

Douglass High School Commemorative Committee MEETING SCHEDULE

Frederick Douglass Elementary School – 6:00p.m.
510 Principal Drummond Way, SE Leesburg

January 10, 2022

January 24, 2022

February 7, 2022 (First Monday)

February 28, 2022

March 14, 2022

March 28, 2022

April 18, 2022 (only one meeting in April)

May 9, 2022

May 23, 2022

June 13, 2022

June 27, 2022

July 11, 2022

July 25, 2022

August 8, 2022

August 22, 2022

September 12, 2022

September 26, 2022

October 11, 2022 (Tuesday after holiday)

October 24, 2022

November 14, 2022

December 12, 2022

CONTACT: DouglassRenovation@LCPS.org 571-252-1050 https://www.lcps.org/Page/224865
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***Douglass High School Commemorative Committee
Mission Statement***

The mission of the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee is to identify, collect, preserve, and display, memorabilia, documents, photographs, oral history, digital records, and other materials that commemorate and honor the rich legacy of past and present generations who fought to overcome systemic racial challenges to ensure African American children in Loudoun County could receive an accredited secondary education; as well as working with local diverse community organizations to promote and maintain the rich heritage of the historic Douglass High School.



Agenda Item Details

Meeting	Jan 11, 2022 - 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting 4:00 p.m.
Category	12. Information Items
Subject	Department of Support Services: Douglass High School Commemorative Committee Update & Response to Request for Assistance from the Joint Committee of the Board of Supervisors and School Board
Access	Public
Type	Information

Public Content

SUMMARY:

The former Douglass High School, located at 407 East Market Street in Leesburg, was constructed in 1941 on land purchased by the African American community and transferred to the School Board to secure a facility for the secondary education of their children. Douglass High School was the only African American high school in Loudoun County until the end of segregation in 1968. The building is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register.

In June 2021, timed with the close of the 2020-2021 academic year, the renovation of the school facility began. The renovated Douglass High School is scheduled to reopen in 2022, although specific historical renovation efforts associated with the original 1941 portion of the building may continue beyond 2022.

A Douglass High School Commemorative Committee (DHSCC) was appointed by the School Board on May 11, 2021, with the charge to determine how the history and importance of Douglass High School should be incorporated in the renovation of the Douglass High School building.

On September 28, 2021, Ms. Erica Bush and Mr. Charles Avery, co-chairs of the DHSCC, provided an update on the committee's work to date which included the recommendation that the School Board provide dedicated and individual space for the Edwin Washington Project, Loudoun Douglass High School Alumni Association (LDAA), and Loudoun Chapter of the NAACP within the renovated 1941 portion of the Douglass High School facility. The School Board endorsed the recommendation of the DHSCC on October 26, 2021, and authorized the provision of dedicated office space for the three identified groups within the renovated Douglass High School building for a period of five (5) years and subject to subsequent renewal. Based on the October 26 action of the School Board, staff is in the process of developing terms of agreement and individual Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), as appropriate and outlined by Policy 6310, Facility Use. The MOUs will be brought back to the School Board for review and action.

To provide a quarterly update to the Board, as was mentioned in the fall, the DHSCC co-chairs will present commemorative recommendations that have been discussed and voted upon by committee members including:

- Naming of the Renovated Facility/Site: *The Historic Douglass High School Education and Development Campus*
- Interior & Exterior Commemoration Subcommittees
- Mission Statement
- Oral History Project

The DHSCC has also reviewed the request of the November 1, 2021, Joint Committee of the Board of Supervisors and School Board (Joint Committee) specifically regarding the committee's interest to assist with recommendations for reconciliation of the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County and the forced sale of the Douglass High School. At their December 13, 2021, meeting, the DHSCC voted 14-0-3 (Ms. Carter, Ms. Jackson and Ms. Randolph absent) to accept the invitation of the Joint Committee:

The Douglass High School Commemorative Committee (DHSCC) accepts the invitation of the Joint Committee to assist with the request for recommendations on the reconciliation for the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County and the forced sale of the Douglass High School property. The DHSCC proposes to provide a status update and recommendations to the Joint Committee within six months of being designated to participate. If designated, DHSCC would form a subcommittee which will allow work on the Joint Committee's request simultaneously with the commemorative effort. Recommendations on commemoration are also proposed within the six-month timeframe.

For the DHSCC to assist with recommendations on the reconciliation for the operations of segregated schools in Loudoun County and the forced sale of Douglass High School property, as asked by the Joint Committee, the School Board would need to take action endorsing the DHSCC to

assist with this project and amend the current mission of the DHSCC. On May 11, 2021, the School Board adopted the following motion (7-0-2, Mr. Morse and Mr. Serotkin absent):

The Loudoun County School Board appoint the DHSCC [as outlined in the May 11, 2021, item] to determine how the history and importance of Douglass High School should be shared and to recommend commemorative components for School Board action.

The mission of the DHSCC could be amended with an additional sentence reading:

And, subject to the appointment and approval of the Board of Supervisors, assist with the request for recommendations on the reconciliation for the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County and the forced sale of the Douglass High School property.

Unless otherwise directed, an item for action will be prepared for the January 25, 2022, School Board meeting to amend the mission statement of the DHSCC and endorse the assistance of the Committee in the reconciliation recommendation project.

Staff Reference: Beverly I. Tate

Staff Telephone: 571-252-1050

Staff Reference: Kevin L. Lewis

Staff Telephone: 571-252-1385

[11-01-21 Joint 11032021 Jt BOS-SB Cmte Mtg_Item 03 Study and Reconciliation for the Operation of Segregated Schools.pdf \(70 KB\)](#)

[5-11-21 DHSCC Action Item.pdf \(156 KB\)](#)

**JOINT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND
SCHOOL BOARD COMMITTEE
INFORMATION ITEM**

SUBJECT: Study and Reconciliation for the Operation of Segregated Schools in Loudoun County

ELECTION DISTRICT: Countywide

STAFF CONTACTS: Monica Spells, County Administration
Shalom Black, County Administration
Mark Smith, Superintendent's Office

PURPOSE: To discuss the study and reconciliation for the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County; the forced sale of 8 acres of land in Leesburg on December 16, 1940, by the "County-Wide League" that conveyed land purchased for \$4,000 to Loudoun County for \$1 during its operation of segregated schools and to seek out ways to address that injustice; and recommendations for further actions to address the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County and the community healing that needs to occur from the ongoing impact of segregation.

BACKGROUND: On September 25, 2020, the Loudoun County School Board (SB) and the Board of Supervisors (BOS) issued a [formal statement of apology](#) for the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County. The apology to the Black community was for "the negative impact, damage and disadvantages to Black students and families that were caused by decisions made by the Loudoun County School Board, Loudoun County Public Schools Administration, and the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors." The apology documents a history of racist policies enacted by these entities to prevent Loudoun's Black residents from receiving the same level of education as white residents during the operation of segregated schools.

At the [BOS Business Meeting on September 21, 2021](#), the BOS approved [Supervisor Briskman's Board Member Initiative](#) (BMI) (6-3: Buffington, Kershner, and Letourneau opposed) directing staff to forward the item [BMI] to the Joint Committee, "for discussion and return to a future Board Business Meeting with recommendations." The BOS approved a second motion (9-0) directing the Joint Committee to "review and discuss the forced sale by the then 'County-Wide League' that conveyed land purchased for \$4,000 dollars to Loudoun County for \$1, and to return to a future Board Business Meeting with recommendations to address that injustice."

At the [School Board meeting on October 12, 2021](#), the SB approved a motion (7-0-2: Barts and Hoyler abstained) to forward the item to the Joint Committee for review and discussion: "The Joint Committee, in collaboration and consultation with the community, will provide recommendations

for further actions to address the operation of segregated schools in Loudoun County and the community healing that needs to occur from the ongoing impact of segregation. Collaboration with community groups will include groups that widely represent the Black citizens of Loudoun County.”

ISSUES: The Joint Committee may choose to discuss the motions passed by each Board, determine any discrepancies between the motions, and if any, take back to each Board a recommendation on how to proceed, or if none, choose how to proceed.



Agenda Item Details

Meeting	May 11, 2021 - 2nd Tuesday School Board Meeting 4:00 p.m. (Virtual Meeting)
Category	9. Action Items
Subject	9.03 Finance & Operations Committee: Douglass High School Commemorative Committee
Access	Public
Type	Action
Recommended Action	That the Loudoun County School Board appoint the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee, as identified herein, to determine how the history and importance of Douglass High School should be shared and to recommend commemorative components for School Board action. Further, that the two representatives from the Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association serve as Co-Chairs of the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee.

Public Content

SUMMARY:

In continuing dialogue on the Douglass High School renovation project, staff has updated the Finance and Operations Committee as well as the School Board on the general timeline for next steps in the Douglass High School renovation plan review and anticipated construction schedule. At the March 16, 2021, Finance and Operations Committee meeting, staff further outlined steps for a School Board-appointed commemorative committee to engage and formulate ideas for historical displays at Douglass High School; the Committee forwarded discussion on the formation of a Douglass High School Commemorative Committee to the School Board on April 13, 2021.

With a goal to engage the present as much as the past, the School Board initiated the formation of a Douglass High School Commemorative Committee on April 13. The charge of the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee will be to review and develop options, both permanent and temporary, for relevant historic artifacts, memorabilia, and other possible interpretive building displays at Douglass High School. This committee will determine how the history and importance of Douglass High School should be shared and will recommend commemorative components for School Board action and funding, as necessary.

It was recommended that the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee be comprised of a variety of community stakeholders including but not limited to members of the Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association (LDAA), The Edwin Washington Project, Loudoun Chapter of the NAACP and Martin Luther King, Jr. 'I Have a Dream' Committee. Representatives from other Loudoun historical organizations and commissions, as well as elected official citizen appointees, would serve on the committee.

Based on the suggested committee list reviewed by the Board on April 13, the appointment of a member from the Friends of Thomas Balch Library (in addition to a member of the Black History Committee of the Friends of Thomas Balch Library) was reallocated to the Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association – as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee Chair. This revision allocated two committee seats to members of the Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association.

Staff advertised the committee's formation in local print media and on the LCPS webpage, subsequent to the April 13 Board meeting. Staff also kept the four key stakeholder organizations informed on the proposed formation of the Committee and how individuals could apply for appointment. Persons wishing to serve on the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee, as a School Board citizen appointee, were asked to submit a letter of interest to LCPS' Division of Planning Services by April 30, 2021.

While staff had originally recommended committee membership be limited to fifteen (15) appointed persons, the following list of nominees for the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee totals seventeen (17) persons – including seven individuals who relayed interest in serving as an at-large School Board appointee. Of these seven interested citizens, six attended Douglass High School; the remaining individual's parents both attended Douglass High School. Staff supports the expansion of the committee to these seventeen (17) identified persons.

While an invitation was extended to the Loudoun Museum, due to extenuating circumstances, there will be no appointed representative from Loudoun Museum serving on the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee.

Douglass High School	Representing Stakeholder Group
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Commemorative Committee Nominee(s)	
James Roberts	Black History Committee of the Friends of Thomas Balch Library
Larry Roeder	Edwin Washington Project
Gladys Burke	Loudoun County Heritage Commission
Charles Avery Erica Bush	Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association*
Margaret Good	Loudoun Preservation Society
Tammy Carter	MLK 'I Have A Dream' Committee
Michelle Thomas	NAACP - Loudoun Chapter
Mary Randolph	Citizen At-Large, Leesburg Town Council Appointee
Carlotta Coates	Citizen At-Large, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Appointee
Dwight Brooks Valerie Bush Gertrude Evans Glory Howard Joyce Jackson Larry Simms Sylvia Smith	Citizens At-Large, Loudoun County School Board Appointees

*It is recommended that the two representatives from the Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association serve as Co-Chairs of the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee.

Following School Board appointment, Committee meetings will be scheduled to immediately begin discussion on historic artifact and memorabilia display possibilities at Douglass High School. Generally, the Committee will meet on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at Frederick Douglass Elementary School; the first meeting is scheduled for May 24, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. More detail on the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee meetings, which will be open to the public, will be posted on the LCPS webpage calendar. LCPS Support Services staff, in collaboration with the Director of Equity, will facilitate the meetings.

The Douglass High School building renovation and associated construction should be complete by fall 2022. It is likely, depending on the recommendations of the committee and actions of the School Board, that certain historical restorations and/or commemorative efforts may continue beyond summer 2022, as appropriate or necessary.

Staff Reference: Beverly I. Tate
Staff Telephone: 571-252-1050

Staff Reference: Kevin L. Lewis
Staff Telephone: 571-252-1385

Motion by Ms. King that the Loudoun County School Board appoint the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee, as identified herein, to determine how the history and importance of Douglass High School should be shared and to recommend commemorative components for School Board action. Further, that the two representatives from the Loudoun Douglass Alumni Association serve as Co-Chairs of the Douglass High School Commemorative Committee.

Seconded by Ms. Corbo

Motion Passes 7-0-2 with Mr. Morse and Mr. Serotkin absent for the vote.

[4-13-21 School Board Information Item 11.04.pdf \(152 KB\)](#)

[3-16-21 Finance and Operations Information Item with attachments.pdf \(6,585 KB\)](#)

[November 2020 Commemorative Concepts Presentation - Douglass High School.pdf \(4,301 KB\)](#)