

A .G. Richardson, Assistant Supervisor of Negro Education, to O. L Emerick:  
December 15, 1939

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Mr. O. L. Emrick  
Superintendent of Schools  
Leesburg, Virginia

Dear Sir:

In response to your special request, I visited the Colored High School in Leesburg, Virginia, on November 30, 1939. The purpose of this visit was to study the conditions of the building situation and to make recommendations to you for the improvement of these conditions, so that the school may better serve the needs of the people of Loudoun County.

My greatest impression was the complete confidence of the Negro people in you and the school board, and their willingness to cooperate fully with you in the establishment of a school that will meet the needs of all the people. My honest opinion is that this is the proper time for the improvements which you have in mind.

I was very favorably impressed with the site on which you contemplate locating the school. This site, in my opinion, is not too far from the town of Leesburg. I think it would be best to let the school face the main highway as the landscaping which will be done on the front of the building will then show up to better advantage and make that part of the highway very attractive. May I suggest that the school building be placed far enough back from the highway to permit the proper landscaping, side walks, driveway, and the planting of shrubbery, but not so far back as to interfere with the necessary playground space in the rear and any future program of expansion.

With regard to the type of building you desire to construct, may I recommend that a more detailed study be made of the number of children to be served by the school, the necessary transportation involved, and the educational programs to be offered in this building. I also recommend that you request the services of Mr. Raymond V. Long, Supervisor of School Buildings, State Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, who will gladly assist you.

I hope you may find it possible to construct a building which will adequately house both elementary and high school children. However, if this is not possible at present, I suggest that the first section of the new school serve all high school children and the elementary children will remain in the present school building. I do not think it desirable to transport pupils or teachers from school to school. In my opinion too much time would be lost in this way. The present school building which is a very hazardous structure so far as fire is concerned, should be abandoned at the very earliest time possible.

I promised to let you know what is being done in the way of offering vocational programs to Negroes in the neighboring counties. The Rosenwald High School in Warrenton and the Manassas Industrial Institute in Manassas both offer vocational agriculture, a general shop program, and home economics. I think you and members of your board should visit these schools to see the splendid work which is being accomplished. You will receive a great many practicable suggestions for your own proposed school

through such a visit. In your particular situation, however, I recommend that the high school program be developed to include the following offerings:

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English	4 units
Social Studies	4 units
Science	2 units
Mathematics	2 units
Foreign Language	2 units
Home Economics	3 units
General Shop	3 units
Physical Education	
Music	

I do hope that you can get your building program under way as soon as possible. Please rest assured that the members of the staff of the State Department of Education are willing and ready to help you go forward with this program. May I further suggest that you contact Miss Martha Creighton and Dr. B. H. VanOot with regard to securing financial aid for your vocational offerings.

Thank you very much for allowing me to make these suggestions.

Sincerely yours,

A. G. Richardson  
Assistant Supervisor of  
Negro Education

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(With permission, from the Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, Howard University.)