

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

Listed On:  
VLR: 06/18/2015  
NRHP:  
8/24/2015

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cornland School

Other names/site number: Benefit School; Pleasant Grove District School #4; DHR #131-0111

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 2309 Benefit Road

City or town: Chesapeake State: Virginia County: Independent City

Not For Publication:  N/A

Vicinity:  N/A

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

Julie D. Longan 6/23/15  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official: Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/School

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: One-Room School

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; WOOD: weatherboard; METAL

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Cornland School, the oldest remaining one-room school in Chesapeake, Virginia, is located at 2309 Benefit Road in a rural area adjacent to unimproved Ranger Road to the east. Ranch houses are beyond Ranger Road to the east, while open land is to the rear (south) of the former school, the unimproved parking area for the New Foreman Temple A.M.E. Zion Church is to the west, and forested land is to the north across Benefit Road. The school was constructed in 1903 by T.B. Tuttle under the direction of the Pleasant Grove District School Board and is a simple, gable-front building with weatherboard siding. A standing-seam metal roof covers the frame building, which is raised above grade on brick piers. Entry to the one-room rectangular plan interior is on the north façade below a small shed hood. Although minor changes have taken place on the interior, the Cornland School retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The school building is the only resource associated with the property.

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### Narrative Description

#### Setting

Cornland School is located south of the long and winding Benefit Road in a rural area of Chesapeake. The property is surrounded by undeveloped land, a few single-family ranch houses to the east, which are set back from Benefit Road, and a small brick church to the west. Further west, one mile down Benefit Road, is the historic Cornland post office building, while the Benefit post office was located about one mile to the east. The school is located about fifty feet from the road and, although there is no direct access to the school from Benefit Road, the

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remains of a dirt drive are apparent immediately to the north of the school. A small open area surrounds the building with unregulated vegetation bordering the open space. Former student recollections state that privies were located to the rear of the building, but their exact location has not been verified.

### Exterior

Cornland School, a simple one-story gable-front building, has a rectangular plan and is raised above grade on brick piers. Wide plain weatherboards sheath the building. The north facade is blind except for a centered entry composed of a one-light-over-two-panel door with one-light transom, plain wood surround, and wood screen door. A small shed-roofed hood shelters the entry and is supported on triangular braces. Access to the entry is provided by newer wood steps with a wood handrail. The plain gable has narrow rake boards and narrow overhanging boxed eaves with simple cornice returns. A standing seam metal roof with ridge cap covers the building and a central low brick chimney flue rises from the ridge line.

The east and west elevations are similar with clapboard siding, corner boards, and narrow overhanging boxed eaves. Symmetrically placed windows, three per side, extend along both elevations. The window openings have six-over-six-light double-hung sash with plain wood surrounds, but no sills. The windows have been boarded over on the outside, but are fully intact. On the west elevation, a metal stove chimney protrudes through the weatherboard siding between the center and south windows. The rear (south) elevation is similar in detail to the façade except that the boarded-over entry is located in the west corner and the plain gable has rake boards, but no overhanging eaves.

### Interior

Like the exterior, the interior of Cornland School is simple and functional, consisting of a single room with a small L-shaped plywood partition in the northwest corner that was added to create a restroom. At the south (rear) end of the room, a low wood L-plan platform has been added to the east of the rear door. This platform extends out approximately five feet with two steps in the corner providing access. Remnants of a simple open wood balustrade remain along the north and west sides and the platform's low bulkhead is enclosed with paneling. Original interior walls are painted bead board with a plain baseboard; these walls remain intact underneath thin added paneling and a narrow board "cornice." Original bead board remains partially exposed on the ceiling, although added gypsum board covers some areas. The original square chimney access port is framed in the center of the ceiling. A second chimney pipe remnant remains on the west wall, set low between the center and south windows. The windows have plain casings and narrow sills. The rear (south) door is boarded, but the original five-panel door is stored within the building. Flooring is wood with portions of the floor quite damaged; thin carpeting covers the platform. In the northwest corner, the aforementioned plywood partition creates a narrow room with a solid board door on its east side; the partition does not extend to the ceiling. Within the restroom, a fuse box is located on the north wall while a narrow dry sink has been built along the west wall. A curtain separates this area from the rest of the restroom.

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Integrity

The architectural integrity of Cornland School is excellent. Its original configuration is intact as are its original finishes. Former students remember an attached blackboard on the rear wall, which has been removed, as has the original stove once situated in the center and attached to the metal stove pipe remnant. When closed in 1952, the building was still without electricity or running water. Only minor alterations have occurred since the building's construction in 1903 and include the addition of a low wood platform, a small closet, and the covering of the original beadboard wall and ceiling surfaces with removable materials. On the exterior, the original wood steps have been replaced with simple wood steps with a wood railing. The minimal alterations allow the Cornland School to retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as a rural one-room school dating to the early twentieth century.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1903 – 1952

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Tuttle, T.B. (builder)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Locally significant, Cornland School is eligible for listing in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Education because of the important role the school served in the education of African American students throughout the early to middle twentieth century. It is also an excellent and rare local example of a vernacular one-room schoolhouse built for the education of African American students in the Pleasant Grove School District of the Norfolk County Public Schools system during the Jim Crow era of racial segregation. The building was constructed by T.B. Tuttle for the school district to replace the former circa 1868 Cornland School that had stood on the site and was built by local labor. The period of significance is 1903, when the school was constructed, to 1952, when the school closed and its students were transferred to a newly-constructed but still racially segregated elementary school. Cornland School is the oldest remaining one-room schoolhouse in the Independent City of Chesapeake and one of the last intact African American elementary schools remaining from the segregation era.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### History

The City of Chesapeake was established in 1963 with the merger of the City of South Norfolk and the County of Norfolk.<sup>1</sup> The newly created governmental body consists of 363,450 square miles of land and encompasses an area stretching from the Elizabeth River (north) to the North Carolina border (south) and from the Dismal Swamp (west) to the Independent City of Virginia Beach (formerly Princess Anne County) (east). Included in the merger were governmental, public safety, library, and judicial systems as well as school districts.

Education in this large area actually dates back to colonial Virginia when it was a family responsibility due to the isolation of the plantations and the difficulty of travel. Schooling was conducted by members of the clergy, private tutors, or members of the family. By the mid-seventeenth century, however, several white parochial and private schools had been established and private donors helped fund education for poor white students. Education for African American children typically was not provided on a systematic basis; the vast majority of African American children were enslaved prior to the Civil War. Schools in then-Norfolk County were located at Hickory Ground, Great Bridge, and Sycamore Hill. However, it was not until 1845 that a system of public schools for free white children was established under the authority of an act by the General Assembly. In Norfolk County, the new board of school commissioners met at Deep Creek and established twenty white schools with three local trustees per school. By the time of the Civil War (1861) the number of schools had grown to thirty.<sup>2</sup>

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In the South, education for African Americans, both enslaved and free, was not unheard of prior to the Civil War, but was offered on an intermittent basis. In slave-holding states, such education was mainly done under the auspices of religious groups such as Quakers and Presbyterians, who established schools for African Americans out of a concern for their spiritual wellbeing. Some slave owners taught their slaves to read and write as a means to promote an occupation or for religious reasons. However, many Southern whites saw little practical purpose for educating African Americans and, in fact, feared that education would promote slaves to attempt escape or revolt. After the 1800 Prosser slave conspiracy, the 1822 Vesey slave insurrection, and the 1831 Turner slave revolt, white leaders restricted educational opportunities and teaching African Americans, particularly those who were enslaved, was increasingly restricted by law through the Civil War. Whether white or black themselves, those who taught African Americans to read and write often faced harsh penalties.<sup>3</sup>

During the Civil War, Norfolk County came under the control of the Union army with the result that white students' schools were closed and dismantled; materials from these school buildings were subsequently used to build military camps. Among the schools destroyed were those at Cornland, Wallaceton, Good Hope, Bells Mill, and Tanners Creek.<sup>4</sup> However, educational opportunities for African Americans in Virginia was restarted during the war with the opening of schools in Alexandria (by Mary Chase) and near Fort Monroe (by Mary Peake). The American Missionary Association (AMA) secured permission from the Union army to open schools for blacks behind Federal lines. By 1862, the AMA had schools in Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, Virginia. Educational opportunities expanded with Union victories during the war, culminating in the 1865 act of Congress creating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau. The Bureau coordinated those few educational programs already in existence and helped secure additional teachers and buildings. When the Freedmen's Bureau closed in 1871, more than \$5 million had been spent to finance some 4,300 schools with 9,300 teachers for nearly a quarter of a million African American students.<sup>5</sup>

Additionally, black communities gave of themselves to build and support their own schools. Money was raised locally to buy books and hire teachers, but manual labor was also given to clear land, cut lumber, and build schoolhouses. By 1870, 215 schools had been financed with help from Virginian freedmen and of those, 111 buildings were owned by blacks.<sup>6</sup>

After the war, the newly passed Virginia constitution of 1869 mandated public education for all children but required that white and African American students be educated in separate facilities. Governor Gilbert Walker appointed an extremely capable and hard-working man, Captain John T. West, as the new superintendent of schools for Norfolk County. West took up his duties on January 1, 1870, and established a school board composed of three men from each of the six county magisterial districts. The representatives for District No. 3, Pleasant Grove, were William R. Dudley, C.T. Forehand, and E.H. Williams. The next year, the trustees officially organized the Norfolk County School Board with John T. West as chairman. Instructions to the board were "to at once organize separate schools for white and colored children wherever practical in their respective districts."<sup>7</sup>

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Although provision for publicly financed education for children of both races now was mandated by law throughout Virginia, from the beginning the segregated schools were not equal. White students typically had access to more schools, more teachers, and a longer school year compared to African American students. The records for Norfolk County's early public school system demonstrate this trend. Nineteen white schools and eleven black schools opened on April 15 according to John West's records, "many in communities where no schools existed since before the war;" with two more white schools opened for the fall term. The district also took a census of all children between the ages of five and twenty-one for a total of 5,200 children. Six private schools were functioning, each with an average enrollment of 150 students. The next school year, 1872-1873, opened with twenty-five white schools with 1,003 pupils and sixteen black schools with 1,087 students.<sup>8</sup>

To support the schools, a county tax levy was passed in 1872 by area voters that assured moderate support for the district's schools. This levy was fifteen cents per \$100 of property real and personal that was to be used for district purposes alone; five cents per \$100 used by the county for teachers' pay; and a tax on dogs, fifty cents per head. With funding assured, the county district added more schools. Forty-three schools were operating in 1873 with 1,165 white students (thirty-two white teachers) and 1,114 black students (sixteen black teachers); six new school houses were built. Of the total of forty-nine schools operating, twenty-nine were owned by the school district. The student census of 1874 counted 6,658 children (2,659 white and 3,999 black) between the ages of five and twenty-one.<sup>9</sup> By 1900, there were 125 schools: seventy-three for white students and fifty-two for African Americans, with an average term of nine months for the white schools and eight months for the black schools.<sup>10</sup>

### Cornland School

The history of Cornland School dates back to the establishment of the Pleasant Grove School District No. 3 in 1871 when it was reported that three schools for African Americans were in operation. Cornland School was most likely one of these three. It should be noted that early records also use the name "Benefit" for the school building located on Benefit Road. To add to the confusion, there were also Benefit and Cornland schools for white students at the same time according to Superintendent West's record book.<sup>11</sup> City of Chesapeake deed books show that one acre of land immediately adjacent to Cornland School was donated by its owners, Israel and Alice Foreman, to the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in America (now the Foreman AME church) in 1868 for the construction of a church building.<sup>12</sup> However, this acre of land was not surveyed; the donation is only noted in the subsequent sale of the surrounding seventy-nine acres of land by the Foremans to Israel Grimes in 1870 and reconveyed by the Foremans to the trustees of the church in a deed dated May 10, 1883.<sup>13</sup> This reconveyance was necessary due to a Chancery Court case over the will of Israel Grimes.<sup>14</sup> The 39.42 acres of land (Lots 8 & 9), which includes the site of the Cornland School, was given to Israel Grimes' son Ernest F. Grimes.<sup>15</sup> To aid the court's division of Israel Grimes' assets, a plat of his land (209 4/5 acres) was filed on 25 March 1882 with the case. This plat shows Ernest Grimes's 39.42 acres and specifically notes a church and school house on the property.

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Although an assumption, it seems probable that members of the Foreman A.M.E. church were instrumental in the construction of the first Cornland School located to the east of their church building between 1868 and 1871. However, the school house was not located on church land as its acreage has descended to subsequent owners of Ernest Grimes's 39.42 acres. Confirming the plat, West's records indicate that in 1881, Pleasant Grove District No. 3 had six white schools and four "colored" schools in operation.

In 1902, Cornland School was ordered rebuilt under the direction and financing of the Mount Pleasant School District. According to the minutes of the district's August meeting, "It was moved and carried that the old school house (colored) at Benefit be rebuilt."<sup>16</sup> Two months later (October) "on motion L.M. West (Pleasant Grove commissioner) was authorized to sell the old school house near Benefit. . . . W.R. Dudley, W.L. Wilson and L.M. West were appointed a com. [sic] to have a new house built."<sup>17</sup> By December, the old school house had been sold. "The Committee appointed to sell the old school house near Benefit reported that it had been sold for \$18.00 and the money turned over to the County Treasurer."<sup>18</sup> Construction of the new building proceeded quickly as by February 1903 the district authorized \$314.50 in payment to T.B. Tuttle for building the school house.<sup>19</sup> A year later, 1904, the district records refer to the new school as "Cornland" for the first time. In the minutes, "Cornland" is written above a scratched-out "Benefit" for school No. 4 in the "Col." school list.<sup>20</sup> Henceforth, Cornland is the name associated with this school building.

The school building changed little over the years. An insurance survey in 1933 described Cornland School as follows:

*One story frame building with wood joist roof covered with wood shingle; building stands on brick piers; interior finish painted wood sheathing sidewalls and ceilings, with wood joist floors.*

*This building consists of one classroom which is heated by means of a coal stove standing on wooden floor with pipe running to brick chimney supported by joist straps. No apparent means of lighting.*<sup>21</sup>

Estimated insurable value of the building was listed as \$750, although the insurance carried by the school district was only \$500. Contents of the building were not insured.<sup>22</sup>

Cornland School remained in operation until the fall of 1952 when a new school for African American elementary students, Southeastern Elementary School, was opened. The new school consolidated seven black schools: Long Ridge, Butts Road, Willow Grove, Bethel, Cornland, Richard Swamp, and Oak Grove. All these schools had been located in the Pleasant Grove and Butts Road districts. All the buildings were small, one or two rooms, and some were more than fifty years old.<sup>23</sup> All of these schools, except for Bethel, were offered at auction along with Oakwood School, West Norfolk School, the Ship Yard School Property and the School garage

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site.<sup>24</sup> At the auction, held on March 20, 1953, the Cornland School building was sold for \$1,000 to C.E. Frost.<sup>25</sup> However, deed book records do not show a transfer of property from the school district to Frost.

According to deed book and school district records, Pleasant Grove School District #4 never owned the land on which Cornland School was built. The land remained part of the larger parcel of property distributed in the Grimes estate and subsequently owned by John Waterfield, Mary Waterfield Lamb, L.W. Lamb, and Lyman and Mable Snead. The Snead estate currently owns the property.<sup>26</sup> Apparently, the auction notice was incorrect when it listed the school on a one-acre tract of land along Highway 625 adjacent to Foreman Temple Methodist Church. In addition, the legal description of the auction sale to C.E. Frost, as recorded in South Norfolk County Deed Book 32, page 2 (dated 30 April 1953), describes a different property on State Highway 625. The property that Frost bought was sold to the former school district in 1855 by the Methodist Protestant Church at Bear Quarter and was probably located further east along Benefit Road.<sup>27</sup>

Randolph Snead, son of Lyman Snead, remembers an attempt in the 1950s to move the school building off the property. His father stopped the move and retained ownership of both the building and acre of land.<sup>28</sup> Further records detailing actions of the school district with regard to the Cornland School property and the Methodist Protestant Church property have not been discovered.

### **Criterion A - Education**

As detailed above, educational opportunities for black Virginians prior to the Civil War generally depended on the largess of religious organizations, the tolerance of white slave owners, and the courage of African Americans to seek what many tried to forbid them. Few blacks, free or enslaved, received formal schooling prior to the Civil War and widespread opportunity had to wait until free public schools were mandated by the Virginia Constitution of 1869. A local exception was in the City of Norfolk where the American Missionary Society of New York founded the “first school system for Negroes,” which consisted of four day schools (ten teachers, 520 students) and one night school (three teachers, 180 adults). A black superintendent oversaw the school system. These schools remained independent until 1871 when the Norfolk City Council established a Negro school in each ward under a white superintendent.<sup>29</sup> It is unknown if any Norfolk County schools were part of this system.

Schools established under Virginia’s 1869 constitution were segregated by color on the assumption of a “natural order” that did not permit the races to intermingle as equals. At the same time, establishment of racially segregated schools offered the potential for African American students to have their own buildings and teachers without interference by whites, a practice that African Americans had embraced in establishing their own churches rather than continuing to attend white-dominated churches. Although the segregated schools were supposed to be “separate but equal,” in reality funding for black schools was controlled by whites-only school boards. Far less financial support was given to black schools, which resulted in a higher

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student to teacher ratio, smaller and poorly constructed buildings, fewer and older books, and reduced teacher compensation.<sup>30</sup> Inequalities in other “separate but equal” facilities, such as public parks, passenger trains, and public libraries, prevailed as well, leading some to protest the inherent unfairness in the practice.

The “separate but equal” doctrine was upheld in the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision and, in 1902, Virginia’s Constitution was rewritten to enshrine the doctrine into every aspect of state law. During the early twentieth century, African American teachers and parents worked to improve their schools, but inadequate public funding continued to characterize the state’s schools for black children, leading to shortages of books, teachers, and even buildings for learning. Typically, a single teacher taught all academic subjects to African American students of all ages and grades in overcrowded schools. In 1900, the average black school had 37 percent more pupils in attendance than the average white school.<sup>31</sup>

A segregated educational system was instituted in Norfolk County by Superintendent John T. West in 1870. Instructions to the newly organized Norfolk County School Board were “to at once organize separate schools for white and colored children wherever practical in their respective districts.”<sup>32</sup> Disparity between schools was evident immediately when nineteen white schools, but only eleven black schools (including the original Cornland School) opened on April 15; two more white schools were in operation the following fall. Overcrowding quickly became a problem for black schools, with an average school size of sixty-eight pupils per black school and forty pupils per white school. Forty-three Norfolk County schools were operating in 1873 with 1,165 white students (thirty-two white teachers) and 1,114 black students (sixteen black teachers). The student census of 1874 counted 6,658 children (2,659 white and 3,999 black) between the ages of five and twenty-one. By 1900, there were 125 schools, of which 73 were for white students, who attended for an average term of nine whites, while 52 schools for African American students had an average term of just eight months.<sup>33</sup>

Although specific records for Pleasant Grove District #4 are limited, the school district reflected the segregated, separate-and-unequal pattern found elsewhere in Norfolk County. In 1881, the district had six white schools and four black schools; in 1885, the four black teachers had an average of thirty-eight students each. In 1888, the Benefit (Cornland) School had eighty-three African American students registered with an average monthly attendance of forty-six for the seven months the school was in session.<sup>34</sup>

The new Cornland School opened in 1903 with A.J.J. Sykes as teacher but he taught for just a year before being brought up on unspecified charges.<sup>35</sup> The next year, Benefit Colored #4 School (later renamed Cornland) was initially passed over for teacher appointments in August. A committee was appointed to investigate Sykes (specific charges against him were not recorded), with committee minutes stating that the “charge against A.J.J. Sykes was heard and on motion, the committee was further continued with power to act.” On August 29, 1904, J.F. Newbern and J.T. West were given the direction to fill the teacher vacancy at Cornland and J.E. Owens was appointed to the position. No further action was recorded.<sup>36</sup>

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Although the 1902 Virginia Constitution mandated “separate but equal schools,” teacher pay and building facilities were decidedly less for black students. Pay scales for teachers in the Pleasant Grove District are not recorded until the early twentieth century. In 1907, Seth Brown was paid \$30.00 per month to teach at Cornland, while two women were paid \$40.00 each to teach at the Cornland and Benefit schools for white students. In subsequent years, the salary discrepancy continued, with most black teachers earning between \$25.00 and \$30.00 per month, while white teachers were paid between \$35.00 and \$60.00 (average pay was \$40.00). In 1919, Cornland teacher Mrs. Mattie E. Johnson was paid \$40.00 per month (at a time that white teachers received \$60.00 on average), but this was a raise from her previous pay of \$27.50 when she was hired at Cornland in 1916 as a single woman (Mattie Epperson).<sup>37</sup> In addition, Pleasant Grove School Board minutes from 1902-1922 detail expenditures for each school for items such as supplies, heating material (wood/coal), repairs, signs, and the like. However, the large majority of money was spent on white schools; rarely is a notation made for a “colored” school.

District school boards were abolished by an act of the General Assembly dated March 24, 1922, and were replaced by a county school board with members from each magisterial district. Specific conditions of the Pleasant Grove district schools in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s are unknown, but might be extrapolated from noted conditions in nearby districts. It was reported in 1925 that the (now former) school board of Deep Creek Township, Norfolk County (now part of the City of Chesapeake) had not spent \$500.00 of public funds in physical improvements on the district’s one African American school building in over fifty years. However, in the past twenty years, the school board had spent approximately \$100,000 in enlargements and improvements on white schools which were paid for by both white and black taxpayers. This was despite repeated requests for enlargements to the black school to relieve overcrowding.<sup>38</sup> County school superintendent James Hurst admitted that the black schools were below standard in buildings and equipment, but maintained that no injustice was done.<sup>39</sup> The 1923-1924 school board budget for six districts details \$158,083.00 to be spent on white schools and \$25,305.00 to be spent on black schools. These funds were for rent, instruction, fuel, supplies, repairs, janitors, and insurance. Insurance for white schools was budgeted at \$2,725, while black schools were insured for only \$292.<sup>40</sup> The minutes also detail the 1920 student census for Pleasant Grove as 385 white children and 562 colored children between the ages of seven and twenty years old. Of these children, 277 white students and 361 colored students attended school.<sup>41</sup>

The disparities between white and black schools is further reflected in a 1926 school board status report which detailed that Norfolk County had seventeen white schools with 133 teachers and twenty-seven black schools with fifty-seven teachers. Obviously, the white schools were larger and better staffed, while the black schools were one or two rooms on average. In addition, white schools were assigned fifteen janitors and black schools were allocated three, but the black school positions were eliminated the next year. Thirty school buses served the white schools, while African American students had no access to buses.<sup>42</sup> A small improvement came in 1929, when black teachers’ salaries were increased (still below white salaries), and for the first time black schools were granted a standard nine-month term. Enrollment in September 1929 was 3,795 white students and 2,388 colored students.<sup>43</sup>

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Through the 1930s, the Great Depression resulted in pay decreases for both white and black teachers. Superintendent Hurst reported that a shortage of school funds had “greatly affected the colored schools in this city [Portsmouth] and Norfolk county.” Only twenty-five black teachers were working in county schools and their pay was cut twelve percent. Most of the black teachers were in one-room schools and the reduction in the number of teachers resulted in a larger assignment of pupils to each teacher and more congestion. “The average annual salary of the colored teachers last year was \$482 as compared with an average annual salary of \$948 for white teachers.”<sup>44</sup> Neighboring Princess Anne County reported that the per capita cost of teaching white students was \$30.25, but the average cost for an African American student was \$4.86 for the 1932-1933 school year. The report details that fifteen Virginia counties spent over three times as much on white school children as on black students, and in one county (Sussex) the cost was five times more. South Norfolk (city) spent \$10.18 on black students and \$32.70 for white students. Inequity also continued in the length of school terms. Black rural schools were in session an average of 160 days in 1930, as opposed to white schools which were in session an average of 172 days. During the Great Depression, terms were reduced: black rural schools had 156 average days, white rural schools had 167 average days.<sup>45</sup>

Cornland School is specifically mentioned in the Norfolk County School Board Minutes twice in the 1930s. In 1932, school board trustee E.H. West was authorized to secure someone to construct outhouses at the Cornland School.<sup>46</sup> Student remembrances’ recall two wood outhouses to the rear of the school; their location has not been determined. The second notation is for Cornland School teacher, Miss E.L. Fitchett, who was lauded by the School Board in 1935.

*Owing to [sic] outstanding work of E.L. Fitchett, teacher of the Cornland School, it was decided to increase her salary \$5.00 per month.*<sup>47</sup>

The 1930 student census for Pleasant Grove counted 488 white students and 603 African American students (1091 total). There were, however, a total of 531 white children between the ages of six and nineteen years old and a total of 644 black children. Five years later, the census found 483 white students and 563 African American students (1046 total) with 525 white children and 622 black children counted.<sup>48</sup>

Even after economic conditions eased with the onset of World War II, unequal spending on schools continued. In local district records, Cornland School was mentioned in 1942 with regard to transportation. The school board minutes state, “The question brought up of transportation for certain Negro children to the Cornland School. Mr. West was requested to see what arrangements could be made with power to act, in securing a person to haul these children, salary to be made in conjunction with the Supt.” In 1943, bus driver A.E. Brown was paid \$35.00 for transporting African American students to Cornland and Bethel. When the Wallaceton School closed in 1943, the students were sent to Bethel and Cornland schools on Bus #18.<sup>49</sup>

One of the main topics under discussion by the Norfolk County School Board in the 1940s was low teacher salaries. As early as 1935, the *New Journal and Guide* reported not only on the low salaries of Norfolk teachers, but also the lower salaries for black teachers. “The average annual



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salary for rural elementary teachers was \$549 for whites and \$337 for Negroes. The average salary for all elementary teachers in rural schools was \$489.”<sup>50</sup> In December 1940, an early step toward equal pay for black teachers in Norfolk County schools was taken when Richmond attorney Oliver W. Hill, a member of the Joint State Committee for Salary Equalization legal staff, asked to review the county’s teacher’s salary records for the past ten years. This request followed the formation of a Norfolk County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).<sup>51</sup> The school board countered by issuing a statement to the press in January that a substantial increase in pay for black teachers would be made for the next year with the amount to be determined later. But the salary issue continued throughout the spring of 1941 with one result being the dismissal of three black principals and one black teacher without any stated public reason. When not reinstated as requested by the county’s black community, the three principals filed suit against the school board, charging unequal facilities in black schools and discrimination against students. A second suit for pay equalization was filed by black teacher James Riddick, the NAACP, and the Virginia State Teachers Association. As a result of these and other salary parity suits, teachers’ pay was made equal in fifty-three Virginia school districts including Norfolk County.<sup>52</sup>

The inequality of school buildings, always of concern to black residents, was highlighted again in the early 1950s as demands for equal treatment increased in Virginia and across the nation. White politicians responded with attempts to “equalize” schools by increasing appropriations for constructing new and upgrading existing facilities. Norfolk County schools received \$1.25 million from the state for school construction projects. With this money, eight white and four black schools were built. The black school construction program included an addition to Norfolk County High School (although located in a white neighborhood, it was the only high school in the county for African American students), an elementary school at Oakwood, an addition to the Crestwood Elementary School, and a new elementary school in the southeastern part of the county. Even the “equalization” program, however, contained disparities, with the white school construction program including two new senior high schools (Norview and Cradock); additions to Deep Creek and Churchland high schools; and additions to Norfolk Highlands, Great Bridge, Simonsdale, and Ingleside elementary schools.<sup>53</sup> A \$4 million school bond issue was also proposed that fall to supplement the construction funds. However, the Norfolk County Civic Forum campaigned for blacks to vote against the bond issue since the proposed building program did “not adequately provide for Negro schools and the need for colored schools is far greater than it is for whites.”<sup>54</sup>

The bond issue passed anyway, but this meant discussions about school construction continued. In 1951, a petition to the Norfolk County School Board was submitted by black students asking for the type of “separate but equal” schools and curriculum to which they were entitled under the laws of the United States and State of Virginia. A report by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for the school year 1947-1948 detailed that black enrollment in Norfolk County schools was 19.5 percent of total enrollment (3,690 students out of 18,075), but that black school buildings/sites were valued at only 7.2 percent of the total (\$364,900 for black schools, \$4,976,086 for white schools). Per capita cost of education in high schools was \$132.60 for white, but only \$91.32 for blacks.<sup>55</sup> A summary report on the inequalities of white and black

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schools was presented to school board officials by attorneys Victor Ashe and James Overton. Among other things, the report detailed that several older one-room elementary schools were still in use for black students (including Cornland School), while white students had modern buildings; that there were no cafeterias, auditoriums or gymnasiums in black elementary schools; and that many black schools were located on low and undesirable sites. Moreover, toilet facilities for black schools were antiquated, obsolete, and out-of-doors.<sup>56</sup> Yet even these outdated schools remain in use; in 1951, student enrollment at Cornland School was twenty-seven, up from nineteen students in 1950.<sup>57</sup>

The mounting pressure and threat of lawsuits for better school facilities prompted another attempt to buttress the fiction of “separate but equal.” The Norfolk County School Board revised the new school list and placed four elementary school building projects on a “must” list, with three of those schools slated for black students. A new all-black southeast county school was named the top priority; it was number four behind three white schools in 1950.<sup>58</sup> In making the change

*. . . no reference was made of a threatened suit by colored parents to compel the county to equalize schools for the races, it was felt in some quarters that the board acted under this pressure.*<sup>59</sup>

The three new schools, Oakwood, Southeastern, and Crestwood Addition, were expected to be completed by September 1952; a new black high school was to open a year later. The new Southeastern Elementary School consolidated seven small rural schools in the Pleasant Grove and Butts Road districts. The schools replaced were Long Ridge, Butts Road, Willow Grove, Bethel, Cornland, Richard Swamp, and Oak Grove. All of the schools were one- or two-room buildings, some of which were more than fifty years old. Identical in plan, the new Southeastern and Oakwood schools were to have fourteen classrooms, a combined cafeteria/auditorium/gymnasium, library, offices, clinic, and faculty rooms, and would cost \$600,000 each.<sup>60</sup> When opened, the new Southeastern school employed eighteen teachers for 624 students in grades one through seven; it was on an eighteen-acre site. A dedication for the school was held in November 1952.<sup>61</sup> The old school buildings, including Cornland, were given back to the county for disposal.

Just two years after these “equalization” schools were constructed, the U.S. Supreme Court finally struck down the “separate but equal” doctrine with its *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. Virginia’s white-dominated power structure resisted school integration for more than a decade, with some local school systems going so far as to close down rather than permit integrated classrooms. Over the same period, the Civil Rights Movement gained momentum and eventually resulted in the abolition of legally required segregation in all aspects of American life, including schools, restaurants, public parks, transportation, and other types of public accommodations. The 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act guaranteed equal rights under federal law. The U.S. Supreme Court’s 1968 *Green v. [New Kent] County [Virginia] School Board* finally put an end to attempts to use state and local law to avoid full integration of public schools.

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**Summary**

Cornland School is the oldest remaining one-room school house in the City of Chesapeake and dates to the early twentieth-century era of “separate but equal” education for African American students. It was built for and used exclusively by black students and teachers during a time of segregation based on race. The current building, constructed in 1903, followed a similar one-room school that was built just after the Civil War by freed people. Cornland School is a rare visible reminder of the school facilities constructed for an educational system dominated by a white-controlled school board which actively pursued an unequal and lower educational standard for their African American students.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

City of Chesapeake Chancery Court files.

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<http://www.vahistorical.org/civilrights/education.htm>.

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\_\_\_\_\_ and Raymond T. Jones. *Dear Old Golden Rule Days, A History of Norfolk County, South Norfolk, and Chesapeake Schools*. Chesapeake: Raymond L. Harper, 2003.

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Rorer, Henry S. "History of Norfolk Public Schools, 1681-1968." Typewritten manuscript, copyright 1968.

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Snead, Randolph. Interview conducted by Karen Lang Kummer, 3 December 2012.

Stewart, Col. William H., editor. *History of Norfolk County, Virginia, and Representative Citizens 1637-1900*. Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1902.

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West, John T. *A Record of Work and Official Acts of John T. West, County Superintendent of Schools for Norfolk County, Virginia*. Manuscript in possession of the City of Chesapeake, Virginia School District.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Independent City of Chesapeake School District; Cornland School Foundation, Chesapeake; Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** VDHR File #131-0111

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** 1.3 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 36.625580 | Longitude: -76.301830 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

**Or**

### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The historic boundary is drawn to encompass the one-acre lot that was traditionally considered to be part of the Cornland School property during its years of operation, although the lot was never legally recorded as a parcel owned by the Norfolk County Board of Education. The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached map entitled, "Sketch Map/Aerial View."

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary encompasses the school building as well as the one-acre lot historically associated with the school during its years of operation. Although precise locations of two privies have not been determined, their sites are believed to be encompassed as well by the historic boundary, as the school's lot boundaries were set at one acre in 1871

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and were not altered during the period the property functioned as a public school for African American students.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Karen Lang Kummer, architectural historian  
organization: Cornland School Foundation  
street & number: 1309 Divot Court  
city or town: Mount Pleasant state: South Carolina zip code: 29466  
email: klkummer1@gmail.com  
telephone: 217-621-7202  
date: January, 2015

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Cornland School

City or Vicinity: City of Chesapeake

County: Independent City of Chesapeake

State: Virginia

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Photographer: Jennifer White, City of Chesapeake

Date Photographed: January 22, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Photo 1 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0001 View: School Building , west elevation, camera facing east

Photo 2 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0002 View: School Building , north elevation, camera facing south

Photo 3 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0003 View: School Building , north elevation, camera facing southwest, new entrance steps

Photo 4 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0004 View: School Building , north elevation, camera facing southwest, entranceway

Photo 5 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0005 View: School Building , east elevation, camera facing west

Photo 6 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0006 View: School Building , south elevation, camera facing north

Photo 7 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0007 View: interior of school building , south elevation, camera facing south

Photo 8 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0008 View: School Building , ceiling

Photo 9 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0009 View: interior of school building , west elevation, camera facing west

Photo 10 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0010 View: School Building , west elevation and front entranceway, camera facing northwest

Photo 11 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0011 View: interior of former bathroom , west elevation, camera facing west



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Photo 12 of 12: VA\_Chesapeake\_Cornland School\_0012 View: School Building , east elevation, camera facing east

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Raymond L. Harper, *A History of Chesapeake, Virginia* (Charleston, South Carolina: The History Press, 2008), 145.

<sup>2</sup> Col. William H. Stewart, editor, *History of Norfolk County, Virginia, and Representative Citizens 1637-1900*, (Chicago: Biographical Publishing Company, 1902), 177-180.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Cianci Salvatore, Waldo E. Martin, Jr., Vicki L. Ruiz, Patricia Sullivan, and Harvard Sitkoff, "Racial Desegregation in Public Education in the United States Theme Study," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, September, 2000, 2-5.

<sup>4</sup> Stewart, 180.

<sup>5</sup> Salvatore, et al, 10-13.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>7</sup> John T. West, *A Record of Work and Official Acts of John T West, County Superintendent of schools for Norfolk County, Virginia*, undated manuscript record book in the possession of the City of Chesapeake School District, 3-5. John T. West was a resident of this part of Norfolk County, then called Bear Quarter. He and his family had property near Cornland School and were members and leaders of Good Hope Methodist Protestant Church.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 3-5.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 7-8. John West noted that the dog tax was usually evaded and only raised \$812.55 in the first year, rather than the \$2,500 that would have accrued if enforced.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 180-181. In 1882, West left his post for four years before being reelected in 1886 and serving continuously until his retirement in 1908.

<sup>11</sup> The Cornland School for white students was closed in 1925, according to Norfolk County School Board minutes.

<sup>12</sup> Israel and his sister Alice Foreman donated the land to Foreman Church in 1868. Foreman, born in North Carolina about 1825, was a Pleasant Grove District farmer and member of Good Hope Methodist Protestant Church as was school superintendent John West. His father, also named Israel Foreman, and Laban Hall donated the land on Benefit Road for Good Hope Church in 1848. At age 58, Israel Foreman married his twenty-three year old niece Alice McPherson Gordon of Camden County, North Carolina, who was part of his household, according to the

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1880 census and marriage license #7633, 26 September 1883. Both his sister Alice and wife Alice are mentioned in Deed Book records.

<sup>13</sup> South Norfolk County Deed Book 93, page 495 dated 2 September 1870 states, “except a Lot upon which a church has been erected for colored persons” and South Norfolk County Deed Book 118, page 459, dated 10 May 1883.

<sup>14</sup> Chancery cause of Jacob Grimes, et als, v. Ellen E. Grimes, et als, File No. 725 Clerk’s Office of the Circuit Court of Norfolk County, Virginia. Ernest Israel Grimes (born 1859) was the son of Israel and Ellen Grimes. Ellen was Israel’s second wife with whom he had Ernest, Serepta, Mary, Samuel, and Virginia. However, Israel and his first wife, Sally (or Sarah) had five children: Jacob, John, Sarah, Josephus, and Ann Elizabeth.

<sup>15</sup> South Norfolk County Deed Book 122, pages 188-189, dated 22 March 1884.

<sup>16</sup> Pleasant Grove School District, “School Board Minute Book,” typewritten, Norfolk County Virginia, 15 August 1902 to 22 April 1922, 1.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>21</sup> Harold K. Robison, Engineer, “Fire Insurance Survey of Norfolk County Schools, Norfolk, County, Virginia,” typewritten report prepared for Mssrs. Welton, Duke and Hawks, Inc. by Alliance Insurance Company, Philadelphia Pennsylvania (Portsmouth, Virginia: February 1933), n.p.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> “New School To Replace Seven In Norfolk County,” *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 26 July 1952, A4.

<sup>24</sup> Minutes of the Norfolk County School Board, 1944-1956, dated 13 March 1953, 13; and auction broadside contained in School District Minute Book, July 1951 – June 1959.

<sup>25</sup> School Board Minutes, 10 April 1953. The 1956 Norfolk City Directory lists a Clarence E. Frost as living in Hickory and working for the police department.

<sup>26</sup> E.I. Grimes to John Waterfield, South Norfolk County Deed Book 262, page 170, dated 30 September 1902; John Waterfield estate to Mary Waterfield Lamb, deed of partition, South Norfolk County Deed Book 493, page 527, dated 5 February 1921; Mary Waterfield Lamb to L.W. Lamb, South Norfolk County Will Book 17, page 398, probated 1 May 1946; L.W. Lamb to Lyman and Mable Snead, South Norfolk County Deed Book 816, page 61, dated 3 June 1946.

<sup>27</sup> South Norfolk County Deed Book 84, pages 399-400, dated 10 October 1855.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Randolph Snead conducted by Karen Lang Kummer, 3 December 2012.

<sup>29</sup> Henry S. Rorer, “History of Norfolk Public Schools, 1681-1968,” typewritten manuscript, copyright 1968, 58-59.

<sup>30</sup> Virginia Historical Society, “Brown I and Brown II,” <http://www.vahistorical.org/collections-and-resources/virginia-history-explorer/civil-rights-movement-virginia/brown-i-and-brown>.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> West, 3.

<sup>33</sup> West, 7-8 and 180-181.

<sup>34</sup> West, 84.

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<sup>35</sup> Pleasant Grove School Board Minutes, 7. This was probably Anderson J.J. Sykes who is listed in the 1900 census as living in the Pleasant Grove Magisterial District. His sister, Amanda Sykes, also a well-known teacher, is listed as living with Anderson and his family.

<sup>36</sup> Pleasant Grove School Board Minutes, 7, 15-16. It is unknown what happened to Anderson J.J. Sykes, but by 1907 he was principal at Mt. Hermon Public School in Berkeley, according to the 1907 City Directory. A notation in the Norfolk County School Board minutes of 2 January 1926 mentions that Mr. Sykes had died on December 30 at the age of 67 in South Norfolk. He had worked in schools for forty-three years.

<sup>37</sup> Pleasant Grove School Board Minutes, 95, 101, 107, 132, 143.

<sup>38</sup> "Norfolk County's Shame," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 25 July 1925, 12.

<sup>39</sup> Editor, "Norfolk County Schools," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 3 October 1925.

<sup>40</sup> Norfolk County School Board Minutes, 1923-1933, 115.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 28 July 1923, 147. The 1920 figures are reissued as the school census for 1923.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 11 May 1926, 44 and 66.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 March 1929, 122; 16 March 1929, 122; and 30 September 1929, 140. Black schools went back to an eight month term for the 1931-1932 school term; *Ibid.*, 4 April 1931, 182.

<sup>44</sup> "Negro City Teachers Are Cut 16 Percent," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 24 February 1934.

<sup>45</sup> Thomas L. Dabney, "Fifteen Va. Counties Spend Over Three Times As Much On White Child As On Colored Child In The School," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 10 November 1934.

<sup>46</sup> Norfolk County School Board Minutes, 2 January 1932, 204.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 October 1935. Miss Fitchett's pay in 1936 was \$60.00 per month. She remains on the teacher lists through 1942, although no school assignment is given.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* 1930 student census, 302; and 1935 student census, 301.

<sup>49</sup> Norfolk County School Board minutes, 10 October 1942, 18 September 1943, and 9 October 1943.

<sup>50</sup> "Norfolk Pays Low Salaries To Teachers," *New Journal and Guide*, 19 January 1935, 9.

<sup>51</sup> "Norfolk County Teachers Petition for Pay Raises," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 21 December 1941, 2.

<sup>52</sup> Various articles in the *Norfolk Journal and Guide*: 21 June 1941, 1; 16 August 1941, 1; 10 January 1942, C14; 31 January 1942, C15; 7 February 1942, C14; 28 February 1942, A10; 21 March 1942, B18; 28 March 1942, C16; 2 May 1942, A10; 30 May 1942, B13; 1 August 1942, 6; 25 January 1947, 8.

<sup>53</sup> "Norfolk County Schools to Get \$1,250,000," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 25 March 1950, D27.

<sup>54</sup> "Norfolk County Citizens Oppose School Bond Issue," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 16 September 1950, E13.

<sup>55</sup> "The Norfolk County School Situation," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 20 January 1951, 25.

<sup>56</sup> "Attorneys Point Out Inequalities in Norfolk County Schools," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 10 March 1951.

<sup>57</sup> "City Schools Enroll 10,021, 424 Increase," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 15 September 1951.

<sup>58</sup> Norfolk County School Board Minutes, 13 October 1950 and 26 February 1951.

<sup>59</sup> "Three New Colored Schools Planned in Norfolk County," *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 24 February 1951.

Cornland School  
Name of Property

Chesapeake, Virginia  
County and State

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<sup>60</sup> “New School To Replace Seven In Norfolk County” and “Three Norfolk County Schools To Be Built On These Plans,” *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 26 July 1952, 4. Architects for the new school building were J. Binford Walford and O. Pendleton Wright.

<sup>61</sup> “Norfolk County Schools, 15 Years of Progress, 1939-1954,” Bulletin, Norfolk County Public School Board, 1954, 18 and “New Southeastern School Serves Ten Communities,” *Norfolk Journal and Guide*, 22 November 1952, B7.





**LOCATION MAP**

**Cornland School**  
**City of Chesapeake, VA**  
**DHR No. 131-0111**  
Location Coordinates:  
Latitude: 36.625580  
Longitude: -76.301830



**Title: Cornland School**

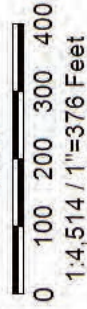
**Date: 4/27/2015**

*DISCLAIMER: Records of the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) have been gathered over many years from a variety of sources and the representation depicted is a cumulative view of field observations over time and may not reflect current ground conditions. The map is for general information purposes and is not intended for engineering, legal or other site-specific uses. Map may contain errors and is provided "as-is". More information is available in the DHR Archives located at DHR's Richmond office.*

*Notice if AE sites: Locations of archaeological sites may be sensitive to the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) and Code of Virginia §2.2-3705.7 (10). Release of precise locations may threaten archaeological sites and historic resources.*



Feet





**SKETCH MAP/AERIAL VIEW**

**Cornland School**  
**City of Chesapeake, VA**  
**DHR No. 131-0111**





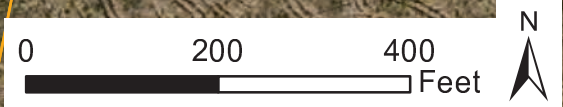
BENEFIT RD

BENEFIT RD

1 acre

**Legend**

-  Historic Boundary
-  School (contributing)

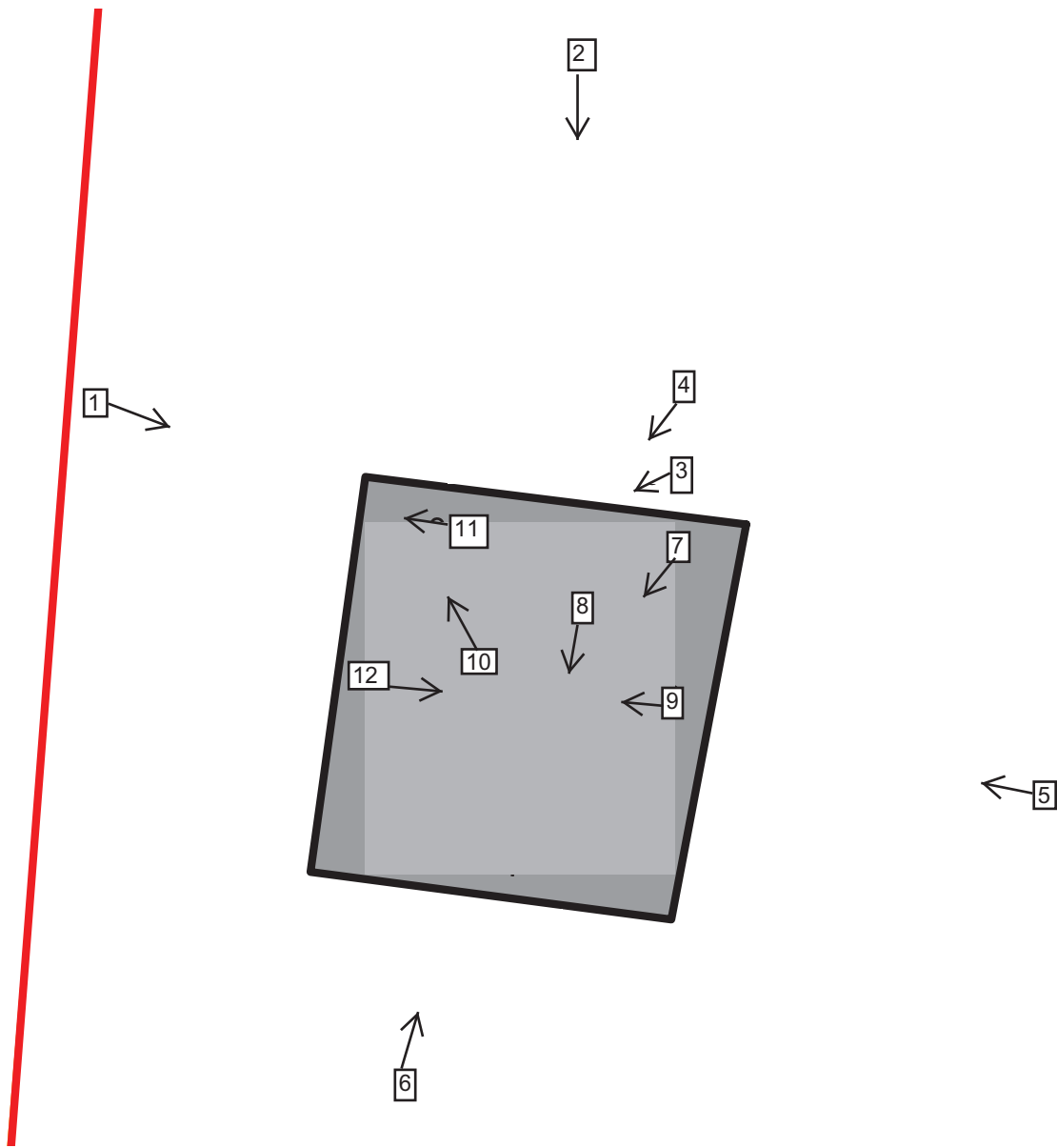


Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, i-cubed, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User Community



Cornland School  
2309 Benefit Rd Chesapeake, Va  
Photo Key

Photographer: Jennifer White  
Date Photographed: January 22, 2015  
DHR No. 131-0111



**Legend**



-  Building Outline
-  Cornland School Site Boundary

Photo Location

