



Desegregation of Virginia Education (DOVE) Project

Statement of Purpose

A century from now, will desegregation in Virginia be a forgotten story? If we don't do a better job of saving our records, it will be. Currently few of the records of school desegregation in Virginia are publicly available. Old Dominion University Libraries has formed a state wide organization, Desegregation Of Virginia Education (DOVE) Project, in order to identify, locate and preserve records that document Virginia's school desegregation process.

The first step to save our history is to identify and locate relevant records already held in repositories and public institutions throughout Virginia. Thus, DOVE has created regional task forces to find and inventory these records. Task force members, knowledgeable in regional history, will identify individuals and groups who could have records, such as school superintendents, historical societies, teachers, civic leaders, curators of private collections, and civil rights organizations. The results of these surveys are being compiled into a publicly available online catalog at Old Dominion University. The DOVE Project is similar to the presentation of the Virginia Heritage Project, a project that also actively records the histories of the Commonwealth. However, DOVE is wider in its scope to include private records and institutions outside of Virginia, yet narrower in its focus to one topic and era. Our project will provide an invaluable resource for scholars, educators, students, and even community members involved in school desegregation, and it will preserve the records for future generations to come.

The primary purpose of the surveys is to locate and spread knowledge of available material related to school desegregation. Hopefully, the attention brought to the topic will unearth new material suitable for conservation in appropriate repositories. Additional future plans include obtaining funding from granting agencies and developing a teacher's guide to help K-12 teachers use DOVE's material to educate children about the desegregation era in Virginia.

The media attention given to the 50th anniversary of Massive Resistance's school closings has increased public awareness of this important era. While the public is listening, this is the best time to find documentation so that the 100th anniversary is not commemorated with silence.

Which Records Are Relevant for DOVE's Catalog?

Our catalog encompasses public and private records from the mid 1940s into the late 1980s. Public records of desegregation could include City Council/County Board minutes; School Board minutes and administrative papers; school district correspondence with parents, city and county officials, Virginia Department of Education and Pupil Placement Board; decisional papers, legal advice and policy statements. Private records might take the form of teachers' diaries, oral histories, records of informal tutoring groups that existed when public school were closed, organization papers of ad hoc citizen groups for and against Massive Resistance, papers of associations such as Virginia Education Association, Virginia State Teachers Association, Virginia Association of School Superintendents, and the Virginia School Boards Association. Legal research may be necessary to determine the public access rights to some of these records. Individual student school and medical records would not be sought due to confidentiality laws.

Events to be documented include the early challenges to Jim Crow schools in the mid-1940s; the Virginia court cases that were bundled with other suits to become *Brown v. Board of Education*; the school closings in Prince Edward County, Charlottesville, Warren County and Norfolk; the school openings in those counties; the gradual integration of all public schools in Virginia and court ordered busing to end de facto segregation lasting into the late 1980s. The goal of the collection is to include anything related to school desegregation in Virginia, so our definitions are necessarily broad. Material may be of any format.

If you have any material of relevance to our project or questions on how to get involved with the project, please get in contact with your regional task force chair today. Let's preserve this era of Virginia's history together.

Regional Task Forces:

Region 1: Southwest (Appalachian), Chair: Aaron Purcell, Virginia Tech, adp@vt.edu, (540) 231-9672

Cities: Bristol, Galax, Norton, and Radford.

Counties: Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Lee, Montgomery, Patrick, Pulaski, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, and Wythe.

Region 2: Southside, Chair: Lucious Edwards, Virginia State University, ledwards@vsu.edu, (804) 524-5749

Cities: Danville, Emporia, Franklin, Hopewell, Martinsville, Petersburg, and South Boston.

Counties: Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Campbell, Charlotte, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, Prince George, Southampton, and Sussex.

Region 3: Hampton Roads, Chair: Charles Ford, Norfolk State University, chford@nsu.edu, (757) 823-8344

Cities: Chesapeake, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach.

Counties: Isle of Wight.

Region 4: Greater Tidewater (Peninsula, Middle Peninsula, Northern Neck), Chair: Bea Hardy, College of William and Mary, bbhard@wm.edu, (757) 221-3054

Cities: Williamsburg.

Counties: Charles City, Essex, Gloucester, James City, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, Surry, Westmoreland, and York.

Region 5: Central Piedmont, Chair: Brian Daugherty, Virginia Commonwealth University, bjdaugherty@vcu.edu, (804) 828-4498

Cities: Colonial Heights, Fredericksburg, and Richmond.

Counties: Buckingham, Caroline, Chesterfield, Cumberland, Fluvanna, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Louisa, New Kent, Orange, Powhatan, and Spotsylvania.

Region 6: Northern Virginia, Chairs: Bob Vay, George Mason University, rvay@gmu.edu, 703-993-9513 and Derek Gray, D.C. Public Library, derek.gray2@dc.gov, (202) 727-1213

Cities: Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Winchester.

Counties: Arlington, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Frederick, King George, Loudoun, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Stafford, and Warren.

Region 7: Western (Valley and Blue Ridge), Chair: Ted DeLaney, Washington and Lee University, DelaneyT@wlu.edu, (540) 458-8963

Cities: Bedford, Buena Vista, Charlottesville, Clifton Forge, Covington, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Lynchburg, Roanoke, Salem, Staunton, and Waynesboro.

Counties: Albemarle, Alleghany, Amherst, Augusta, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, Greene, Highland, Madison, Nelson, Page, Rappahannock, Roanoke, Rockbridge, Rockingham, and Shenandoah.

Region 8: Eastern Shore, Chair: TBD

Counties: Accomack and Northampton.

Who We Are

DOVE is different from other organizations because of our variety. We include archivists, librarians, teachers, scholars, local researchers, and students. Our member institutions range from major archival and historical institutions, private colleges to public universities, non-profits and governmental organizations. While our work is graciously hosted at Old Dominion University Library's website, we make decisions as a group to further our group's purpose and not the mission of any one institution. If you have any questions about our group or would like to contact us, please visit our web site: <http://www.lib.odu.edu/special/dove/>.

How You Can Help

DOVE is looking for surveyors and other volunteers to fill our regional task forces. If you have a passion for your area's history, are knowledgeable about Virginia's school desegregation, or are familiar with your region's archival offerings, please contact a regional chair listed above or Sonia Yaco at the ODU Special Collections and University Archives:

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Perry Library, Room 327
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With your help, we can identify and preserve this era of Virginia's history.