steel ceiling joists supporting corrugated metal. The east side features the large twelve-light metal windows which nearly fill the upper half of the wall. The north side features a pair of double-leaf solid core metal-clad doors which lead out to the rear concrete porch and courtyard between the main school and the annex. The south side features a matching pair of double-leaf doors, which lead to a vestibule and the main entrance to the gymnasium with three sets of double-leaf metal-framed glass doors. There is a restroom at each end of the entry area. The interior west wall holds two large sets of wood, roll-out stepped bleachers for games. There is also a small wood enclosure, probably for each team during the game, at each corner of the west wall.

The far, west end of the school basement area, below the auditorium, houses a chorus practice area with three rows of poured concrete stepped semi-circular seating facing a blackboard. The area has linoleum floor tiles, a plaster ceiling, and concrete walls. The exterior (north) wall at the rear of the room has the concrete piers seen on the outside of the auditorium at the rear. Between them are metal jalousie windows, which are covered on the outside with recessed panels. Above the chorus room is the backstage area with lighting and sound equipment still present. From the stage the large auditorium is best viewed with its intact wood seats split into three sections by aisles. To the rear is an entry vestibule, similar to the one providing access to the gymnasium. However the doors are a different style with solid bottom halves and three horizontal panes of glass in the upper half, some of which are a rolled plate pattern; the door differences are likely to control light entering the theater during performances. There is a balcony above the vestibule with further seating as well as the sound and light control area. Tall metal jalousie windows are partially visible behind curtains and are boarded up on the exterior on the west wall. Also like the earlier gymnasium, the construction is concrete block with exterior brick veneer.

The interior of the main school building retains many of its historic features and decorative elements. The stairways have the same beige glazed tile wainscot seen in the basement areas. The main hallways have a narrower glazed tile wainscot which varies from gold to yellow with a cap running along the top. Most doors are wood and usually are solid or have a multiple-light glass top half, depending upon the function of the room. Floors and stair treads are generally terrazzo. Some offices have linoleum tile and some classrooms have carpet over the terrazzo. A majority of classrooms have historic chalkboards and the ceilings are exposed concrete joists. Some offices and the hallways have dropped acoustical tile ceilings. The interior of the main entry has three single-leaf doors with the upper half featuring three horizontal glass panes. Above the doors are half circle pediment windows. The glazed tile wainscot is higher in the entry vestibule, reaching to the top of the doors. The two square columns at the end of the vestibule, matching those on the exterior, are also covered in glazed tile. Some classrooms have the same tile wainscot seen in the hallways, reaching up to the bottom of the chalkboards.

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The 1938 rear annex building is two stories with minimal detailing. Due to the complex's hilltop site, the top story is on the same level as the main school building's basement and the lower story is accessed from the other side as the steep hill descends. The exterior, like the other later additions, is five-course Flemish stretcher bond. The window openings are all intact, though boarded up from the outside, and retain their brick sills. A single soldier course of brick runs along the entire annex above the windows, forming a lintel. Above that is a double header course which forms a simple cornice. There is a single central side interior chimney with a concrete cap, and two double-leaf entry doors, one under the arcade on the east end, and one in the center of the building. A covered stair runs down the hill, towards the detached trades building below, and provides access to a side doorway into the lower level of the annex. The lower level consists of poured concrete piers with window openings in between. Most of the window openings on both levels of the rear of the annex are filled with stucco panels, but retain their sills, which are brick on the upper level and concrete on the lower level. There are two single-bay doorways with small concrete roofs at the rear ground level. Only the first floor interior is accessible. It features concrete floors, acoustical ceiling tile, and concrete block walls between each section of the interior. Some of the historic metal, multi-light windows are intact, and other openings are covered by panels on the interior as well as exterior.

The ca. 1940 Manual Trades Building, located down the hill to the west of the main school building, retains its window fenestration, though many openings are boarded up. The one-story building has limited exterior detailing but would best be described as an example of the Moderne style. The central section of the building has the entry hall, a perpendicular central hall, restrooms, offices, and a large classroom. The two side sections are taller because they feature open garage areas to the rear, while the front areas have offices below and open mezzanines above with low ceilings, likely for storage. The wider garage sections extend back beyond the central portion, forming a small rear three-sided courtyard. All three sections have independent flat roofs. The interior features concrete floors, concrete block walls, and mostly intact historic metal and wood doors. The ceilings in the large classroom and the two garage areas are steel frame joists supporting a corrugated metal ceiling, which in turn supports the roof. Many historic metal jalousie windows are visible from the interior and there is a skylight in each garage area along with the original garage doors. The metal roofing system extends to the mezzanine areas, which retain their wood flooring. The entry and central hall areas have dropped tile ceilings.

The historic floor plan has been retained throughout the main school building, and in the contributing additions as well as the annex and Manual Trades Building. William Byrd High School represents the development of consolidated public schools in Virginia. Earlier examples, such as the Roland E Cook school (NRHP 2016), also in Vinton, follow the two-story, double-pile, central-entrance schools built ca. 1910-1920. During the 1930s, plans for larger schools were developed which included interior halls and auditoriums.<sup>1</sup>

The two main floors of William Byrd High School have a central hall running the length of the building from northeast to southwest, with rooms off both sides facing out either the front or back of the building. The first floor has six classrooms, several offices in the central section, and a large education room which was likely the original gymnasium as noted on the 1955 Sanborn

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maps. Several small rooms within it have glass upper walls to break up the large space. The second story has classrooms for the full length of the hallway, twelve in total. Some are the standard size, while there are some larger rooms created by combining classrooms. The basement had a kitchen, cafeteria, lockers, and service rooms.

There are several secondary resources which are part of the district. The noncontributing, ca. 1970 gas pump is metal, with a metal awning, and sits atop a concrete slab. There are two poured concrete covered walkways, discussed earlier, which lead down from the high school to the Manual Arts Building (West) and to the parking lot (East). These have metal handrails and are covered by a corrugated metal awning. At the north end of the district is the athletic field which is bordered on two sides by a chain link fence. There is a baseball diamond and the field extends beyond this to the north and is surrounded by trees which ring the far north end of the district.

## Historic District Inventory

### 100 Highland Rd.

**William Byrd High School** 149-5013-0001  
*Other DHR Id#: 149-0038*  
*Primary Resource: School (Building), Stories 2, Style: Classical Revival Style, 1933*  
Contributing  
Total: 1

**Annex** 149-5013-0003  
*Other DHR Id#:*  
*Primary Resource: Annex (Building), Stories 2, Style: Minimal Traditional Style, 1938*  
Contributing  
Total: 1

**East Covered Walkway** 149-5013-0006  
*Other DHR Id#:*  
*Primary Resource: Other, Stories 1, ca.1940*  
Contributing  
Total: 1

**West Covered Walkway** 149-5013-0007  
*Other DHR Id#:*  
*Primary Resource: Other, Stories 1, ca.1940*  
Contributing  
Total: 1

### 156 Highland Rd.

**Manual Trades Building** 149-5013-0002  
*Other DHR Id#:*  
*Primary Resource: Classroom Building (Building), Stories 1, Style: Moderne Style, 1940*  
Contributing  
Total: 1

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**Gas Pumps**

**149-5013-0004**

*Other DHR Id#:*

*Primary Resource: Other (Structure), Stories 1, ca.1970*

**Non-Contributing**

**Total: 1**

**Playing Fields**

**149-5013-0005**

*Other DHR Id#:*

*Primary Resource: Athletic Field (Site), ca.1933*

**Contributing**

**Total: 1**

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

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

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

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

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

**Period of Significance**

1933-1969

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

**Significant Dates**

1933 – date of construction

1938 – construction of annex

1940 – construction of manual trades building

1965 – integration of the high school

1969 – last year as the town high school

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

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

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

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

**Architect/Builder**

Eubank and Caldwell, architects

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

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

The William Byrd High School Historic District is locally significant and is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Social History, as the school was a gathering space for significant local events and a focal point for the entire community of Vinton, Roanoke County, for several decades. The school also played a role in the desegregation of local schools with one grade per year being integrated over the last four years it served as a high school before being replaced by the current William Byrd High School, which was built to serve the larger fully integrated school system. The district is also locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Education as it is the final step and most prominent local example of the process of school consolidation from one-room school houses to large, centralized schools able to accommodate multiple grades and to offer modern educational amenities such as laboratories, libraries, cafeterias, and outdoor recreational space, as well as serving the larger community for social functions. Finally, the William Byrd High School Historic District is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The school is an excellent example of the Classical Revival style while its additions, the supporting buildings, and site effectively demonstrate the evolution of design and function for schools serving the community during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century era when revival styles were supplanted by more austere Modern styles in public architecture. Also contributing to its local significance are the architects of the 1933 Classical Revival main building, Eubank and Caldwell, which was a prominent architecture firm in the area at the time. The district's period of significance stretches from the school's initial construction date of 1933 to 1969, the final year it was used as an integrated high school. Because the preponderance of the district's period of significance is more than fifty years old and the period of significance ends 48 years ago with the locally significant event of school desegregation, Criteria Consideration G need not be met.

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

### **William Byrd High School**

William Byrd High School, "the school on the hill," was constructed in 1933. The name of the high school was changed from Vinton High School with the construction of this new building, at the suggestion of Dr. Herman Horn, principal of Vinton High School. William Byrd was the founder of Richmond, an early educator and writer in Virginia, and nicknamed the "Black Swan" for his immaculate and usually black attire. The school yearbook was renamed from the Roacovin (Roanoke and Vinton) to the Black Swan. The cost of the initial school building was \$48,158.80 with later additions constructed ca. 1938, 1940, and 1954.<sup>2</sup> When construction began the Vinton Home-Coming Parade, including most of the town population, ended at the site of the

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new William Byrd High School and the cornerstone was laid. Congressman Clifton A. Woodrum was the main speaker. A copy of the *Roanoke Times*, lists of all prominent citizens, lists of all Vinton High School students, and a coin commemorating George Washington's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday were all placed in the cornerstone.<sup>3</sup>

The Vinton Dogwood Festival was begun May 5, 1956, as a band festival at the suggestion of the William Byrd High School Band Boosters. This William Byrd band was the only uniformed band west of Lynchburg in the 1930s-1940s and this became their primary fundraising event. The town businesses, clubs, and organizations supported the event and approximately 10,000 people watched fifteen bands, various floats, and the first Dogwood Queen march down Washington Avenue. The festival dance was held at William Byrd High School.<sup>4</sup> Once complete, William Byrd High School became a focal point of not only education, but community pride and events for several decades.

William Byrd High School also represented the conclusion of school consolidation in Roanoke County, a trend seen across Virginia in the early twentieth century. The 1902 state constitution expanded the powers of the State Board of Education, which resulted in more school construction, more school operational funding, higher teacher salaries, and a longer school year, with most of these benefits only for schools attended by white students. This process resulted in the consolidation of smaller elementary schools, which forced the construction of new junior high schools, and finally the construction of new, larger high schools such as William Byrd. The state Literary Fund and the Works Progress Administration contributed to the massive school construction efforts in Roanoke County in the 1930s. Communities, initially attached to their local one-room schools, increasingly supported consolidation as they saw better facilities constructed in neighboring towns. The construction of William Byrd was part of a massive plan for four new high schools initiated by the Roanoke County School Board in 1932. This also corresponded with the expansion of the school year into its current nine-month format. The net result between 1920 and 1940 was a seventy-five percent reduction in the number of schools, but an almost doubling of the school population. William Byrd High School eventually had all of the amenities being demanded by communities: auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria, playgrounds, full educational programs, as well as necessities not seen in many one-room schools including plumbing, lights, and basic storage.<sup>5</sup>

### **Criterion A: Social History**

The William Byrd High School Historic District is significant at the local level in the area of Social History for its prominent role as a social center for the Vinton community for more than a generation as well as its role in the completion of school integration in Roanoke County. As part of Progressive Era reforms, schools were consolidated and, aside from educational objectives, an important goal was to create centers for local events and gathering points for the entire community, which often didn't previously have a comparable facility. These facilities would be used for community organizations such as the Ruritans, local commercial board meetings, or community fundraisers. School auditoriums and gymnasiums would serve the entire town and high schools became multi-generational points of community pride and organization.<sup>6</sup> This was

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demonstrated most clearly by the Vinton Dogwood Festival. Bands, floats, and the Dogwood Queen entertained 10,000 people as they marched down Washington Street and ended up at William Byrd High School followed by the festival dance in the gymnasium. Separately, the final five years when William Byrd served as a high school saw it desegregated and it became the high school for the entire Vinton community for a brief time, before the construction of a larger, integrated William Byrd High School in 1969. The Roanoke County Schools system began desegregation in 1962 and completed the process by 1966, two years ahead of schedule.<sup>7</sup> This school served as the most important social building in town for almost four decades as well as witnessing the culmination of the consolidation era and the completion of school integration.

### **Criterion A: Education**

The William Byrd High School Historic District is significant at the local level in the area of Education for its role in the era of school consolidation as well as its physical evolution demonstrating the changes in the goals and purpose of schools and the communities they served. From the beginning of the twentieth century through World War II, most schools constructed in Virginia were larger consolidated schools which replaced one-room schools, then later two-and-three-room and even larger schools were replaced. The trend continued towards fewer but larger schools consolidating groups of students from entire towns or even whole counties. Beginning after 1910 with the Progressive Era and its new school reforms, the movement was towards two-story consolidated schools which, usually with an auditorium, became the norm. The overcrowding of schools and their generally poor conditions after World War I helped fuel the demand for these changes. The resulting schools also featured single-use rooms for laboratories, libraries, music rooms, and other uses common in modern schools. Later schools also had larger facilities, such as gymnasiums and trade schools, added onto existing facilities.<sup>8</sup> William Byrd, with its original auditorium space, cafeteria, and multiple classroom types, mirrored this trend. Its later auditorium, gymnasium additions, and manual arts building followed the continued expansion of schools to meet evolving educational requirements and more demanding communities.

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

The William Byrd High School Historic District is significant at the local level for its architecture. The school was architect-designed, which in an era of standardized designs from the Virginia Board of Education, was unusual. The school was constructed as the consolidated high school for the Town of Vinton, and its design represents the culmination of school consolidation and movement towards larger, more broadly functional schools with much greater variation in classroom functions and overall school features. The consolidated schools built in Virginia during the post-World War I era through 1950 were often of brick construction and utilized one of the revival styles popular at the time. The schools often featured central halls with flanking classrooms. Eventually later schools had separate balconied auditoriums and vocational buildings, or they were added to existing schools.<sup>9</sup> These concepts are clearly echoed with William Byrd's brick Classical Revival façade, its floorplan, and the later addition of the

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gymnasium, auditorium, and Manual Trades building. The main 1933 building, with its supporting resources and large evolved parcel, also represent one of the most prominent buildings in the Town of Vinton with a dramatic setting overlooking the town from a hill on the western end.

William Byrd High School is an excellent example of the Classical Revival style, epitomized by its pedimented central bay with a three-bay arcade and recessed primary entry, creating a distyle in antis portico, with a broken pediment with dentiled cornice, and brick jack arches with flush concrete keystones. The architectural integrity of William Byrd High School is strong with the historic floorplan intact and most interior finishes and decorative elements retained. The exterior retains all of its historic material, features and decorative elements characteristic of the Classical Revival design, except that the original wood window sash have been replaced. Despite the replaced sash, the building's fenestration pattern is unchanged and all other window elements (sills, opening size, arches) also were retained. Additionally, the integrity of the original setting atop the hill overlooking the Town of Vinton, and with the original acreage for athletic fields, is strong. The complex's later additions and separate buildings also have strong architectural integrity and are illustrative of the transition from revival styles to the eventual dominance of Modern-influenced styles for all types of public buildings, from schools to post offices to hospitals. The visual elements, the setting, and the historical association and feeling all are manifest and illustrate the evolution of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century pedagogical theory and school design.

The *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings in Southwest Virginia*, a study by the John Kern of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in 2000, argues that a school building should retain "historic integrity of those features necessary to convey its significance."<sup>10</sup> Within the parameters of location, setting, and architectural design, Register-eligible schools are recommended to retain historic setting, access, and grounds. Original massing, floor plans, surface materials, ornamental detailing, and original fenestration also are important to a school's integrity.<sup>11</sup> Kern quoted Virginia architectural historian Jack Zehmer as saying that schools which retain "reasonable architectural integrity should be considered eligible for historic designation" are further significant because of their prominent roles as community centers.<sup>12</sup> Kern thus concludes that county consolidated schools constructed between World War I and World War II which "survive today with reasonable integrity should receive strong consideration as valuable resources eligible for nomination."<sup>13</sup>

## **Eubank and Caldwell**

The architectural firm of Eubank and Caldwell was formed in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1920. James A. Walker Caldwell (active from 1912-1942) was a draftsman for the Virginia Bridge & Iron Company beginning in 1912 and was a civil engineer with architect George R. Ragan by 1919. Beaufort N. Eubank (active from 1914-1953) was a draftsman for George R. Ragan before joining Caldwell. In Wells and Dalton's *The Virginia Architects*, the firm is listed as architects and/or contractors for various local projects, and is credited with designs for dozens of projects over several decades when both men were active. Most projects were small to medium-sized institutional or commercial projects in southwest Virginia. Eubank and Caldwell were listed in

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May 1932 as the architects for a Roanoke County Board of Supervisors contract for a new Vinton High School. During this time their offices were in the Boxley Building in downtown Roanoke. The firm still exists today as SFCS and is still based out of Roanoke.<sup>14</sup>

## Historical Background

Vinton began as a tiny town called Gish's Mill, which embarked on a rapid expansion with the arrival of the Norfolk & Western Railroad in 1880. By 1884 the town had expanded by hundreds of new residents and the citizens voted to incorporate and change the name to Vinton, perhaps inspired by the Vinyard family, the largest land owners in the area at that time. As the City of Roanoke grew, so too did Vinton through the years. A new 1904 charter allowed head and property taxes and this began the addition of more urban features to the town such as streets, public lighting, schools, a sewer system and streetcar service. During this time there were two major industries: Virginia Etna Springs Company and the Vinton Roller Mills (Vinton Milling Company after 1924). In 1926, the Vinton Motor Company arrived as the local Ford dealership. In the 1930s Burlington Mills opened the Roanoke Weaving Plant and Southern States Cooperative opened a feed and processing mill, greatly expanding the number of local jobs. This led to higher town revenue which allowed the addition of sidewalks, water mains, storm drains, improved streets, and an expanded sewer system. The diverse local economy also helped to shield Vinton from the worst effects of the Great Depression. During the 1930s the population reached approximately 3,500, where it stayed until a geographic expansion of Vinton in 1964.<sup>15</sup>

The history of the Vinton school system mirrors the changes in population and economic fortunes of the town. In 1884, a three-room frame school was constructed on Lee Avenue and employed three teachers. In 1891, this school was demolished and replaced by a larger, two-story frame school on Poplar and Jefferson streets. This school had four teachers and 257 students, which led to a four-room addition soon after. This Vinton School took students through grade school and if they continued to high school they did so by commuting to either Roanoke High School or Salem High School. The lack of a high school in town and the unsafe status of the frame school led the community to construct a new masonry Vinton School in 1916. This school could not fully handle the eventual load of high school students, so Vinton High School was constructed in 1928 on Gus Nicks Boulevard across the street from a flour mill and down the hill from the eventual site of William Byrd. The 1928 Vinton High School building no longer exists. With the construction of a dedicated high school, the 1916 Vinton School became solely and elementary school and was renamed the Roland E Cook school in 1945; it was listed in the NRHP in 2016. The continued population growth pushed the town to construct an even larger high school just a few years later, William Byrd in 1933. The old Vinton High School building became the Junior High School until 1970 when a new William Byrd High School was constructed outside town. The William Byrd on the hill then became the Junior High School for many years.<sup>16</sup>

Before integration in the 1960s, the town's African American student population attended a series of smaller and poorly equipped "colored schools." The first documented example was the Vinton Colored School, a two-story, four-room frame building, located on what is now Pollard

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Street, which was in use by the late 1880s. A replacement frame school was built on Craig Street in 1914 and named the Vinton Elementary School. This school was not replaced until 1959 with the construction of the brick Craig Avenue Elementary School, which remained in use until Roanoke County school integration was completed in 1965-1966. Up until this point, African American students who wished to attend high school had to travel to Salem to attend the segregated Roanoke County Training Center, until William Byrd was integrated in 1964-1965.<sup>17</sup>

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County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Coulson, Darlene. Reconnaissance Survey of Architectural and Historical Resources in The Town of Vinton. Richmond, Virginia: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 1993.

Hall, Keith, "Vinton Area School Enrollment Reflects Housing Growth," The Vinton Messenger, Wednesday March 27, 1974, p.B1.

Kern, John, Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings in Southwest Virginia, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, October 2000.

Manufacturer's Record, Vol CI (July 7, 1932, p.31; May 26, 1932, p.34).

"Profile: Reminiscing with Former Educator," Vinton Messenger, November 17, 1982, p.1.

"Schools In Vinton Open Next Tuesday," The Vinton Messenger, Wednesday August 30, 1967, p.1.

Smith, Dan. "Dedicated Educators Establish School System," The Vinton Messenger (Vinton's First 100 Years), Saturday March 17, 1984, p.C1.

Smith, Lillie. Federal Writer's Project, American Guide, History of Vinton, Virginia, 1936.

The Black Swan, William Byrd High School: Vinton, Virginia (yearbook): 1934, 1969.

The Roacovin, William Byrd High School: Vinton, Virginia (yearbook): 1933.

William Byrd High School, 2002 Alumni Directory, New York: Bernard C. Harris Publishing Company, Inc., 2002.

"William Byrd History," The Vinton Image, 2004.

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### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR no. 149-5013

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 17.8

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.284540 | Longitude: -79.901480 |
| 2. Latitude: 37.283870 | Longitude: -79.900310 |
| 3. Latitude: 37.292070 | Longitude: -79.899360 |
| 4. Latitude: 37.281160 | Longitude: -79.902170 |
| 5. Latitude: 37.282070 | Longitude: -79.903040 |
| 6. Latitude: 37.283870 | Longitude: -79.902410 |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

1. Zone: Easting: Northing:

2. Zone: Easting: Northing:

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3. Zone: Easting: Northing:

4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

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

The William Byrd High School Historic District is bounded on the southern side by Highland Road, and on the eastern side by Gus Nicks Blvd. The northern side of the district is marked by Glade Creek, and on the outside of the western end is a residential neighborhood abutting the westernmost parking lot. The historic boundaries are coterminous with the lot lines of Tax Parcels 060.11-04-17.00-0000 and 060.11-04-20.00-0000, as recorded by Roanoke County, Virginia. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the accompanying Location Maps and Sketch Map/Photo Key.

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

The historic boundaries for the William Byrd High School Historic District are based on the two tax parcels that have been associated with the property since its construction. The boundaries encompass the property's historic setting and all known associated resources.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Marcus Pollard & Jonathan Valalik  
organization: Commonwealth Preservation Group  
street & number: PO Box 11083  
city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23517  
e-mail: marcus@commonwealthpreservationgroup.com  
telephone: 757-651-0494  
date: November 15, 2016

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

William Byrd High School Historic District  
Name of Property

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### **Photographs**

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

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: William Byrd High School Historic District

City or Vicinity: Town of Vinton

County: Roanoke

State: Virginia

Photographer: Marcus Pollard

Date Photographed: June, 2016

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

Photo 1 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0001)  
Gus Nicks Boulevard, Facing NW

Photo 2 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0002)  
William Byrd High School, Façade and Auditorium, Facing NE

Photo 3 of 12

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0003)  
William Byrd High School, façade, Facing NE

Photo 4 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0004)  
West Walkway, Facing NW

Photo 5 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0005)  
William Byrd High School, Rear of School and Gymnasium from East Walkway, Facing E

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Photo 6 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0006)  
William Byrd High School, Rear Elevation, Facing SW

Photo 7 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0007)  
Annex, Facing W/SW

Photo 8 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0008)  
Parking Lot (and East Walkway in Background), Facing E

Photo 9 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0009)  
East Walkway, Annex and William Byrd High School, Facing SE

Photo 10 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0010)  
Parking Lot, Manual Trades Building, Gas Pump, Facing SW

Photo 11 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0011)  
Athletic Field and Associated Surface Parking, Facing NE

Photo 12 of 12.

(VA\_ Roanoke County\_William Byrd High School Historic District\_0012)  
Athletic Field, Facing NW

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

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

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> John Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings in Southwest Virginia*, Virginia Department of Historic Resources, October 2000, p.16-17.

<sup>2</sup> Trammell and Forbes, *Vinton History*, p.113-14.

<sup>3</sup> Senior Class of Vinton High School, *The Roacovin*, Vol.5, Vinton, 1933, p.5.

<sup>4</sup> Kagey, *A History of Roanoke County*, 534-35; Trammel and Forbes, *Vinton History*, p.148-50.

<sup>5</sup> Kagey, *A History of Roanoke County*, p.474-78.

<sup>6</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p.13-16.

<sup>7</sup> Kagey, *A History of Roanoke County*, p.521; 556-57.

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<sup>8</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p.2, 5, 8-9; Kagey, *A History of Roanoke County*, p.478.

<sup>9</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p. 8-9.

<sup>10</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p.13.

<sup>11</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p.14.

<sup>12</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p.14.

<sup>13</sup> Kern, *Thematic Evaluation of County Public School Buildings*, p.16.

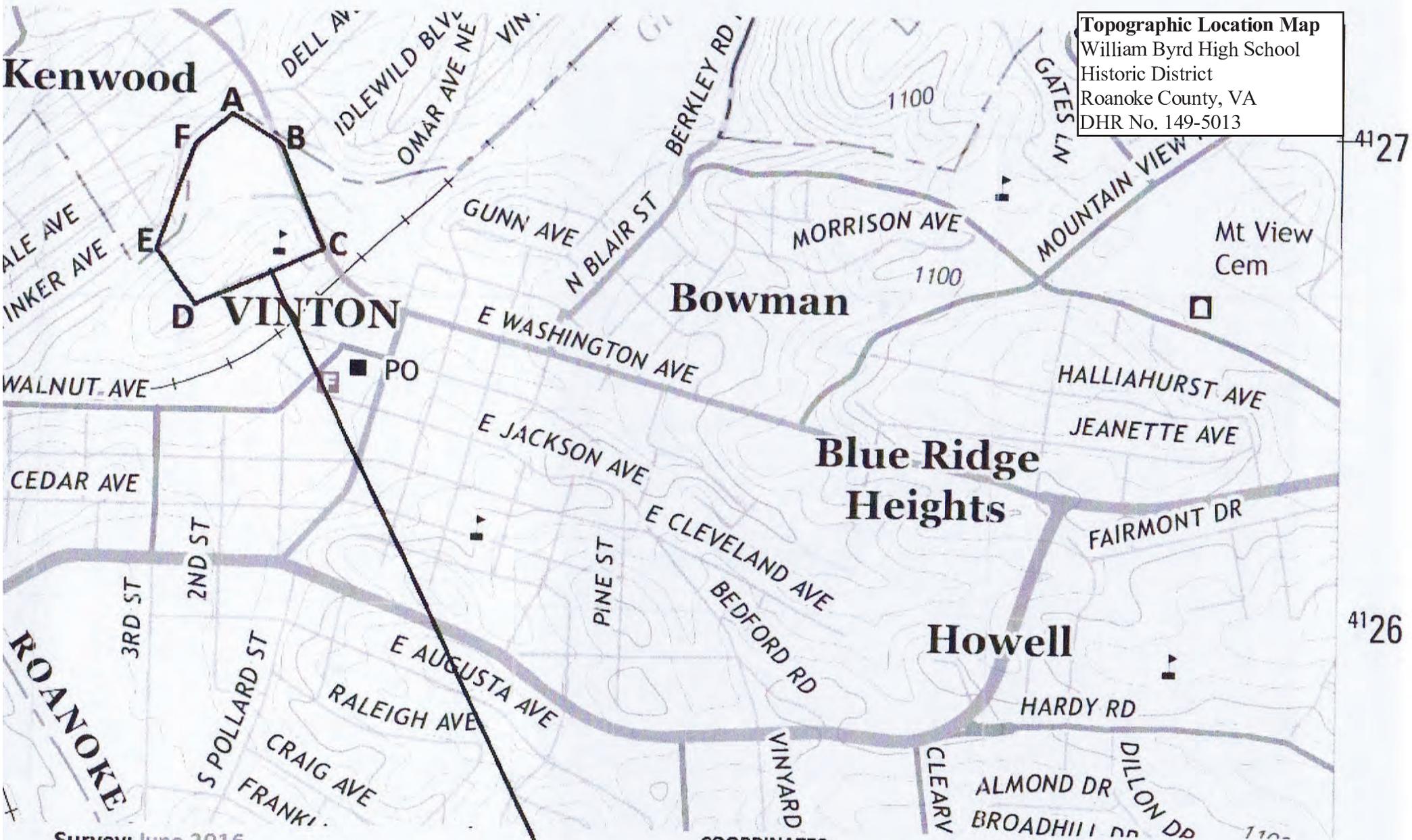
<sup>14</sup> John E Wells and Robert E Dalton, *The Virginia Architects, 1835-1955*, Richmond, 1997, p.63, 133-35; *Manufacturer's Record*, Vol.CI, May 26, 1932, p.34.

<sup>15</sup> Deedie Kagey, *A History of Roanoke County*, Roanoke, 1988, p.265-71, 421-29, 486-93, 529-38.

<sup>16</sup> Irma Trammell Mosely, Madeline Simmons Forbes, *Vinton History, 1884-1984*, Roanoke, 1984, p.109-16.

<sup>17</sup> Trammell and Forbes, *Vinton History*, p.116-19.

Topographic Location Map  
William Byrd High School  
Historic District  
Roanoke County, VA  
DHR No. 149-5013



Survey: June 2016

Property: William Byrd High School Historic District

DHR ID: 149-5013

Quadrangle: Roanoke

COORDINATES:

A: Latitude: 37.284540	Longitude: -79.901480
B: Latitude: 37.283870	Longitude: -79.900310
C: Latitude: 37.282070	Longitude: -79.899360
D: Latitude: 37.281160	Longitude: -79.902170
E: Latitude: 37.282070	Longitude: -79.903040
F: Latitude: 37.293970	Longitude: -79.902410

USGS 7.5 Minute



**Legend**

Historic Boundary

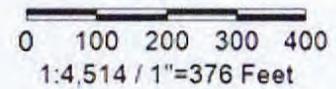
**Coordinates:**

- A-** Longitude: -79.901480  
Latitude: 37.284540
- B-** Longitude: -79.900310  
Latitude: 37.283870
- C-** Longitude: -79.899360  
Latitude: 37.282070
- D-** Longitude: -79.902170  
Latitude: 37.281160
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Latitude: 37.282070
- F-** Longitude: -79.902410  
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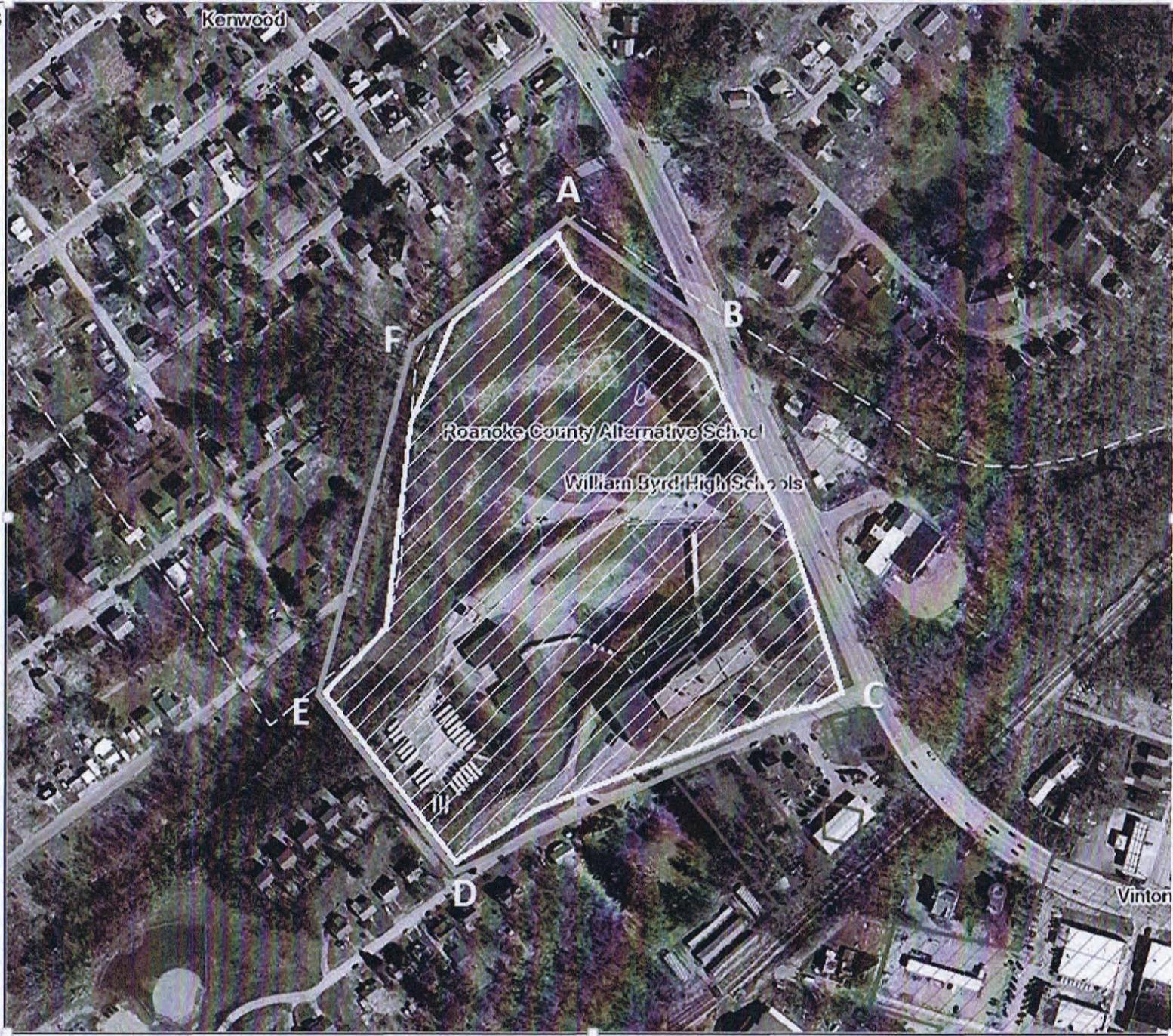
WGS84 (VCRIS)



Feet



**LOCATION MAP**  
**William Byrd High School**  
**Historic District**  
**Roanoke County, VA**  
**DHR No. 149-5013**



**Title: William Byrd High School Historic District. Town of Vinton, VA. DHR ID: 149-5013      Date: 10/27/2016**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice of AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*

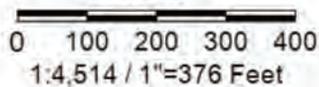
**Legend**

- C : contributing
- NC : non-contributing
- 000#: DHR ID
- **█** : National Register Boundary
- **—** : Resource Boundary
- # → : Photograph location and direction of view

**SKETCH MAP/PHOTO KEY**  
**William Byrd High School**  
**Historic District**  
**Roanoke County, VA**  
**DHR No. 149-5013**



Feet



**William Byrd High School Historic District**  
**Vinton, VA**