

**DRAFT**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOL BOARD  
OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA**

**WHEREAS**, on May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court ruled against segregated schools in the United States with the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision; and;

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of Virginia implemented a strategy of “Massive Resistance” to public school integration between 1954 and 1959; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 26, 1955, the parents of African-American students in Charlottesville petitioned the school system to transfer their children to white schools, and were denied, and;

**WHEREAS**, on May 6, 1956, the parents, assisted by the Charlottesville Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), sued the Charlottesville School Board to admit their children, and the School Board hired a former Governor to defend the case ;

**WHEREAS**, on August 6, 1956, U.S. District Court Judge John Paul ruled in *Allen v. School Board of the City of Charlottesville* that the school system must integrate Lane High School and Venable Elementary School, and;

**WHEREAS**, in a special session in August of 1956 the Virginia legislature passed massive resistance laws allowing the Governor to close of any school in Virginia that was under federal court order to desegregate, and the legislature also formed a state Pupil Placement Board for the purpose of removing local control, and;

**WHEREAS**, on March 25, 1957 the U. S. Supreme Court declined to hear the School Board’s appeal of Judge Paul’s decision;

**WHEREAS**, on September 10, 1958 Judge Paul ordered the school system to admit two African American students to Lane High School and ten to Venable, and;

**WHEREAS**, on September 19, 1958, in an effort to prevent the desegregation of the Charlottesville School System, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia ordered the closing of Lane and Venable, and;

**WHEREAS**, Lane and Venable were shut down for the period of five months until February 4, 1959, adversely affecting all students, their families, and school staff and after re-opening the Charlottesville School System still remained segregated for the remainder of that school year with the African American students being taught in a separate room in the Venable Annex \* , and;

**WHEREAS**, on September 1, 1959, the Commonwealth’s Pupil Placement Board denied the transfer request of the Charlottesville African American students wanting to be admitted to Venable and Lane and;

**WHEREAS**, on September 5, 1959, Judge Paul ordered the immediate transfer of twelve African-American students, three to Lane High School and nine to Venable Elementary, and;

**WHEREAS**, on September 8, 1959, as a result of the determination and courage of their families and supporters -- those twelve students bravely integrated the Charlottesville School System, and;

**WHEREAS**, the struggle for equality in the Charlottesville Public School System and our City forever affected those involved;

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**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the undersigned members of the Charlottesville City School Board, praise the courage displayed by the twelve students and their families, the work of the NAACP and others who supported the integration of our school system; believe that the closing of Lane and Venable in our City from 1958 to 1959 was a disgraceful act; and **regret** the pain that was caused before, during and after the integration of our schools **to all that were affected**; and for all the wounds, known and unknown, we do hereby apologize and sincerely hope that all of us can learn from the injustices of the past as together we strive to create a more just **community** (Alt – **Education System**).