

United States Department of the Interior
 National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Mary N. Smith High School

Other names/site number: Mary N. Smith Middle School, Mary N. Smith Cultural Enrichment Center; VDHR #001-5479

Name of related multiple property listing: African American Schools in Virginia
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 24577 Mary N. Smith Road

City or town: Accomac State: Virginia County: Accomack

Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: X

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

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

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

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

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

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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>0</u>	<u>2</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION / school

RECREATION AND CULTURE / sports facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL / clubhouse

RELIGION / religious facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation: BRICK; CONCRETE

Walls: BRICK

Roof: SYNTHETICS

Chimney: BRICK

Windows: METAL; GLASS

Narrative Description

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

Summary Paragraph

The Mary Nottingham Smith Cultural Enrichment Center is in the Town of Accomac in Accomack County on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. It was built in 1953 to provide high school education for Black students during the segregation era. The school stands west of U.S. Highway 13 on Mary N. Smith Road (SR-663). The main school building faces the road on the northeast side, separated by a small field and a parking lot that is connected by two driveways.

The building is approximately 48,000 square feet across its two stories. The brick exterior is laid in a 5-course American bond pattern interrupted by large, steel paned windows. Protruding from flat, membrane roof of the second floor, the brick coal chimney rises above the rest of the building. The front entrance facing Mary N. Smith Rd creates the bottom of a "U" shaped floor plan with two wings extending to the northeast, creating a courtyard. The single-story east wing to the right of the main entrance leads to the cafeteria and gymnasium as well as the kitchen and locker rooms. To the left of the entrance, the two-story west wing contains classrooms, the library, and tan locker-lined hallways on the first floor, and the second story contains home-economics rooms, science laboratories, and additional lockers in the hallway. The 17-acre site also includes two contributing buildings, a contributing athletic field, and two non-contributing sheds postdating the period of significance.

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Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The 17-acre property is located west of U.S. Highway 13 on Mary N Smith Road (SR-663). The main school building faces the road on the northeast side, separated by a small field and a parking lot that is connected by two driveways. The gravel driveways surround the main building, providing more rear parking and a connection to an auxiliary classroom, church building, and the cleared field. The driveway blends with the grassy courtyard behind the school, as it has slowly transitioned into an additional loading/delivery space. The area surrounding the building is relatively flat, consistent with the Eastern Shore landscape, and contains few trees.

Behind the two secondary buildings, northeast of the primary school building, is an open grass field.

Exterior

Front Elevation:

Facing to the southwest, front entrance has four brick steps leading to two glass entry doors underneath an inset covered porch. Three, new aluminum single-pane windows are adjacent to the entry doors on each side underneath the porch for a total of six windows. To the left of the porch, the aluminum windows are in grouped into a pair followed by three sets of four. Interrupting the windows is the 5-course American bond brick pattern that makes up the entire exterior. The right side mirrors a similar pattern with a pair of windows followed by another set of four before an entrance to the cafeteria disrupts the order. However, here, the windows remain the original 2x5 multiple light steel frame with smaller glass panes. The second story has retained its larger metal frames with some glass panes missing. From the front, the brick chimney from the former coal-heated system protrudes from the roof. The school is now gas-heated. However, during the school's construction, gas heating was already becoming mainstream in public buildings on the shore signaling an intentional choice to disregard the trend for a cheaper alternative.

Shifting to the northwest facing side of the building, the same 5-course American bond brick pattern is present. On the first floor, there are five large, 6x5 multiple light steel-framed windows. One for each classroom. To the right of the rightmost window is a door functioning as an exit from the hallway inside. The accessibility ramp to this stairway was constructed after the period of significance during its time as a middle school in the late 20th century. Shifting to the right, the library wall does not have any windows and instead a blank brick façade. The second story has a more unique fenestration pattern alternating number of panes as well as the width of panes. The leftmost window has half of the standard pane width in a .5x4 multiple light frame configuration for the teacher's lounge restroom. All the other 11 windows have full width panes including 1x6, 2x6, 1x5, 2x5, and one singular 6x6 multiple light frame configuration. Each of these windows leads into a classroom except the furthest right which is the end of the hallway.

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The rear of the school faces to the northeast. The same 5-course American bond brick pattern is consistent besides the elevator shaft which was constructed outside of the period of significance during the school's time as an integrated middle school in 1985. The two wings of the school protrude in the same direction creating a central courtyard which currently has mixes of gravel and grass. The right wing has a doorway that connects to the stairwell and hallway. Above the doorway on the second floor is a 2x6 multiple light steel-framed window leading down the hallway. The left "wing" has three connections to the gymnasium via the stage and both locker room hallways. The back wall of the gymnasium does not have any windows, but each office adjacent to the locker room has one 1x3 window. Additional exits are located along between the two wings leading into the electrical and water tank rooms. On the second story, there are four windows for the three classrooms and one bathroom. Two windows are in a 4x6 frame configuration with the 5x6 pane window in between. To the right is the bathroom window with a 2x4 frame. The full brick chimney is visible from the rear protruding from the central corridor of the second floor.

The final side of the building faces to the southeast. The entire façade does not deviate from the same 5-course American bond brick pattern. The two leftmost windows on the first floor are in a 2x6 frame looking into the kitchen along with a single door entrance. To the right is an aluminum awning covering a double-door entrance to the hallway leading to the locker rooms. On the left and right side of the doorways are singular 1x3 and 1x4 window respectively. To the right are six more 1x4 multiple light framed windows. Looking into to the locker room area. Upstairs are four 2x6 multiple light steel framed windows allowing natural light into the gymnasium.

Interior

Entering the lobby through the primary doors, the floors are standard 24x24 vinyl composition tiles (VCT) with dropped ceilings above. The lobby intersects the main hallway leading to each of the wings. Across the intersection is a doorway to the stairwell leading to the second story. The main hallway does not have lockers on the first floor and instead has a tan brick design from the ground to halfway up before transitioning into standard plaster. The hallway has not been altered since the original construction of the school.

Traveling to the right, the entrance to the cafeteria is the second doorway on the right side of the hallway after the entrance to the restroom. The large, open room contains the same 24x24 floor tile with dropped ceilings. Multiple standard residential ceiling fans help circulate air through the space. The wall design is the same half brick, half plaster as the main hallway. Attached to the cafeteria is the kitchen equipped with cooking and other food preparation and storage facilities. Currently, the cafeteria is used as an event space for the Alumni Association and other community groups on the Eastern Shore. Moving across the hallway, the gymnasium contains the original hardwood flooring of the school. The logo of the Mary N. Smith Bulldogs remains painted onto the center of the basketball court. On the wall above the entrance is an electronic scoreboard with a Coca-Cola logo next to the home score. Opposite of the entrance is a stage elevated above the basketball court. Here, numerous theatrical performances as well as

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graduation would take place. The curtains remain to honor the former graduates of the school. Flanking each side of the stage are the boy's and girl's locker rooms.

The first floor of the east wing leads to the library space on the left side when coming from the main entrance. The library is a single-story section of the east wing with the front façade matching the length of the kitchen and cafeteria space but not matching in depth. Inside, every wall is adorned with mounted bulletin boards posting local community news and events. Passing the library on the main hall, the corridor turns right towards the first-floor classrooms. Replacing the brick pattern on the wall, original full height lockers are flush with the doorways to classrooms. Each classroom has a chalkboard extending the full width of the internal wall and multiple light steel-framed windows. Along the first floor, the windows all remain intact and in good condition. On the locker-lined corridor, there are two stairwells. The first is located at the second entrance to the right after the women's bathroom and the other stairwell is located at the end of the hallway. The latter is next to an inoperable elevator constructed in 1985 during its time as an integrated middle school.

Moving upstairs, the space has not been occupied since 2004 when it still operated as a school. The dropped ceiling tiles are the same as the first floor except a considerable number have fallen or are missing leaving the pink fiberglass insulation exposed. The home economics classrooms are located along this corridor still reflecting their original purpose with numerous built-in cabinets, counter spaces, and functioning sinks. Also located along this corridor are general classrooms varying in size, but all anchored by the original multiple light steel-framed windows. Although, many glass panes have since been broken. The hallway contains more of the tan lockers as well as a trophy case built into the wall displaying the school's athletic and academic success.

Music Education building, c. 1953 (contributing)

Behind the primary building, two secondary buildings are oriented towards Mary N. Smith Rd. The one-story c. 1953 "church building" is 2,944 square feet and is constructed in a 5-course American bond brick pattern. There are multiple light steel window frames in a 2x3 pattern throughout. The west elevation has a manual metal garage door used to transfer larger equipment in and out of the building. The building is separated into four separate rooms divided by 8x16 concrete blocks without any plaster. The first room is the main open area approximately 1000 square feet where music rehearsals took place. The flooring is the standard 12x12 commercial vinyl tiles on top of the original concrete floor. The tiles were added during the period of significance. Also included is a 416 square foot storage area with 9x9 brown vinyl tiles instead of the 12x12 used elsewhere. The final two rooms are the men's and women's restroom both containing the same wall materials and tiles. Currently referred to as the "church building," it was built at the same time as the school and was primarily used for music education practices. Currently, the building operates as the place of worship for the congregation of Abba's House.

Classroom building, c. 1955 (contributing)

To the west of the church building, the c. 1955 one-story frame classroom building contains approximately 1,000 square feet. It rests on a concrete block foundation with vertical board

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siding covering the exterior. Inside is an open floorplan with the original commercial carpet flooring and sheetrock walls. The auxiliary classroom building provided needed space for the growing student body.

Statement of Integrity

The Mary N. Smith School retains a relatively high degree of all seven aspects of integrity. It retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, and association concerning its use as an African American school at its present location along Mary N. Smith Road. Not only is the building still located in its original location, but the property retains the same characteristics as it did historically. The building is still set within a rural landscape consistent with the original landscape and feeling. The gravel driveways surround the main building, providing more rear parking and a connection to an auxiliary classroom, church building, and the cleared field. The driveway blends with the grassy courtyard behind the school, as it has slowly transitioned into an additional loading/delivery space. The field where athletic events were held remains, however, the accompanying bleachers and scoreboard have been since removed. No additional development has occurred on site with portions of the property away from the street remaining unimproved. The area surrounding the building is relatively flat, consistent with the Eastern Shore landscape, and contains few trees, as it did during the period of significance.

The building's footprint remains the same as its period of significance from 1953 until 1971. Minor alterations outside of the period of significance have included the addition of an elevator in 1985, the replacement of windows in the library from the original multiple light steel frame configuration to aluminum single-pane frames, and the addition of ADA accessible ramps to the front, gym, cafeteria, and hallway entrances. The interior has maintained its educational design and purpose including the original tiles, walls, and ceilings. This includes the hardwood in the gym and the configuration of the stage. The building continues to represent an educational facility with the maintenance of classroom conditions, open hallways with lockers, and bathrooms. While the chimney is not functionally relevant, the switch to gas heating took place during its period of significance at a point when most civic buildings were already replacing coal furnaces for internal heat.

As a whole, the building retains the aesthetic and historic components that reflect its history as a mid-twentieth-century African American equalization school. The retention of the physical components associated with the historic property, including integrity of the design and materials, along with setting and location, in particular, help maintain its link to the era of racial segregation in Virginia's public schools from 1870 to the 1960s until integration. Therefore, the resource also retains integrity of feeling.

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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.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: African American
EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1953-c.1971

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

African American

Architect/Builder

English Construction Co.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Mary N. Smith High School, constructed in 1953, holds significant historical value and is eligible for listing on the National Register under Criterion A with significance at the local level in the areas of Education and African American Ethnic Heritage. The school's role during this period of equalization (1946-1968) was originally to provide similar educational amenities that white schools were receiving at this time as an attempt by lawmakers to stave off integration. The school was named after Mary Nottingham Smith who was a notable educator on the Eastern Shore who prioritized the growth and learning of African American children. Further, this school was a staple of the African American community contributing to their longstanding success. The period of significance for Mary N. Smith High School began in 1953 and continued until 1971 when it was integrated and transitioned to a middle school. Still today, it embodies the culture of the Eastern Shore serving as a community hub for many organizations including the Alumni Association. The Mary N. Smith High School is being nominated under the African American Schools in Virginia Multiple Property Document and meets the Registration Requirements therein.

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

Criterion A: Ethnic Heritage – African American and Education

Historic Background – African American Education in Accomack County and Virginia
Even though publicly funded education has existed in the U.S. since the colonial era, most education in Virginia did not take use taxpayer dollars and instead was limited to religious institutions and private funding. At the time of the 1870 census, only 122 public schools existed in the entire state of Virginia serving 8,709 pupils.¹ For reference, the entire county of Accomack had 8,732 people who could not write of which 5,305 were black.² This meant that less than 33% of the 7,842 black people in Accomack County could write.³ Only 120 black individuals had even attended any formal school in the county. The state ratified a new constitution in 1870 to mandate public education throughout the state setting a goal of 2,800 total schools in the state in just over a year's time. These schools, however, would remain segregated and not mandate any form of integration. This choice to have segregated academic facilities was continually upheld most notably in the ruling of *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1896 where the supreme courts ruled that facilities may be segregated if they are of equal quality.

During the 1900 census, Virginia now had over 300,000 students attending school including 88,726 black students. However, in Accomack County, 37% (4,323/11,825) of all black people were listed as illiterate compared to only 32% (6,611/20,743) of all white people over the age of

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 1870.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

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10.⁴ This is especially pertinent given the ratification of 1902 state constitution that mandated a poll tax and literacy test. Both measures were historically used to disenfranchise many black voters while the current education system simultaneously did not offer the resources necessary to increase literacy. Accomack County was no different. Instead, many black communities in the county relied on philanthropists to provide the necessary resources for their schools which were typically single rooms for ages 5-19. One notable philanthropist was Anna T. Jeanes who was listed as having sponsored multiple schools who Mary Nottingham Smith eventually went on to supervise. However, these philanthropic facilities did not level the playing field. It was not until 1934 that an African American secondary school was constructed in Accomack County.

Before the construction of the current building, Accomack County continued to see a significant disconnect in secondary education completion. According to the 1950 census, only 3.3% of black adults over 25 years old (195/5909) had completed 4 years of high school or beyond. This is compared to the 34.4% of white adults over 25 (2585/7511) who had graduated high school. The median age of school completed was only 4.5 years. This comes at a time where the median years of school completed for black people in the state was 6.1 years. The percentage of high school completion among nonwhite adults in Virginia was also significantly higher than Accomack County at 9.5%.⁵ Advocates across the state began to look to the state at this failure to reach *Plessy v. Ferguson's* separate but equal mantra. Students were not continuing education after primary school and those that were did not have adequate nor comparable facilities to the white schools. Accomack's only black high school had noted significant overcrowding and lack of financial support. In response to these challenges, then-governor John S. Battle (1950-54) created a fund to support the construction of new schools of equal quality for African American students in Virginia. This would signify a period referred to as the "Equalization Era" for African American schools. The investment allowed the black communities throughout the state to reap the benefits that white students had already been experiencing. The government was making a concerted effort to uplift the long-ignored black students throughout the state. This included new places of community congregation, athletic facilities, and specialized classrooms like home economics and science labs. Accomack County had the benefit of receiving portions of this fund to build Mary N. Smith named after the locally famed Mary Nottingham Smith. For additional information regarding equalization schools in Virginia, please see the African American Schools in Virginia MPD.

Mary Nottingham Smith

Mary Nottingham Smith was born on August 22, 1882, on the Eastern Shore in Northampton County. Having a passion for education, she received a degree from the Hampton Institute. Shortly thereafter she began teaching in Essex County in 1910 before continuing as a traveling supervisor for African American schools in Louisiana. After 5 years in Louisiana, she made her way back to the shore to become the Jeanes Educational Supervisor of Accomack County. The role was funded by philanthropist Anna T. Jeanes to support the education of rural African American communities in the South. She would travel around to one-room schoolhouses in the county providing schools with educational supplies but also food and coats during the winter.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 1900

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, 1950

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Her primary goal was to ensure children remained in school. One year, several students began to frequently miss class due to the lengthy distances they had to walk to the bus stop. After being notified, she immediately altered the route and followed the bus on its first day to ensure the children were picked up. The alumni thanked her from saving what would have likely been another group of dropouts.⁶ In 1934, the first African American high school in Accomack County was constructed and named after her. Unfortunately, the physical school no longer remains in the town of Accomac. However, the site is still honored through a highway marker along U.S. 13.⁷

Eventually, the student body exceeded capacity of the original building.⁸ Mary N. Smith went right into action advocating with local black entrepreneurs and churches to help fund the construction of a new school. With the community's financial support and funds allocated by then-Governor John S. Battle for African American schools, construction began on the new site three miles outside of the town of Accomac. Completed in 1953 and costing \$587,000⁹, the new Mary N. Smith High School was the epitome of the Equalization Era of African American schools with new facilities comparable to the neighboring Central High School also in Accomack County. Unfortunately, Mary N. Smith did not live to see the completion of the new school built in her honor as she passed away on December 30, 1951.

Mary N. Smith School was completed in a period where state governments were attempting to create African American schools equal to those White students attended. In some facets, the quality mirrored nearby white schools including the gym, lockers, and home economics classrooms. However, the school was designed for coal heating which led to the construction of the brick chimney as it is today. This was in an era where many new public buildings in Accomack County were using gas for heat instead. Never truly were the resources in Accomack County fairly dispersed.

The disparate treatment did not stifle the growth and community experienced at the school, however. The school boasted the largest number of graduates on the shore in 1960 with 244 students.¹⁰ They had an array of opportunities in their music education with a successful marching band winning multiple awards. The emphasis on academic excellence throughout their four years at Mary N. Smith encouraged many students to pursue secondary education and further contribute to the community that shaped them. Coaches were noted as key role models for young men instilling commitment on and off the field. Former students attributed their coach's presence and guidance to their future successes beyond the walls of Mary N. Smith. Sports, theater, and concerts all provided opportunities for adults in the community to support students and showcase their talent. Notably, three NFL players trace their roots back to the Mary N. Smith Bulldogs.

⁶ *Eastern Shore News*, 1991.

⁷ The Historical Marker Database.

⁸ *Peninsula Enterprise*, 1948.

⁹ *Peninsula Enterprise*, 1953.

¹⁰ *Peninsula Enterprise*, 1960.

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After the Supreme Court ordered integration in 1971, Mary N Smith's period of significance concludes as a center for solely African American culture and community. However, the school maintained its role as an educational facility transitioning into a middle school. Rather than being condemned like many other African American schools across Virginia, Mary N. Smith's continuation as a school speaks to the quality of the building and its importance to youth education on the Eastern Shore. The school eventually ceased operation in 2004 before being purchased by the Alumni Association in 2011. Even after the building had served its purpose as an educational facility, the community members of the Eastern Shore continue to prioritize youth development and success through Mary N. Smith.

Registration Requirements

The Mary N. Smith School meets the registration requirements of Property Type 4: Equalization Era School Buildings (c. 1946-c. 1968) developed in the African American Schools in Virginia Multiple Property Document (MPD). As with many schools in this group, the Mary N. Smith School is a large rural school featuring an expansive layout, Modernist stylistic influence, and brick construction. The Mary N. Smith School retains its standardized, mass-produced construction materials that called for standardized construction methods. As with other schools of the period, materials consisted of standardized, mass-produced lumber, bricks, concrete blocks, window sash, doors, roofing finishes, tile, composite flooring, ceramic wall and bathroom tile, lighting and plumbing fixtures, and other elements.

Newly built Equalization Era schools did not follow standardized floor plans, but they include spaces by that time considered standard for public schools, such as kitchens suitable for preparing hot lunches for large student enrollments, as well as cafeterias and auditoriums (or combined "cafeteriums," which housed both functions), and libraries. As in the case of the Mary N. Smith School, the period's larger schools also typically included a gymnasium, which also served as an auditorium through inclusion of a stage along one side of the space. The Mary N. Smith School had a high number of classrooms and specialized educational spaces such as science labs and music rooms, more administrative spaces, and boiler/furnace rooms and mechanical rooms. In keeping with the trend of separating elementary and high school campuses, the Mary N. Smith School was specifically designed for high school students.

The Mary N. Smith School retains most of the elements which identify it so clearly as an Equalization Era School building (c. 1946-c. 1968). The school retains strong architectural integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and floor plan, with only library window replacements and the removal of some acoustic tile drop ceilings being of notable change. The school is in its original location and the rural setting is unchanged. The distinctive two-story brick exterior design with prominent central chimney is virtually unchanged. The floor plan retains all circulation patterns and room layout. Hallways retain their composite tile floors, ceramic wall tile, wall and ceiling finishes, lockers and trophy cases, doors, and hardware. In most cases, classrooms retain their historic tile floors, wall finishes, and some chalkboards. The ceiling is a mixture of historic wood paneling and plaster board, as a result of the 1955 fire. With its intact representative features, the Mary N. Smith School meets the registration requirements

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of the MPD under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage: African American, as well as Education.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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U.S. Census Bureau; 1870 Decennial Census: Volume 1. The Statistics of the Population, Table X School Attendance and Illiteracy, State of Virginia, 1870.

U.S. Census Bureau; 1870 Decennial Census: Volume 1. The Statistics of the Population, Table XIII Statistics of Schools, State of Virginia, 1870.

U.S. Census Bureau; 1900 Decennial Census: Volume 1. Population, Table 4 Population of States and Territories by Counties, State of Virginia, 1900

U.S. Census Bureau; 1900 Decennial Census: Volume 1. Population Part 2, Table 33 Total Persons Attending School During the Census Year by General Nativity and Color, State of Virginia, 1900.

U.S. Census Bureau; 1900 Decennial Census: Volume 1. Population Part 2, Table 84 Total Illiterate Population 10 years of Age and Over Classified by General Nativity and Color, State of Virginia, 1900.

U.S. Census Bureau; 1950 Decennial Census: Volume 2. Characteristics of the Population, Table 20 Years of School Completed by Persons 25 Years Old and Over by Color and by Sex, State of Virginia, 1950.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): DHR ID# 001-5479

Mary N. Smith High School
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 17 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 37.442597 Longitude: -75.385467
2. Latitude: 37.441941 Longitude: -75.384764
3. Latitude: 37.441217 Longitude: -75.385919
4. Latitude: 37.441504 Longitude: -75.390224

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The boundaries of Mary N. Smith's property, as shown in subsequent maps, coincide with their contiguous parcel ownership of both improved and unimproved land relevant to the school. The shape of the boundary is similar to a thick flagpole perpendicular to Mary N Smith Rd (St Rte 663). The covered parcels include the following:

Mary N. Smith High School
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA
County and State

Accomack County Parcel Numbers: 87B-3-4-7, 87B-3-4-8, 87B-3-4-9, 87B-3-1-10, 87B-3-1-11, 87B-3-1-8, 87B3-1-9, 87B-3-4-10, 87B-3-4-11, 87B-3-4-12A, 87B-3-2-8, 87B-3-2-9, 87B-3-2-10, 87B-3-2-11, 87B-3-5-7, 87B-3-5-8, 87B-3-5-9, 87B-3-5-10, 87B-3-5-11, 87B-3-5-12, 87B-3-5-13, 87B-3-5-14, 87B-3-5-15, 87B-3-5-16, 87B-3-5-17, 87B-3-5-18, 87B-3-3-1, 87B-3-3-2, 87B-3-6-1, 87B-3-6-2, 87B-3-6-3, 87B-3-6-4, 87B-3-6-5, 87B-3-6-6, 87B-3-6-7, 87B-3-6-7A, 87B-3-6-8, 87B-3-6-9, 87B-A-10C, and 87B-A-10C.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The parcels had previously been subdivided to mirror the surrounding neighborhood's plots. As a result, the school owned a large number of contiguous plots. For example, the main school building footprint spans across 7 different parcels. Still today, all the parcels included contribute to the history of the school including the unimproved areas like the former location of the athletic field. All the listed parcels are currently owned by the alumni association.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Chancellor Reynolds
organization: University of Virginia Urban and Environmental Planning
street & number: 360 14th St NW
city or town: Charlottesville state: Virginia zip code: 22903
e-mail: pqz5hx@virginia.edu
telephone: (901)-930-9151
date: 2/19/26

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.)

Mary N. Smith High School
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA
County and State

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: Mary N Smith Cultural Enrichment Center

City or Vicinity: Accomac

County: Accomack

State: Virginia

Photographer: Barbara Brown Wilson

Date Photographed: 10/21/25

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

- 1 of 17 Front entrance to main building looking Northeast.
- 2 of 17 Front façade of main building looking North.
- 3 of 17 Front façade of main building looking Northeast.
- 4 of 17 Rear wings looking South.
- 5 of 17 Rear Courtyard looking Southwest.
- 6 of 17 Rear Courtyard looking West.
- 7 of 17 Northwest wing looking Southwest.
- 8 of 17 Church building exterior looking North.
- 9 of 17 Church building exterior looking East.
- 10 of 17 Annex building exterior looking Northeast
- 11 of 17 First floor hallway looking Southeast
- 12 of 17 Stage looking North
- 13 of 17 Gymnasium and Stage looking Northeast.
- 14 of 17 First floor classroom looking North.
- 15 of 17 Second floor classroom looking South.
- 16 of 17 Second floor home economics classroom looking East.
- 17 of 17 Second floor home economics classroom looking West.

Mary N. Smith High School
Name of Property

Accomack County, VA
County and State

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.


Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

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

BOUNDARY MAP

Mary N. Smith High School
Accomack County, VA
DHR ID# 001-5479


 Nominated Boundary

0  600 Feet



BOUNDARY MAP

Mary N. Smith High School
Accomack County, VA
DHR ID# 001-5479

 Nominated Boundary

0 500
 Feet



MARY N. SMITH MIDDLE SCHOOL

















ABBA'S HOUSE
Prayer, Praise & Worship for All People
† Pastor: Elder Ralph Harmon Jr. †





























