

## Department of Historic Resources

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**Contact:**

Randy Jones

Department of Historic Resources

540.578-3031 (cell)

[Randy.Jones@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:Randy.Jones@dhr.virginia.gov).

### STATE HISTORICAL HIGHWAY MARKER

"ASHBURN SCHOOL"

TO BE DEDICATED IN LOUDOUN COUNTY

***—Marker highlights a late-19<sup>th</sup> century, surviving African American school building; the sign is sponsored by students at Farmwell Station Middle School in Ashburn—***

***—The marker text is reproduced below—***

RICHMOND – A state historical marker issued by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources will be dedicated this Tuesday that commemorates the "Ashburn Colored School," constructed around 1892 in Loudoun County to serve African American students during the era of public school segregation in Virginia and other states.

The dedication ceremony for the marker will begin at 10:30 a.m., June 6, at the sign's location alongside the historic school building located at 20579 Ashburn Road in Ashburn. The public is encouraged to attend.

The roadside marker for the historic one-room schoolhouse is sponsored by seventh-grade students at Farmwell Station Middle School under the guidance of social studies teacher Anthony Dodson and support of Loudoun Education Foundation.

During the dedication Dodson and students Ben Bressette and Ashlee Brown will discuss the school project that resulted in the sponsorship of the historical marker. Also providing

remarks will be Clyde P. Smith, chairman of the Virginia Board of Historic Resources, the board authorized to approve new state historical markers.

The Ashburn School served African American students from its opening until 1958, when it closed and “its students were transferred to a new segregated school in Leesburg,” according to the marker.

The marker highlights institutional inequalities during segregation when “schools for black children received less funding and offered fewer educational opportunities than those for whites.”

Public school segregation was found unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954 in *Brown v. the Board of Education*.

“Virginia’s government resisted integration” of public schools and in “Loudoun County schools were fully desegregated by the 1968-1969 school year,” the sign concludes.

The “Ashburn School” sign was approved by the Virginia Board of Historic Resources in March. The marker’s sponsors are covering the sign’s manufacturing costs.

Virginia’s historical highway marker program, which began in 1927 with the installation of the first historical markers along U.S. Route 1, is considered the oldest such program in the nation. Currently there are more than 2,500 official state markers, most maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation, as well as by local partners in jurisdictions outside of VDOT’s authority.

Text of marker:

#### Ashburn School

On this site stands Ashburn Colored School, a one-room public schoolhouse built ca. 1892 for African American students. Virginia’s public school system, established in 1870, was racially segregated from its inception. Schools for black children received less funding and offered fewer educational opportunities than those for whites. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) that segregated schools

were unconstitutional, but Virginia's government resisted integration. This school closed in 1958, when its students were transferred to a new segregated school in Leesburg. Loudoun County schools were fully desegregated in the 1968-1969 school year.

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