

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Macon County High School
Other names/site number Notasulga High School
Name of related multiple property listing N/A
(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 500 East Main Street
City or town: Notasulga State: AL County: Macon
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 36866

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this 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 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

Lee Anne Wofford

October 1, 2020

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Alabama Historical Commission

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 of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Macon County High School
 Name of Property

Macon, AL
 County and State

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:) _____

Lisa Delina
 Signature of the Keeper

11/16/2020
 Date of Action

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	3	buildings
1	2	sites
		structures
		objects
7	5	Total

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

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Spanish Colonial Revival

Modern Movement: International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

STUCCO; CERAMIC TILE; BRICK; ASPHALT;
ALUMINUM

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.)

The historic campus of Macon County High School, whose name changed to Notasulga High School in the early 1970s, is a multi-building property located on the south side of East Main Street less than a mile from Notasulga's historic core. The nominated historic district has six contributing buildings, one contributing site, three noncontributing buildings, and two noncontributing sites. Built over several decades, the campus's oldest buildings are the 1935-1936 Spanish Colonial Revival auditorium and east classroom wing built by the Works Progress Administration. Stucco painted white covers the exterior of both buildings, which are connected by an arcade. The one-story classroom wing has a flat roof and a Mission-shaped parapet over a single arched entrance. The auditorium has a gable roof, a gable parapet dominates the façade, and triple arches define the entrance. To the west of the auditorium is a 1965 International Style, split-level classroom building with brick walls painted white, a flat roof, and bands of casement windows. To the south of this classroom building, there is a one-story lunchroom building of similar International Style design that dates to the same period. To the west of the 1965 classroom building is a vocational education building of similar International Style design that dates to the same period. Covered walkways connect each of the three International Style buildings to each other and also connect the International Style classroom wing to the Spanish Revival auditorium. These date to c.1993 when the school added ramps to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. A 1954 detached gymnasium is located east of these buildings, nearest the Spanish Revival classroom wing. A 1965 concrete block fieldhouse with gable roof and monitor is

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

located near the northwest corner of the football field. Despite modern improvements such as c.2000 fencing, aluminum bleachers, and an announcer's box, the football field is a significant site located on the southern portion of campus as it remains in its original location and played a large role in the school's successful integration story. The buildings and site possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Major changes that have occurred to the contributing resources are the results of significant events involving the school's history.

Non-contributing buildings include the c.2000 L-shaped, brick classroom building located south of the historic classroom buildings and lunchroom, a c.2014 concrete block ticket and concessions building, and a c.2014 corrugated metal building located near the western edge of campus. There are two non-contributing playgrounds (sites).

Setting

East Main Street borders the campus to the north. Bridges Street is located south of and runs parallel to East Main, terminating at the western edge of campus (residential lots are located between the two streets). Directly across East Main Street is a single-family residence and a large forested area. To the east of campus is a lot with a single-family residence. Forest lines the southern half of the eastern border of the campus. A lot with a single-family residence and large pond is located to the south beyond a tree line. An agricultural field, a lot with a single-family residence, and an empty lot are located to the west.

Two separate half-circle, or horseshoe-shaped driveways, the smaller one located within the larger, run from East Main Street, creating two "loops" that guide automobile traffic through the campus. The smaller of the two driveway loops connects to East Main Street perpendicularly at both junctions and encompasses much of the manicured greenspace that fronts the school. This driveway opens up immediately in front of the classroom buildings to include one row of parking.

The larger loop driveway, roughly the shape of a horseshoe, runs behind the cluster of classroom buildings, thus encompassing a majority of the campus. The eastern entrance to this larger driveway meets East Main Street at a perpendicular angle and continues directly south. An unpaved student parking area, empty greenspace, and the 1954 detached gymnasium are located to the east, outside of the loop. The driveway continues south and turns west at the football facility. The football field, ticket and concessions building, and fieldhouse are located to the south, outside of the loop. After passing the fieldhouse, the driveway turns northwest and passes the metal building located outside of the loop before straightening directly north. Just north of the metal building, Bridge Street ends where it meets the driveway at a perpendicular angle. At the northwest corner of this junction sits a single-family residence. North of this, the driveway functions as the campus' western border, on the other side of which is an empty but treed lot, before connecting back to East Main Street at a perpendicular angle. At the southeast corner of this junction are two square, cement pillars flanking a sidewalk that cuts southeasterly across greenspace toward the 1965-1966 classroom building. Near the halfway point of the sidewalk, the path splits to create a landscaped circle.

1. SPANISH REVIVAL AUDITORIUM AND CLASSROOM BUILDING C Building

The Works Progress Administration built the Spanish Colonial Revival facility as an all-white school 1935-1936. The original facility had three one-story parts that created a symmetrical facade: a central auditorium

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

with a classroom wing to the east and west, each attached by an arcade. In 1964, arsonists opposed to the school's integration destroyed the western classroom wing which was soon replaced by one-story International Style additions (Photos #0001 and #0002).

The remaining Spanish Colonial Revival building (Photo #0003) retains its character-defining features, including smooth stucco exterior wall surfaces painted white, parapets, colorful tiles arranged in geometric patterns, arched doorways and windows, and much of the original wood flooring. All exterior doors are non-historic. The original wood framed windows in these buildings were replaced with vinyl windows during the 2000s, but the configuration is similar to what was present during the period of significance. A stucco water table approximately two feet high runs around the auditorium and classroom wing. A front-gable roof with hipped corners covered in asphalt shingles caps the auditorium. The classroom wing's flat roof is covered in bitumen.

One remaining original arcade connects the Spanish Colonial Revival auditorium to its east classroom wing. There are three arches in the arcade's north wall, the middle of which contains five stairs that ascend to the arcade's floor. There are two, smaller arches in the south wall, each located near the south corners of the arcade. Both of these contain five stairs that ascend to the arcade's floor. All sets of stairs have flanking handrails.

A c.1993 covered walkway with flat roof connects the doorway in the west elevation of the auditorium to the doorway in the east elevation of the International Style classroom building.

Unless otherwise noted, the following describes walls left to right.

EXTERIOR - Auditorium

North Elevation

The north elevation of the auditorium is defined by a central section that projects approximately five feet and nearly covers the width of the elevation, leaving approximately two feet of recessed wall on either side (Photo #0005). This projecting section has a flat roof, and can be divided into three distinct bays. The central bay is a loggia bookended by pilasters, defined by a triple-archway, and reached by a stairway of five steps that run the length of the bay. Four round columns support the triple-archway. The two center columns are freestanding; the two outermost columns are engaged. The capitals of each column are square with a simple fleur-de-lis within a scroll executed in low relief on each face of the square. There is a square-shaped diamond made of blue and yellow tiles located above each of the two freestanding columns. Within the entablature that crowns this bay, the architrave contains a recessed rectangular panel flanked by two decorative squares made of yellow and blue tile (Photo #0004).

There are two identical doorways that lead from the loggia into the auditorium, each in line with the outermost of the three archways. Each doorway has double-leaf, metal doors with glass panes in the upper half, and a fanlight above. There is a tall and narrow glass ticket window on the east wall of this space.

The bays that flank the loggia are identical, each containing enclosed space accessible from the interior of the building. The easternmost bay served as the ticket office and still retains the ticket window that opens to the loggia in its west wall (ticket window visible in Photo #0012). The westernmost bay lacks a ticket

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

window. Each of these bays has a pair of narrow, four-over-four double-hung sash windows with fixed side-by-side panes above each set of sashes. Below each window near the ground is a small rectangular crawlspace vent. Directly above each set of windows is a decorative rectangle made of yellow and blue tiles (with a diamond shape inside the rectangle).

A gable parapet rises from behind the flat roof of the projecting central section (Photo #0004). Set back approximately five feet from the projecting section of the north elevation, the parapet wall is the building's true north wall as it is the same wall that divides the loggia from the auditorium and contains the doorways. The parapet is centered on the façade but does not run the width of it; it is as wide as the projecting section of the façade, leaving about two feet of the hipped roof visible on either side. Included in the parapet silhouette, two slightly projecting, rectangle-shaped, and vertically oriented panels bookend the gable. At the top-center of the gable's pediment, there is a decorative square (with a diamond shape inside the square) made of yellow and blue tile. This square is flanked by rectangle-shaped outlines created by yellow tile with blue tile at each corner. Both rectangles are oriented to parallel the parapet's gable shape. Below the top-center decorative square is a circular vent surrounded by a square outline of yellow and blue decorative tile. Each of the rectangle-shaped panels that bookend the gable have a decorative square (with a diamond shape inside the square) made of yellow and blue tile near the top.

East Elevation

On the east elevation, five evenly-spaced square pilasters that reach from the ground to the eaves divide the wall into 6 bays. In the northernmost bay, a doorway provides access from the auditorium into the arcade. The double-leaf door is metal with glass panes in the upper half. A fixed rectangle transom is located above each leaf and is encompassed in the metal frame of the door.

Each of the east elevation's four middle bays has a tall window defined by the rounded arch of the frame and the semi-circle fanlights. Below the transom of each window, the center section made of nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows is flanked by six-over-six fixed sashes. Below each window near the ground are small rectangular crawlspace vents.

The southernmost bay of the east elevation has a single-leaf metal door that leads to the back of the auditorium's stage. The door's small stoop is reached by three concrete stairs and is covered by a small shed roof above the door (Photo #0009).

South Elevation

The south elevation's wall is continuous with its gable parapet and similar in size, style, and shape to the one that defines the building's façade (Photo #0010). Mirroring the silhouette of the parapet on the south elevation, two slightly projecting panels bookend the gable but leave approximately two feet of eaves visible on each side. Unlike those on the north elevation, these panels reach the ground. A square shaped chimney exhaust is attached to the middle of the south elevation's wall and rises above the gable parapet's peak. The chimney divides the elevation into two symmetrical bays. The decorative elements are similar to those on the north elevation, except that there are no central tile squares due to the presence of the chimney.

Below these decorative rectangles along the roofline, slender vents flank each side of the chimney. Below these vents, two narrow four-over-four double hung sash windows with fixed side-by-side panes above each

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

set of sashes flank each side of the chimney. Located on the outside of these windows are two more windows of the same size and style, one in each bay.

Each bay's projecting panel also has a narrow four-over-four double-hung sash window with fixed side-by-side panes above each set of sashes.

In the west bay of the south elevation below the windows, a shed roof provides shelter for utility meters. A brick wall approximately four and a half feet tall and attached to the south elevation creates a square to obscure the HVAC system. Space for a double-leaf gate is located in the east wall. The upper two-thirds of the brick wall has patterned perforation to allow airflow and is painted white. The bottom third of the wall is solid brick and is painted gray to match the building's watertable. This wall is a later addition, likely built when an HVAC system was first installed in the auditorium during the latter half of the 20th century.

West Elevation

The west elevation is similar to the east elevation in that the entire wall is broken up into six bays by five, evenly spaced, square pilasters that reach from the ground to the eaves (Photo #0012). Mirroring the east elevation, there is a door of the same size and style in the west elevation's northernmost bay that provides access into the auditorium. This door originally led into the arcade that attached the east classroom wing destroyed in 1964 by arsonists but now leads to the covered walkway. The 1965 repair added a brick stoop here with two steps descending to the stoop at the entrance to the 1965 classroom wing. A wheel chair ramp was added to the north side of the auditorium stoop c.1993.

The rest of the west elevation's five bays mirror those of the east elevation in the number, size, and style of windows; small rectangular crawlspace vents located near the ground; and single-leaf door and stoop in the southernmost bay.

INTERIOR - Auditorium

The auditorium retains the original wood flooring, baseboards with a concave cap, chair rail, and picture rail. The original, denticulated crown molding surrounds the room (Photo #0033). Five original, evenly-spaced ceiling beams run from west to east. The ceiling has been covered in fiber ceiling tiles and fluorescent fixtures flush with the tiles now light the space.

Located near the center of the north wall are the two arched entrance doorways to the exterior. On the outside of each double doorway is a single wood door that leads to a small room. These rooms create the projecting portions of the façade. The room at the northeast corner was the ticket office, indicated by the small ticket window in the west wall. Above the doorways is a mural of Notasulga native Zora Neale Hurston, which was dedicated in May 2010. After interviewing Notasulga High School students regarding local landmarks to include, Auburn University students under the direction of Professor Wendy DesChene painted the mural as part of their Painting III class. The project was part of the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center for the Arts and Humanities lecture series "New Perspectives: The WPA in Alabama."¹

¹ "Zora Neale Hurston mural dedicated at NHS," *Tuskegee News*, May 27, 2010. The students who painted the mural were Sarah Williams, Maggie Mathews, Julia Starke, Emmaline Burch, Aaron Blackman, and Katherine Darby.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

The east wall contains the double doorway near the northeast corner that leads into the arcade outside. The rest of the east wall is taken up by the four evenly spaced windows with rounded arches and semi-circle fanlights. The west wall of the auditorium is identical to the east wall.

The auditorium's stage takes up much of the south wall (Photo #0032). The stage is raised about three-and-a-half feet off the ground. It is accessed from the main floor by a small stairway of four stairs located on either side of the stage. Located near the top of each set of stairs is a single-leaf door in the south wall that leads to the area behind the stage.

The stage's proscenium arch is a rectangle shape slightly projecting from the south wall and outlined by simply carved molding. The stage area retains the original flooring, baseboards, and chair rail. Behind the curtain, the stage is shaped like a symmetrical trapezoid with a single-leaf door in each of the side walls. These doors lead to the area behind the stage. This area's east and west walls each have the single-leaf doors to the exterior located near the corners shared with the south wall.

EXTERIOR – classroom wing

This classroom wing is located east of the auditorium and connected to it by the original arcade-style covered walkway.

North Elevation

The Spanish Revival classroom wing's north elevation is defined by a central arched doorway that leads to a small recessed entry and the elevation's only door to the interior of the building (Photo #0007). Six stairs flanked by low walls lead from the sidewalk to the recessed entry. The doors into the building are double-leaf, metal doors with glass panes in the upper half, and a fanlight above. A square pilaster on each side frames the arch and reaches from the stair walls to just above the roofline where they flank a small, Mission-shaped parapet. Between the parapet and recessed entry's arched doorway is a band of yellow and blue tiles.

Two slightly projecting panels create the corners of this elevation and rise slightly above the roofline (Photo #0003). Near the top of each panel is a decorative square (with a diamond shape inside the square) made of yellow and blue tile.

A shallow parapet wall surrounds the perimeter of the entire roof and is capped with pieces that give the impression of Spanish tile. There are two rectangular crawlspace vents on either side of the central entrance near the ground.

East Elevation

Similar to the north elevation, slightly projecting panels create the corners of the east elevation. Near the top of each panel is a decorative square (with a diamond shape inside the square) made of yellow and blue tile. Below the decorative tile in each projecting panel is a narrow, four-over-four double hung sash window.

There are four large sets of classroom windows of the same style evenly spaced between the projecting corners of the building (Photo #0008). Each large set of windows lights a different room inside. The southernmost window set contains two contiguous pairs of four-over-four, double-hung sash windows with

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

fixed side-by-side panes above each set of sashes. Near this window is an HVAC exchange vent. The remaining three window sets each contain three contiguous pairs of windows of the same style and size. There is a narrow, four-over-four, double hung sash window between these three sets of windows. Five small rectangular crawlspace vents are evenly spaced along the east elevation.

South Elevation

The classroom wing's south elevation is nearly exactly the same as the north elevation, with a central arched doorway that leads to a small recessed entry (Photo #0009). Four stairs flanked by a low stair wall on the east and a wheelchair ramp on the north lead to the recessed entry. Mirroring the north elevation, two projecting panels create the corners of the south elevation, each with decorative tiles near the top, and there are two rectangular crawlspace vents on either side of the central entrance near the ground.

West Elevation

The classroom wing's west elevation is very similar to the east elevation, with projecting panels creating the corners of the west elevation. Both corner panels have decorative tile squares near the top and a single window that are identical to the size and shape of those on the east elevation.

The arcade connects the auditorium to the northern half of the classroom wing's west elevation. A double-leaf metal door with glass panes in the upper half leads from the arcade into the classroom wing's small hallway. A fixed, rectangular transom is located above each door leaf and is encompassed in the metal frame of the door.

Just north of the arcade is a pair of four-over-four, double-hung sash windows with fixed side-by-side panes above each set of sashes (Photo #0006). Originally, this pair of windows belonged to a set of three; the adjacent two pairs were filled in at an unknown date. This is indicated by the remaining outline of the original windows and the sill that still runs beneath the enclosed space.

Just south of the arcade is a narrow, four-over-four, double-hung sash window that looks into a small room on the interior. Continuing southward, there are three more large sets of windows spaced along the west elevation that mirror the size, shape, and style of those on the east. The first of these is made of three contiguous pairs, the last two are made of two contiguous pairs. There are four small rectangular crawlspace vents located along the west elevation near the ground.

INTERIOR – classroom wing

A central hallway runs the length of the building from the entrance door in the north elevation to the door in the south elevation (Photo #0035). Offices and classrooms flank each side of the hallway. Five rooms are located on the east side of the hall. Five rooms and two restrooms are located on the west side of the hall. A secondary hallway is also located on the west side of the hall, leading from the arcade to meet the main hallway at a perpendicular angle.

The interior of the school's east classroom wing retains the original wood floors, baseboards, and chair rail. The walls are plaster. The ceiling has been dropped and is covered with fiber ceiling tiles. Florescent light fixtures have been installed and are flush with the ceiling. On each side of the hallway, there are seven

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

boarded up windows spaced out along the top of the walls. The dropped ceiling that was installed circa 1990 obscures the tops of each frame. These former windows encouraged light and airflow in between the hallway and classrooms. All original interior doors of this building have been replaced. Unless otherwise noted, all interior doors are single-leaf.

The first room (labeled on the sketch plan of the East Classroom Wing as Room 1) on the east side of the hall after entering through the façade door creates the northeast corner of the building. Like every other room on the east side of the hallway, the entry door is in the room’s west wall and its windows are in its east wall. Room 2 is a narrow room located south of Room 1 on the east side of the hallway. Rooms 3, 4, and 5 are large classrooms of similar size. Room 5 makes up the southeast corner of the building.

On the west side of the hallway, Room 6 is a classroom that creates the southwest corner of the building. Like most other rooms on the west side of the hall, the door is in its east wall and windows are in the west wall. Room 7 is of slightly smaller in size and is located north of Room 6. Room 8 is a larger classroom with two entry doors in its east wall and is located north of Room 7.

Room 9 is narrow and shares a wall with Room 8 but is accessed through the building’s secondary hallway that leads from the arcade door and meets the main hallway at a perpendicular angle. The entry door to the hallway is in the room’s north wall.

On the north side of the secondary hallway, across from Room 9, are the men’s and women’s restrooms. In both restrooms, the entry doors to the hallway are located in the rooms’ south wall. Vinyl composition tile covers the floors of the restrooms. The rooms retain original baseboards and parts of the wall retain a chair rail. Like elsewhere in the building, the ceiling is dropped and covered in fiber ceiling tiles. North of the restrooms is Room 10, which creates the northwest corner of the building.

1965 International Style Additions to Campus

The three International Style school buildings were added to the campus as part of the repair from the 1964 bombing that destroyed the original Spanish Colonial Revival Style classroom wing connected to the west side of the auditorium (Photo #0002). All three buildings are constructed with concrete blocks with brick veneer. Consistent with the International Style, all three buildings have low profiles with flat roofs and awning-style windows arranged in long bands. All buildings are one-story unless otherwise noted. All buildings have been painted white with a gray band at the bottom to mimic the walls and watertable of the Spanish Colonial Revival buildings. The International Style buildings were renovated in 1993 when new flooring was added and the ceiling dropped.

Unless otherwise noted, the following describes walls left to right.

2. INTERNATIONAL STYLE CLASSROOM BUILDING C Building

The split-level International Style classroom wing is located west of the Spanish Colonial Revival auditorium. A covered walkway connects the doorway in the east elevation of the International Style classroom building to the doorway in the west elevation of the auditorium (Photo #0011). On the classroom building’s south elevation is a covered walkway that connects to the north elevation of the International Style lunchroom building. This covered walkway continues around the east elevation of the lunchroom building

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

and connects to the noncontributing c.2000 classroom building (Photo #0023). There is a third covered walkway that attaches the classroom building's west elevation to the east elevation of the vocational education building (Photo #0015). The roof of this covered walkway extends south and covers additional space between the classroom building and the vocational building. All covered walkways have flat roofs and date c.1993.

The International Style classroom can be divided into two sections. The easternmost section is one-story and is the largest of the two sections, containing the primary entrances, offices, restrooms, the entire length of the main interior hallway, and some of the building's large classrooms. This section is indicated on the exterior by its one-story level and the long, contiguous bands of windows that light the classrooms. The building's westernmost section is split-level, indicated by the higher roofline. This split-level section contains four large classrooms. The two upper level classrooms are stacked directly on top of the two lower level classrooms. All exterior doors are non-historic.

EXTERIOR

North Elevation

The north elevation of the one-story section has two bays (Photo #0013). The easternmost bay contains a single window with two columns of four panes near the corner of the building. Adjacent to the window, black block letters attached to the brick wall spell "Notasulga High School." On the other side of the sign is the building's main entrance. Seven concrete stairs lead up to the entrance's stoop. A flat roof continuous with the rest of the building's roof projects out from above the door and extends over the stoop and stairs. The main entrance is a double-leaf metal door with a single narrow pane in each leaf. Four rectangular glass panes create a band above the door and three similarly-shaped panes flank each side above a solid panel.

The bay to the west of the entrance has one window with two columns of four panes adjacent to a long band of windows that perforate the upper half of this bay. The band of windows has twelve contiguous columns of five panes each. One pane near the bottom of the westernmost column has been boarded over and a vent is now in the space. There is a small HVAC system enclosed in a chain link fence on the ground near this modified pane.

The two-story section has two separate parallel bands of windows that run the width of this section (Photo #0014). The top band has eight columns of four panes each and lights one room on the upper level. The bottom band has eight columns of five panes each and lights one room on the bottom level. In each band, one pane near the bottom of the westernmost columns has been boarded over and a vent is now in the space. There are two small HVAC systems enclosed in a chain link fence on the ground the northwest corner of the building.

East Elevation

The building's east elevation has three bays (Photo #0011). The southernmost bay has two windows each with one column of three panes. The elevation's only doorway is in the middle bay and it opens into the covered walkway. The doorway has double-leaf metal doors with a single narrow pane in each leaf. A wheelchair ramp connects to the stoop of the classroom building at a perpendicular angle and runs south connecting to the lunchroom building's covered walkway. Another wheelchair ramp from the classroom

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

building entrance runs north and ends at a sidewalk. This wheelchair ramp parallels the one that runs from the auditorium's stoop. The adjacent bay has one window with one column of three panes.

South Elevation

The south elevation mirrors the north elevation. Similar to the north elevation, the split-level portion of the building has two separate parallel bands of windows that run the width of this bay. Both levels have eight columns of five panes in each band of windows. In each band, one pane near the bottom of the westernmost columns has been boarded over and a vent is now in the space. There are two small HVAC systems enclosed in a chain link fence on the ground near the southwest corner of the building.

Similar to the north elevation, the south elevation's one-story bay has a band of windows that perforates the upper half of the wall (Photo #0022). The band on this elevation is made of sixteen columns with five panes each. A pane near the bottom of one of the middle columns has been boarded over and a vent is now in the space. There is a small HVAC system enclosed in a chain link fence near the middle of the wall on the ground.

Mirroring the north elevation, the south elevation's only doorway is located in the easternmost bay and opens into the covered walkway. The two entrances are in direct line with one another. The size, shape, and style of the south elevation's doors are identical to those on the north elevation. Four stairs lead to this doorway's stoop. Also connected to the stoop on its east side is a wheelchair ramp.

West Elevation

The end of the split-level section of the building creates the west elevation (Photo #0019). There are no windows on either level, only an entrance to the bottom floor located in the center of the wall that opens into the covered walkway. The doorway has double-leaf metal doors with a single narrow pane in each leaf.

INTERIOR

The main hallway bisects the entire building lengthwise with flanking rooms. The hallway runs from the entrance door in the east elevation to the split-level stairs at the west end. A secondary hallway intersects with the main hallway and runs from the entrance in the building's north elevation to the entrance in the south elevation.

All walls in this building are concrete block. The floors in the hallways are covered in tile. Individual rooms are floored with vinyl composition tile. The ceiling has been dropped and covered with fiber ceiling tiles. Unless otherwise noted, all interior doors are single-leaf.

The short stretch of hall from the north entrance to the intersection with the main hallway is flanked by walls with no access doors (Photo #0036). On the east wall near the north corner there is a fixed two-over-two window that looks into the reception office. Beyond the intersection with the main hallway, the corridor continues a short distance and ends at the entrance in the building's south wall.

On the east side of the hall are solid double doors that leads to a janitor's closet. A nook located in the middle of the wall contains a single water fountain. The door to the men's restroom, which creates the

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

southeast corner of the building, is located on the other side of the water fountain nook. There are no doors or windows in the west wall of the hall.

Beginning at the east end of the main hallway, the first door on the south side of the hallway leads to the women's restroom. Moving west beyond the intersection with the secondary hall, Rooms 1 and 2 are large, similarly sized rooms located on the south side of the main hallway (Photo #0038). Like every other room on the south side of the hallway, entry doors are located in the north walls of these rooms and windows are in the south walls.

Split-level stairs are located at the west end of the main hallway (Photo #0037). This section of the building contains four rooms (Rooms 3, 4, 5, and 6), two on the upper level and two on the bottom level, of the same shape and size. The bottom flight of stairs leads to a small hallway on the lower level that is flanked on the north and south by the bottom level rooms directly across from one another. In the west wall of this space is the doorway outside. The doorway has metal, double-leaf doors with a narrow pane in each leaf. The upper flight of stairs leads to a small landing that is flanked on the north and south by two rooms directly across from one another.

The large library room is located on the north side of the main hallway. The room has two doors located in its south wall. East of the library is the main hallway's intersection with the secondary hallway. Beyond this intersection, there is a fixed two-over-two window and a door in the north wall of the main hallway. Through the door is the reception office. The reception office's east wall has a door to the principal's office. The north wall of the reception office has a door to a storage room. This cluster of small, connected rooms takes up the northeast corner of the building (bordered on the west by the secondary hallway and the south by the main hallway).

3. INTERNATIONAL STYLE LUNCHROOM BUILDING

C Building

The lunchroom building is located south of the 1965 classroom wing. There is a c.1993 covered walkway connecting the south door of the classroom building to the north door of the lunchroom building. This covered walkway wraps around the lunchroom building's northeast corner, runs along the east elevation, and connects to the non-contributing c.2000 classroom building (Photo #0023). All exterior doors are non-historic.

EXTERIOR

The north elevation is divided into three bays. In the east bay there is one window, a column of three panes. The middle bay has an entrance door. The door is double-leaf and metal with a narrow pane in each leaf. In the west bay, there are three evenly spaced windows that light the lunchroom. Each window is a contiguous pair of columns, each of five panes.

The east elevation has two windows near its center. Each window is a column of three panes. Between the windows are two exhaust/fan systems connected to the wall (Photo #0023).

The south elevation is divided into two bays that reflect the interior division of the building (Photo #0020). The west bay comprises about two thirds of the south elevation and creates the south wall of the lunchroom. There are three evenly spaced windows that light the lunchroom. These windows are the same size, shape,

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

and style as the series of three located on the north elevation. A wheelchair ramp runs the length of this section toward the rectangular concrete slab that fronts the adjacent (east) bay.

The east bay creates the south wall of the kitchen area. There is a large, free-standing, walk-in cooler placed adjacent to the building on the slab. There is a single-leaf metal door to the kitchen area near the cooler. A flat roof is connected to the south elevation and covers the small walkway in front of the cooler's doors.

The building's west elevation has one doorway in the middle of the wall (Photo #0020). It is a double-leaf metal door with a narrow pane in each leaf. A set of concrete steps leads from the ground to the stoop outside the door. There is a small flat roof attached the wall above the doorway that covers the stoop. A large HVAC system is connected to the west elevation near its north corner.

INTERIOR

The lunchroom's interior is divided into two sections by one interior wall: a large lunchroom (Photo #0039) and a narrow kitchen area. The kitchen is located on the east end of the building. The lunchroom takes up the rest of the building. The walls are concrete block and the floors are covered in vinyl composition tile.

4. INTERNATIONAL STYLE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION BUILDING C Building

The vocational building is located west of the International Style classroom building. The two buildings are connected by a c.1993 flat roof covered walkway attached to the west elevation of the classroom building and the east elevation of the vocational building (Photo #0015). It is a slender building that faces east, with three distinct sections. Two classrooms and the shop area create the northern and southern portions of the building's rectangle massing, respectively. The shop area is indicated by a higher roofline. The third section of the building is a narrow, rectangle shape that covers much of the building's east elevation and contains the building's primary entrances. The roof of this long, narrow section is continuous with that of the classroom section, but lower than that of the shop area. All exterior doors are non-historic.

EXTERIOR

East Elevation/Entrance

The majority of the east elevation is covered by the long, narrow section of the building that projects approximately ten feet from the walls of the classrooms and shop area behind it (Photo #0016). This section also contains the building's primary entrances under the covered walkway.

This section can be divided into two bays. Each bay has in its center a single-leaf metal door with a narrow pane. Above each door, three rectangular glass panes create a band above and three similarly-shaped panes flank each side above a solid panel. In between the doors are two one-over-one windows. Flanking the outside of the set of doors is a contiguous pair of windows, each a column of four panes. The north elevation of this section has one contiguous pair of windows, each a column of four panes; there are no openings in its south elevation.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

Classroom Section

This section contains two classrooms and comprises approximately two-thirds of the building's rectangular massing on its north end. The east elevation of this section has one window, made of a column of three panes, located near the wall's junction with the previously described projecting section of the building.

The north elevation of this section originally had three evenly-spaced windows. The middle window has been enclosed and there is now a window unit in the space. The remaining two windows are columns of three panes each.

The interior wall dividing the two classrooms is clearly evident on this section of the building's west elevation (Photo #0017). Three windows, each a contiguous pair of sashes made of five panes light the northern classroom. The outer two windows have HVAC systems attached.

There is a single-leaf metal door south of these three windows that enters into the south classroom. Immediately south of this door is a short wall that projects at a perpendicular angle. The north face of the projecting wall has a double-leaf metal door. Above the double-doorway is a fixed transom divided into two panels that align with each door leaf. The doorways share a small concrete stoop reached by two stairs. A flat roof contiguous with the rest of the building's roof projects beyond the eaves to shelter the stoop.

To the south of these doors, a band of windows perforates the majority of the second classroom's west wall. The band of windows is made of five contiguous columns, with five panes in each column.

Shop Room

The shop room comprises approximately one-third of the building's rectangular massing on its south end. Its higher roofline clearly indicates its location in the building as well as its relationship to other sections of the building. The upper half of the shop room's west wall has four evenly-spaced windows. Each window is a contiguous pair of columns, each made of five panes.

A vertical garage door is located in the center of the shop room's south wall (Photo #0018). A single-leaf metal door is located adjacent to the garage door. There is a small flat roof attached to the wall above the door.

The shop room's east wall has one contiguous pair of columns, each with five panes in each column, near the room's southeast corner. A row of monitor-style windows is located under the shop room's roof line in the section of the east wall that rises above the projecting section of the building's roofline.

INTERIOR

The vocational building's interior is divided into three sections for different industrial arts training. All interior walls are concrete block and the rooms retain their original concrete flooring and open work areas. The prominent southern section is the shop room for automobile and truck repair training. Reflecting its function, the ceiling of the shop room is higher than in the rest of the building. The other two sections of the vocational building were for electrical repair training and for agricultural industrial arts and thus are similar in size and space to other classrooms in the school.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

5. 1954 INTERNATIONAL STYLE GYMNASIUM C Building

The detached gym is located to the east of the campus' main cluster of buildings (Photo #0001). The exterior is brick painted white, except for otherwise noted small sections that have been covered in stucco. A band of gray paint runs along the bottom of the walls to mimic the water table of the Spanish Colonial Revival buildings. Some of the exterior walls are clad with large panels of corrugated metal. These panels cover former window openings. Remaining windows have been replaced.

The gymnasium building has two main sections indicated by two different rooflines. The roof of the basketball court/stage area rises above the lower roofline and is slightly-gable-shaped. The other section has a flat one-story high roofline and runs alongside the west elevation of the building, wraps around the northwest corner, and ends near the middle of the north elevation. All exterior doors are non-historic.

EXTERIOR

The low, flat roof section of the building covers the entire west elevation and contains the primary entrance to the building (Photo #0025). The high roof of the gym is visible above the flat roof. The west elevation is divided into two bays (Photo #0026). In the north bay, four slender brick columns project from the wall and divide it into three sections. The two sections near the north corner have no windows or doors. There is a double-leaf metal door with a narrow pane in each leaf located between the two southernmost columns.

The south bay of the west elevation has two sections. Each section has a row of windows near the top of the wall. Each row is made of contiguous, fixed four-over-four windows. At the middle of each row, a fan system is connected to the wall.

The majority of the gymnasium building's north elevation is created by the flat-roofed section of the building that wraps around the northwest corner and ends in the middle of the gym's north wall. There are no doors or windows in the uncovered section of the gym's wall.

The flat-roofed section of the north elevation is divided into four bays. The east bay has a single-leaf metal door with a narrow pane. A square transom above the door has been enclosed. The adjacent bay is defined by a contiguous pair of windows in the upper half of the wall. Each window has three sets of four-over-four double-hung sash windows with fixed side-by-side panes above each set of sashes. The lower half of the wall in this section is not clad in brick like the other exterior walls of the building but has a smooth finish of stucco. As a result, this windowed section of the north elevation appears recessed from the rest of the wall.

The adjacent bay is faced with brick and has no windows or doors. The westernmost bay creates the northwest corner of the building and projects about one-and-a-half feet from the wall.

The gym section's east wall, with its tall roof, creates the east elevation of the building. There are no doors on this elevation. Originally, a band of windows ran along the length of the elevation near the top of the wall to light the gym area. These have been covered with corrugated metal panels.

The east portion of the south elevation is created by the gym's south wall. The west portion is created by the south wall of the flat-roofed section of the building. There are no doors in the gym portion of the south

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

elevation. Similar to the east elevation, a band of windows originally ran along the width of the wall's upper half. These have been covered with corrugated metal panels. There are two ducts running from the HVAC systems on the ground to above the covered band of windows where they attach to the wall. A chain link fence surrounds this section of the building, obscuring the view of the HVAC systems.

The west portion of the south elevation has one double-leaf metal door. There is a small flat roof attached to the wall above the door.

INTERIOR

Much of the arrangement of the building's interior is indicated by the two rooflines, with the higher rooflines accommodating the stage and gym, both of which retain original wood flooring. The section of the building with the lower, flat roofline contains a lobby/ticket area, locker rooms, and restrooms.

6. 1965 FIELDHOUSE C Building

The fieldhouse is located near the northwest corner of the football field. It is a rectangular, concrete block building with a gable roof (Photo #0030). There is a monitor that runs along the ridgeline of the roof. There is a small room covered with a shed roof attached to the building's southeast corner.

There are two doors located near the corners of the building on its north elevation. All of the windows have been infilled with concrete blocks. The outline of the original windows and sills remain. This building is no longer actively used.

7. 1935-1936 FOOTBALL FIELD C Site

When it was originally built during the New Deal, the football field was an important component of the new, modern school campus. After integration, the football team was an integral symbol of the school's successful implementation of a biracial system.

The football field's length is oriented north-south and occupies the southern portion of campus (Photo #0029). It is surrounded by a chain link fence. Non-historic aluminum bleachers flank either side of the field. A non-historic announcer's box is located at the top center of the east set of bleachers. Despite these modern additions, the football field remains in its original location.

8. c.2000 CLASSROOM BUILDING NC Building

This L-shaped building is located south of the auditorium and International Style buildings. It is clad in brick and has been painted white to match the rest of the buildings on campus. Its cross-gable roof is covered in asphalt shingles. A covered walkway attaches the building to the International Style classroom and lunchroom buildings north of it (Photo #0021 and #0024). The building currently houses the school's elementary classrooms.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

9. c.2014 TICKET AND CONCESSIONS BUILDING NC Building

The ticket and concessions building is located at the northeast corner of the football field (Photo #0028). It is a concrete block building with a cross-gable roof covered in corrugated metal panels. An open-air corridor located in its center divides the building equally and provides access to the football field. A concrete patio wraps around the side and rear elevations. The entrance to this corridor is designed to reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival Style of the auditorium and east classroom wing.

10. c.2014 METAL BUILDING NC Building

This building is located near the western border of campus (Photo #0031). It is clad in corrugated metal panels and has a gable roof covered in the same material.

11. c.2014 PLAYGROUND NC Site

This playground is a non-contributing site located southeast of the detached gym building (Photo #0027). The playground has several modern climbing frames, a swing set, and a large playset for smaller children.

12. c.2014 PLAY AREA NC Site

This playground is a non-contributing site located in the rectangular open space created by the L-shape of the c.2000 classroom building (Photo #0024). A chain link fence encloses the area. There is minimal permanent equipment.

Integrity Statement

The majority of substantial changes undergone by the Macon County High School's historic district occurred during its periods of significance. These modifications, namely the International Style building additions of the 1960s, provide physical links to the historic evolution of the campus from a model, New Deal Era school built for whites, to one of the places where a landmark desegregation lawsuit played out and the site of violent opposition from segregationists during the Civil Rights Era, and ultimately to a much-acclaimed example of successful school integration at work in the later 20th century. The historic buildings related to these periods are generally clustered in the center of campus and are clearly distinguishable and separated from modern building additions and expansion of school facilities that occurred in the late 20th and early 21st centuries and are located toward the rear of campus. Other non-historic modifications, such as the addition of HVAC systems to the historic buildings, drop ceilings, replacement of windows in the Spanish Revival building, and the addition of modern playground equipment to the grounds are either reversible and/or do not substantially affect the design, materials, and workmanship of the historic school buildings. The nominated historic district also retains integrity of location and setting in a rural area as the surrounding landscape remains largely undeveloped. Taken together, the integrity of these five physical characteristics provide the appropriate historic feeling, or aesthetic, as well as association to the relevant historic periods and events.

Macon County High School
 Name of Property

Macon, AL
 County and State

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.)

Property is:

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK

SOCIAL HISTORY

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1935 to 1974

Significant Dates

1963 – lawsuit begins; 1964 – arsonists bomb school, new ruling in case; 1967 – statewide order to desegregate

1974 – school receives widespread recognition of integration success

1935-1936 – construction of Spanish Revival school building by WPA

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

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.)

The Macon County High School, at 500 East Main Street, Notasulga, Macon County, Alabama, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its national, statewide, and local significance under Criterion A, in education history, black heritage, and social history, for its association with the Civil Rights Movement from 1963 to 1974. Known as Notasulga High School since the early 1970s, the school's history and its physical evolution illustrate the profound changes taking place in public education in the American South during those years, particularly the process of integration. The school is significant to racial integration of education in two ways. Events, students, and faculty at the school during its period of significance are directly associated with *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* (1963-2006), the nationally significant landmark Civil Rights case that set a precedent for an enhanced role for the federal government in the desegregation of local schools through judicial relief, direct on-ground intervention, and compliance monitoring. The case is also significant in that it replaced the necessity of addressing integration school district by school district with a statewide approach and grew in scope to affect other education-related institutions. Macon County High School is also significant for its successful integration in the late 1960s and 1970s that received nationwide and international attention as a model example of integration by 1974.

The school also has local significance under Criterion C (Architecture), as an example of the Spanish Colonial Revival and International styles in a rural Alabama public school building. The period of significance for Criterion C is 1935-1965. Original construction of the school as a segregated all-white institution took place in 1935-1936 with partial funding from the Works Progress Administration. The county built the 1965 International style buildings after segregationists bombed the school during its initial integration in the spring of 1964. The centerpiece of the campus then as it is today was the Spanish Colonial Revival auditorium/gymnasium, which became an important public building for all sorts of community events for the remainder of the 20th century.

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

Criterion A: Education History, Black Heritage, and Social History

Background Information: Education in Macon County

Created in 1832 out of land once held by Muscogee Creek Indians, Macon County is located in Alabama's Black Belt region approximately 40 miles east of Montgomery. The dark, loamy soil for which the Black Belt is named drew white settlers who brought with them enslaved African Americans to cultivate the fertile land, giving rise to the plantation agriculture system which shaped the demographics and culture of the 17-county region. By 1860, the Alabama Black Belt's enslaved African American population had risen to 64% of the total population, a substantial increase from 38% in 1820. In Macon County, enslaved African Americans comprised nearly 68% of the total population in 1860, with 18,176 enslaved people, one free African American female, and 8,625 whites. Though Macon County's overall population fluctuated, the county remained rural with an African American majority throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries. The

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

county seat of Tuskegee, as well as the towns of Shorter and Notasulga, emerged as early population centers of the county and remain so today.²

Though public schools existed in Alabama before the Civil War, the system saw limited success outside of Mobile, and private academies provided much of the state's education. Regardless of a school's administration, African Americans attended neither. The same year the Alabama legislature created Macon County, it joined other southern states in prohibiting the education of enslaved and free African Americans, as literacy posed a threat to the racial and social order that upheld slavery. While many enslaved individuals in Alabama certainly gained various extents of literacy and education through clandestine means, violating this rule was met with severe consequences. When the Civil War ended, the vast majority of formerly enslaved people, approximately 18,000 in Macon County, could not read or write and limiting access to education remained a common mechanism in the oppression of African Americans throughout the rest of the 19th and 20th centuries.³

As in other southern states, education of African Americans in Alabama immediately after the Civil War began largely with the help of northern aid societies, the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (commonly known as the Freedmen's Bureau), and various freedpeople across the state who themselves established schools with their own means. No matter the origins of the school, organizers could often not keep up with the demands of large enrollments and had difficulty supplying enough teachers. Seeing education of formerly enslaved people as an affront to the prevailing social structure, many white Alabamians reacted by burning African American school buildings and intimidating students and teachers. Thus emerged two trends that came to define education and social history in the South for the next century: African Americans' tireless pursuit of education; and the violent opposition of many white southerners to this endeavor.⁴

Alabama's Reconstruction Constitution of 1867 laid out plans for the state's new public school system in which "all of the children of the State between the ages of five and twenty-one may attend free of charge."⁵ The constitution also established a state Board of Education (BOE) that oversaw the distribution and use of school funds, with a special committee devoted to African American schools. The constitution did not require separate schools for whites and blacks but the state's BOE allowed the establishment of separate schools and thus began the state's century-long attempt to maintain two school systems. Though it is unclear how many schools existed in Macon County during this time, an 1871 testimony to Congress noted, among

² United States Census Bureau, *Classified Population of the State and Territories by Counties on the First Day of June 1860*, Table No.2 Population by Color and Condition, 8; Donna J. Siebenthaler, "Macon County," *Encyclopedia of Alabama* online, last updated July 19, 2019.

³ Horace Mann Bond, *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study of Cotton and Steel* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994), 15.

⁴ John B. Myers, "The Education of the Alabama Freedmen during Presidential Reconstruction," *The Journal of Negro Education* 40, no.2 (Spring 1971), 166-170.

⁵ Bond, *Negro Education*, 90.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

other violent incidents perpetrated by whites, that nearly every school and church building for African Americans in Macon County had been burned during the fall of 1870.⁶

As former Confederates regained control of the state's legislature, they sought to increasingly curb the public education system and its goal to extend equal education to African Americans. The 1875 constitution codified the segregation of public schools. Subsequent legislation put a cap on how much revenue the dual school system could receive. Perhaps one of the most detrimental blows to equality in Alabama's education system, the constitution of 1901 enabled counties and cities to divide funds among the segregated schools as they wished and, not coincidentally, also did much to worsen the disfranchisement of black voters. In addition to the violent opposition, destruction of property, and limited number of qualified teachers that plagued African American education in Alabama, this new funding arrangement led to the increasing disparity between education for white and black children for the next several decades as local school boards comprised of white members funneled a disproportionate amount of money into white schools. Alabama education officials in 1908 reported only 14 percent of funding went to African American education while they comprised 44 percent of the school-age population. The diversion of funds was particularly egregious in majority black counties such as Macon. According to one historian, "Alabama's state education officials provided detailed statistical evidence of the positive correlation between majority black populations and funding for white schools."⁷ As a result, black families in Macon County and elsewhere in Alabama continued to contribute significant labor, funding, and materials of their own to maintain buildings, pay and board teachers, and provide supplies such as firewood.⁸

Macon County became known as a center for African American education when the legislature established what is now known as Tuskegee Institute, or Tuskegee University, in 1881. Until the mid-20th century, it was implied that Tuskegee Institute faculty abided by "the unspoken pledge to stay out of politics."⁹ Created primarily to train African American teachers, and thus increase the quality of education that was available to black children in the South, Tuskegee Institute also built the Alabama Register-listed Harris Barrett School for black children in 1903 near Tuskegee and ran the Chambliss Children's House on campus which provided elementary education. The Institute was heavily involved in beginning the Rosenwald Fund Rural School-Building Program that helped communities erect 18 modern school buildings for black children in the county, including the National Register-listed Shiloh Rosenwald School in Notasulga (#10000522). Despite these important contributions by Tuskegee Institute, a vast gap in the education provided by the dual public school system persisted due to the mechanisms and political power of white conservatives and the severe suppression of African American voting rights.¹⁰

⁶ Gordon Harvey, "Public Education During the Civil War and Reconstruction Era," *Encyclopedia of Alabama* online, last updated February 12, 2015; *Reports of the Committees: 30th Congress, 1st Session – 48th Congress, 2nd Session, Volume 2, Part 2, 1872*, xviii.

⁷ Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006), 17.

⁸ Harvey, "Public Education"; Robert G. Sherer, *Subordination or Liberation? The Development and Conflicting Theories of Black Education in 19th Century Alabama* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1977), 12-14.

⁹ Robert Jefferson Norrell, "Reaping the Whirlwind: Change and Conflict in Macon County, Alabama, 1941-1972," (PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1983), abstract.

¹⁰ Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database, John Hope and Aurelia Franklin Library, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee. The other 17 schools built in Macon County with partial funding by the Rosenwald Fund include Baldwin Farms School, Bethel Grove School, Brown Hill School, Brownsville No. 2, Chehaw School, Clintonville School, Harnon School,

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

Fisk University’s Charles S. Johnson compared expenditures on teachers’ salaries in Macon County to relate the severe discrepancy of funding between education for whites and blacks in 1930. Of the school age children living in Macon County, 7,145 were black and 1,435 were white, yet only \$27,823 was spent on paying teachers for black schools while funding for white teachers surpassed \$57,000. After surveying 612 African American families in Macon County in 1931, Johnson concluded, “...the Negro school, instead of creating a class of Negro peasant proprietors, seems, particularly since the World War [I], to have conspired with other tendencies to hasten the movement from the rural South to Northern cities.”¹¹ Census numbers from 1920, 1930, and 1940 indicate Macon County’s population actually grew, some of which can be attributed to Tuskegee Institute students and employees, and African Americans continued to comprise the overwhelming majority (82% in 1940) during these decades. Johnson’s account of African American literacy and access to consistent education was bleak, though his study did not compare white literacy rates in Macon County, and Johnson acknowledged that education in Alabama for both whites and blacks in general was “seriously” behind that of the rest of the country.

Well into the 20th century, African American and white children continued to attend school in separate, community schools located throughout the county to obtain an elementary education. Because of the ongoing disparity in funding, the African American communities in Macon County remained largely responsible for the success of these community schools. Some, such as Cotton Valley School for African Americans in south Macon County, offered grades first through eighth, after which students attended the Alabama Register-listed Macon County Training School (MCTS) near Roba to obtain education up to twelfth grade.

Other small community schools, such as Shiloh Rosenwald School in Notasulga, offered classes to the sixth grade and students took middle school courses elsewhere, either at smaller schools that offered seventh and eighth grades, or at Washington Public Middle School in Tuskegee.¹² Examples of other elementary schools for African Americans in Macon County include Tuskegee Institute’s Chambliss Children’s Home open to children in Tuskegee and especially attended by the black middle-class professionals who worked at the Institute. Tuskegee Institute High School was the only other school, besides MTCS, where African Americans could obtain a full high school education.

Alabama’s 1940 per pupil education expenditure of \$41.38 for each white child and \$13.85 for each black child clearly illustrates the severe disparity of the state’s segregated school system.¹³ Education inequality materialized in various ways, to the number of teachers available for each system and the quality of supplies

Macedonia School, New Rising Star School, Notasulga School, Pinkerton Crossroads, Russel Plantation, Sweet Gum School, Thrasher School, Tysonville School, Union Public School, and Washington School.

¹¹ Charles S. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), xx, 136; United States Census Bureau, *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 Population: Characteristics of the Population*, Table No.21 Composition of the Population by Counties, 238.

¹² Information from interview with Mary Whitaker, alumna of Shiloh Rosenwald School, by Elizabeth Moore on March 13, 2008 in preparing the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church and Rosenwald School. National Register of Historic Places, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church and Rosenwald School, Notasulga, Macon County, Alabama, National Register #10000522.

¹³ Harry S. Ashmore, *The Negro and the Schools* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954), 153-159.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

such as textbooks and desks, to the different types of secondary education aimed at children of each race, and the disparate size and condition of their school buildings. Some of these inequalities are best represented by Macon County's high schools. Despite having an overwhelming majority black population, there were three high schools for whites in Macon County, one each in Tuskegee and Shorter, and the nominated Macon County High School in Notasulga, while there were only two African American high schools. The title of "training school" carried by one of the two high schools for blacks, derived from the widespread belief among white Alabamians that African Americans were better suited for careers in manual labor and focused on industrial and domestic arts rather than more classical high school curriculums available to white children. The difference in facilities available to white and black students is also evidenced in the construction of the nominated Macon County High School as a large new, "model" school for whites by the Works Progress Administration in 1935-1936. The *Tuskegee News* in 1936 touted the white school as "one of the most modern and complete school plants in the state." The article conflated such success with the claim that Notasulga's population was "made up almost wholly of Anglo-Saxon ancestry," indicating the blatant white supremacy that undergirded the allocation of school resources.¹⁴ Just a year after the new campus for white children was completed, the principal of Macon County Training School wrote to the *Montgomery Advertiser* that, "The teachers, students, and community are doing everything they can" to finish a one room addition to their extant school building.¹⁵

Efforts to expose and rectify such inequalities and violations of civil rights in general, gained momentum in the 1940s. In 1939, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) established the Legal Defense and Education Fund, a focused commitment to legally challenging the notion of "separate but equal" that justified the South's racially segregated school system. Membership in the NAACP across the country increased from 50,000 in 1940, to 450,000 by 1946.

Early Efforts to Desegregate Macon County High School, 1941-1963

The mid-20th century effort to integrate public schools in Macon County began in 1941, when the Tuskegee Civic Association (TCA) formed to ensure citizenship rights for blacks in Macon County, including voting rights and equitable access to education. In addition to increased political activism by nongovernment organizations, the "liberal dominance of the national Democratic party" worried white conservatives in Macon County and elsewhere in Alabama as moderate candidates such as Jim Folsom defeated more conservative candidates in state elections. The Boswell Amendment, an addition to Alabama's constitution that sought to prevent black Alabamians from voting, was ruled unconstitutional in 1949, further worrying conservatives across the state. The potential of growing black political power was evident in Macon County in 1950, when, through the voter registration work of the TCA, black voters helped oust a sheriff known for his brutality against African Americans. The potential threats to white conservative dominance, and thus segregation, posed by these and similar developments were not lost on state officials in Alabama and other southern states who increased education funding throughout the 1940s and early 1950s in an effort to equalize and protect the segregated school systems they intended to keep in place. In 1951, Charles

¹⁴ "The Notasulga School – The Result of Vision and Determination," *Tuskegee News*, September 17, 1936.

¹⁵ D.V. Joseph, letter to the editor, *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 1, 1937.

Macon County High School

Name of Property

Macon, AL

County and State

Gomillion, leader of the TCA acknowledged that the disparity between white and black schools in Macon County had decreased but still required much work toward equality.¹⁶

In 1951 the TCA also petitioned Macon County Schools to allow an African American high school student to take a geometry course at the white-only Tuskegee High School, as geometry was not offered in the curriculum available to black high school students in the county. The school board denied the request but the petition, commented one Birmingham reporter, was an “opening wedge move by Negroes to gain admittance to white schools.”¹⁷ Soon after and partially in response to the petition, newly elected state legislator and white Macon County native, Sam Engelhardt, took up the mantle of preserving segregation when he proposed a bill that would terminate public education in the state should the Supreme Court order integration. A known racist and segregationist, Engelhardt ran on an alarmist campaign that pointed to growing black political power, such as that exhibited in Macon County, as a threat to white political and social dominance. Alabama lawmakers voted his bill down but the proposal foreshadowed the extent to which white conservatives like Engelhardt would go to preserve segregation in Alabama schools later.¹⁸ Three years after the petition, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared “separate but equal” schools unconstitutional but its weak mandate allowed local school boards to avoid implementation of integration.

In 1955, following the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education II* that ordered school desegregation proceed with “all deliberate speed,” thirty-two African American families in Macon County again petitioned the school board to admit their children; once more the answer was no. Senator Engelhardt proclaimed: “We will have segregation in the public schools of Macon County or we will have no schools.”¹⁹

Most whites across the South shared the senator’s attitude. Left to their own devices after the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board* that declared “separate but equal schools” for black and white children unconstitutional, local school boards across the South avoided integration. Though *Brown v. Board I and II* provided an important foundation from which to challenge segregation in public education, “limited guidance and support from the Supreme Court, congressional resistance, and presidential hesitation” enabled southern states and local school boards to avoid implementing the ruling for years. Southern officials and politicians not only avoided implementing *Brown*, they actively resisted school desegregation through various legal means under the banner of Massive Resistance, described by one historian as “the counterrevolution against the Civil Rights Movement.”²⁰ Initiated in Virginia by Senator Harry Byrd, Massive Resistance rested upon the insistence of states’ rights over federal authority as well as the preservation of “southern traditions” (i.e., racial segregation), two ideas that were, unsurprisingly, inextricable from Lost Cause ideology.²¹ Though each state’s Massive Resistance tactics played out in

¹⁶ Robert J. Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee* (New York: Knopf, 1985), 81.

¹⁷ Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, 81; *Birmingham News*, February 10, 11, 1951.

¹⁸ Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, 82.

¹⁹ Brian K. Landsberg, “Enforcing Desegregation: A Case Study of Federal District Court Power and Social Change in Macon County Alabama,” *Law & Society Review*, 48 (December 2014): 871.

²⁰ John Kyle Day, *The Southern Manifesto: Massive Resistance and the Fight to Preserve Segregation* (Oxford: University of Mississippi Press, 2014), 63.

²¹ Commenting on Virginia’s leadership role in resistance to *Brown*, former Virginia legislator Ben Muse explained, “Virginia, with its glorious role in the early history of the republic and again in the struggle for the great Lost Cause... was surely indicated to

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

unique ways, “legislative patterns of resistance” emerged among them. The era after *Brown* saw politicians across the South pass over 450 statutes to legally avoid integration and hinder civil rights work which was inextricable from the issue of school desegregation.²²

Some of the legislative tools used to maintain segregation after *Brown* were pupil placement laws. These laws essentially enabled local school authorities to place children in schools as they saw fit under the veil of applying non-racial criteria such as academic record, ability, and transportation availability, to determine placement. Exercised by all-white school boards in Alabama and elsewhere, the placement laws effectively prevented black children from attending white schools. The laws also functioned as a way for states to shirk responsibility for integration since the authority to “place” students in particular schools lay with the local governments. Alabama passed its Pupil Placement Law in 1955. In 1958, Birmingham Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth unsuccessfully challenged the constitutionality of Alabama’s pupil placement law in *Shuttlesworth v. Birmingham Board of Education*. By the 1960s, the majority of southern states had passed similar pupil placement laws to aid in the maintenance of their segregated school systems.²³

Interposition was another, more radical strategy used by southern states to avoid federally-ordered integration. Instead of the hyperlocal authority upon which the pupil placement laws were based, interposition strategies placed the state in between the federal government and the state’s people as a way to check the former’s power when citizens felt their constitutional rights had been violated. As early as 1954, Mississippi passed an amendment allowing the use of public funds for private schools attended by whites who wanted to avoid integrated schools. Other southern states followed suit. These laws that authorized the use of public funds to privatize white education often went hand in hand with constitutional amendments that called for the closure of public schools rather than integrate per the *Brown* ruling. Virginia, Alabama, and other southern states passed interposition resolutions declaring the Supreme Court’s orders regarding the desegregation of public schools null and void.²⁴

Southern states exercised another form of interposition with laws designed to hinder civil rights work because of its threat to segregation and aspirations for equality. Alabama’s attorney general at the time, James M. Patterson, secured an injunction to prevent NAACP activity in the state. Alabama also gave local school boards the authorization to fire teachers who promoted integration. Georgia criminalized advocating for desegregation. Mississippi required all public employees to declare their membership in organizations. South Carolina kept NAACP members from public employment. Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina passed laws prohibiting the Federal Bureau of Investigation from interviewing prisoners that were victims of civil rights violations without a state official present. During George Wallace’s time as Alabama Circuit Court Judge before his election to the governorship, he vowed to arrest FBI agents investigating jury

carry the banner of the South in this latest conflict.” Quoted in Daugherty, “‘Keep on Keeping On’: African Americans and the Implementation of *Brown v. Board of Education* in Virginia,” in *With All Deliberate Speed: Implementing Brown v. Board of Education* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2008), 45; Day, *Southern Manifesto*, 11.

²² Daugherty, 44; James Tyra Harris, “Alabama Reaction to the *Brown* Decision, 1954-1956: A Case Study in Early Massive Resistance,” (PhD diss., Middle Tennessee State University, 1975), 40. Brian J. Daugherty and Charles C. Bolton, eds., “Introduction,” in *With All Deliberate Speed*, viii, xiii; Benjamin Muse, *Ten Years of Prelude: The Story of Integration Since the Supreme Court’s 1954 Decision* (New York: The Viking Press, 1964), 63-65.

²³ Harris, “Alabama Reaction,” 214.

²⁴ Day, *The Southern Manifesto*, 11-13.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

tampering. According to one historian, “The interpositionists spread their message across the United States and thus provided the intellectual propaganda necessary for subverting *Brown*” and “predicted that regions with black majorities would inevitably experience violent resistance, as well as the degradation, if not abandonment, of their public school systems.”²⁵

The various means of delaying desegregation worked in Macon County as elsewhere in the South. After seven years of no progress, the Tuskegee Civic Association in September 1962 petitioned the school board to develop a plan for desegregation of the schools. The petition read,

We, the undersigned, are residents of Macon County, Alabama and are members of the Negro race; and are parents of school age children, which children attend various schools located in Macon County, Alabama. We hereby petition the Board of Education of Macon County, Alabama to begin immediately operating the schools under your jurisdiction according to the principles laid down by the U.S. Supreme Court on May 17, 1954 in the case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* ...²⁶

This time the board just ignored the request. Thus on January 28, 1963, attorney Fred Gray, at that time one of a handful of African American lawyers licensed in the state, filed suit on behalf of eight families in federal district court against the continued segregation.²⁷ The case of *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, which legal scholars have recently described as “perhaps the best opportunity for litigation to promote racial equality in American schools,”²⁸ soon involved Macon County High School which took center stage in the events leading up to the following case.

Lee v. Macon County Board of Education and Macon County High School, 1963-1964

Lee v. Macon County Board of Education began in 1963 as a federal case solely confined to the efforts of African American parents and students in Macon County to desegregate the white Tuskegee High School and the Macon County High School at Notasulga. But over the next 30 years, rulings from federal district courts, courts of appeal, and the U.S. Supreme Court turned the issues involved with school desegregation in Macon County into “a blueprint for school desegregation plans” across the nation.²⁹ Legal scholar Wendy Parker concluded in 2017: “The suit quickly grew in scope and set in motion sweeping remedial orders, compelling the desegregation of school districts, high school athletic conferences, junior college, trade schools, and four-year colleges and universities.”³⁰

Thus as rulings in federal district court evolved in the next five years, *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* and its impact on Macon County High School took on a level of national significance far beyond the efforts of local Macon County residents to desegregate the county’s public high schools. First, once local

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 16-18.

²⁶ “A Petition to the Macon County Board of Education to Desegregate Public Schools Under Your Jurisdiction,” (September 12, 1962).

²⁷ Landsberg, 872.

²⁸ Wendy Parker, “Why Alabama School Desegregation Succeeded (And Failed),” *Case Western Law Review* 67:4 (2017): 1092.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Wendy Parker, “Why Alabama School Desegregation Succeeded (And Failed),” *Case Western Reserve Law Review*, 67:4 (2017): 1091.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

and state officials made clear their determination to keep public school segregated, “then the judiciary asserted its own authority to assert a national rule”³¹ and craft a remedial order. The remedial, statewide desegregation order crafted by the federal judges not only impacted Alabama but the rest of the South as other federal courts followed the precedent and asserted the judiciary’s right to offer remedial solutions in such cases as *U.S. v. Texas* (1970),³² the Tennessee higher education case of *Sanders v. Ellington* (1968)³³; and onto the 1991 Oklahoma case of *Board of Education v. Dowell*.³⁴

In the wake of *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, federal judges largely became the nation’s enforcers of school desegregation. Charles L. Zelden’s article, “From Rights to Recourses: The Southern Federal District Courts and the Transformation of Rights in Education, 1968-1974,” concluded: “in a very short period of time, the federal courts transformed the concept of civil rights, taking it in a new and expansive direction almost impossible to predict a mere decade before.”³⁵

On August 13, 1963, Federal district court judge Frank M. Johnson issued a preliminary injunction that ordered the Macon County school board to begin a nondiscriminatory application of the Alabama Pupil Placement Law by the next month. Alabama’s 1955 Pupil Placement Law, like other southern states’ pupil placement laws, provided a mechanism to avoid integration under the guise of placing students in particular schools according to their ability, prior schooling, and transportation needs. In effect, Johnson’s order merely called for the school board to follow this law that granted the superintendent the authority to place students at the schools he deemed best. But Johnson’s injunction also called for the school board to submit to the federal court by December 1963 its plan for general school desegregation with the intent to abolish the dual system of schools.³⁶ The parties met privately with Judge Johnson after the August 13 hearing to address the possibility of orderly compliance. The groups agreed that the integration would only target Tuskegee High School because “the Notasulga and Shorter areas are bad areas and that integration would undoubtedly go smoother in the Tuskegee school.”³⁷

With these agreements in place and after reviewing 48 applicants, on August 29, the school board approved the transfer of 13 African American students to the white Tuskegee High School.³⁸ But then on September 2, Alabama Governor George Wallace ordered the Macon County Board of Education to close the schools for one week in order that the governor could “preserve the peace, maintain domestic tranquility and to protect the lives and property of all citizens.”³⁹ A week later, on September 9, Governor Wallace ordered the local school board to bar the black students from returning to the high school. His executive order demanded that

³¹ Wendy Parker, “Connecting the Dots: Grutter, School Desegregation, and Federalism,” *William and Mary Law Review* 45 (2004): 1691.

³² Frank R. Kemerer, *United States v. Texas*, *Handbook of Texas*, online edition.

³³ 288 F. Supp. 937 (M.D. Tenn. 1968); also see Carlos Gonzalez, “A Long Journey to Justice,” TBA Law Blog, December 2017.

³⁴ 498 U.S. 237 (1991).

³⁵ Charles L. Zelden, “From Rights to Resources: The Southern Federal District Courts and the Transformation of Civil Rights in Education, 1968-1974,” *Akron Law Review* 32:3 (1999).

³⁶ U.S. Civil Rights Commission, *1964 Staff Report* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Civil Rights Commission, n. d. [1965]), 14.

³⁷ Landsberg, 874.

³⁸ Melinda Bogardus, *The History of Notasulga High School* (University of Alabama: Student Coalition for Community Health, August 1990), 17.

³⁹ U.S. Civil Rights Commission, 14-15.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

no black student could integrate schools in Macon County, Birmingham or Mobile. Federal judge Johnson responded with a restraining order then a preliminary injunction that set aside Wallace’s command. The following day, September 10, Wallace relented and the African American students returned, which led to an immediate walk-out by all of Tuskegee High School’s white students. Governor Wallace announced that the state would provide financial support for the white students to attend the newly established Macon Academy,⁴⁰ and/or provide support and buses so that white students could attend either the all-white Shorter or Macon County High School. The governor even used state highway patrol cars to take students to the school until he was able to borrow buses from a state trade school in Decatur.⁴¹ Governor Wallace personally toured Macon Academy, greeted every student at the school, and told everyone at the academy how proud the entire state was of how they were “meeting the challenge with dignity and without malice.”⁴² State and local reactions to *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* were quickly reshaping the public schools of Macon County.

African American families in Macon County trying to ensure safety and better schools for their children found a powerful ally in the federal government from 1963 to 1970. Federal district judge Frank Johnson had made the local case national almost from its beginning when he, “without a request from either party,” made the United States government a third party in the case. That legal maneuver was not unprecedented but “was highly unusual” and gave the federal Civil Rights Division more legal involvement in the matters of school desegregation in Macon County.⁴³ Thus, as the case progressed, “the African American community, high-powered lawyers, cabinet-level departments, and noted federal judges all converged to integrate Alabama schools. No other school desegregation case presented such a wide range of capable forces to achieve integration.”⁴⁴

Macon County High School’s role in this struggle between African American families, the State of Alabama, and the United States of America intensified after the State Board of Education, under the direction of Governor Wallace, ordered the permanent closure of Tuskegee High School since there were only 13 students (all African American) attending. Enrollment later dropped to 12 after one of the students was expelled “for allegedly whistling at a white woman.”⁴⁵ On February 3, 1964, the federal district court ordered that the students be immediately admitted to Shorter and Macon County High Schools no later than February 5. On the night of February 3, Notasulga Mayor James Rea asked the city council to approve two new ordinances that gave the mayor the ability to close schools in the name of public safety due to a diminished firefighting ability. The next day the Alabama State Board of Education approved financial aid to students who had attended public schools that were then closed, signaling the state’s strategy on the integration of both Shorter and Macon County High Schools.⁴⁶

That evening, segregationists burned crosses in the yards of husband and wife Emerson and Leveron Guthrie

⁴⁰ Ibid., 15; Landsberg, 876.

⁴¹ U.S. Civil Rights Commission, 16.

⁴² Jeff Frederick, *Stand Up for Alabama: Governor George Wallace* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007), 74.

⁴³ Joseph Bagley, *The Politics of White Rights: Race, Justice, and Integrating Alabama’s Schools* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018), 55-56.

⁴⁴ Parker, “Why Alabama School Desegregation Succeeded,” 1101.

⁴⁵ Bogardus, 21.

⁴⁶ U.S. Civil Rights Commission., 17.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

and two others.⁴⁷ The victims were members of the county school board and were targeted because, allegedly, the board had not been defiant enough in resisting integration. On February 4, board member Don Mercer Davis's barn and a tenant house used to store hay were also destroyed by an arsonist.⁴⁸ Lenda Jo Connell, who served on the school board years after Emerson Guthrie, recalled being scared that her own house would be burned down. She praised the Guthries as a family who "stood in the gap" to ensure Notasulga's success.⁴⁹

On February 5, six students were enrolled at Shorter without incident. That was not the case at Macon County High School where the state's plan for massive resistance became public. Six students, Anthony Lee (of the lead plaintiff in the federal court lawsuit), Willie Wyatt, Robert Judkins, Patricia Jones, Martha Sullins and Shirley Chambliss, were bussed from Tuskegee to Macon County High School in Notasulga. They faced hostility from a group of about 30 men, who, despite the cold rain, stood across the street, some waving hickory sticks. The school flag pole flew the Alabama State Flag and the Confederate Stars and Bars, not the United States flag as was the custom. Governor Wallace also had dispatched Col. Al Lingo, the state director of public safety, and 75 state troopers to Macon County High School ostensibly to keep the peace but in reality to intimidate the African American students.

State patrol cars lined the campus. City policeman E.A. Harris, joined by Dallas County (Selma) sheriff Jim Clark, stopped the bus in the school parking lot in the face of a crowd of segregationists across the street. Clark jumped on board and immediately used his cattle prod (wrapped in black tape) to push and beat white photographer Vernon Merritt, III. Clark took Merritt's cameras and smashed both of them on the metal bars over the bus seats, then tossed Merritt from the bus where he continued to be beaten, an incident that received wide coverage in newspapers across the nation. A native of Montgomery, Merritt finished his college education in Los Angeles before returning to Alabama to document voter registration and desegregation efforts in the 1960s.⁵⁰ When interviewed by a representative of the *Montgomery Advertiser*, Merritt said it was not "until [he] was ordered out of town and started walking" that he realized the danger he was in.⁵¹ "That was the closest I had come to being really afraid of violence erupting," recalled Willie Wyatt, Jr., "U.S. marshals had been trailing the bus and were well aware of the situation that might erupt."⁵²

The bus then went to the school doors where Notasulga mayor James Rea stood dramatically and barred the African Americans from entering. At a subsequent news conference, Mayor Rea claimed that segregation had nothing to do with his decision. Rather he blamed a recent fire at the city water plant that had diminished firefighting capacity and a just approved city ordinance that set 175 students as the limit the school could admit. Since the school already had 171 students, staff, and teachers, fire codes and a recent

⁴⁷ Robert J. Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1985), 160.

⁴⁸ Paul Pace, "Barn Arson Investigated," *Alabama Journal*, February 5, 1964.

⁴⁹ Lenda Jo Connell, interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, April 3, 2018.

⁵⁰ Ralph Graves, "A Very Personal View of New York," *Life*, 6, no. 8, August 22, 1969, 3.

⁵¹ Stuart X. Stephenson, "Photographer Roughed Up, Camera Smashed In Tense Notasulga Scene," *The Montgomery Advertiser*, February 6, 1964; Norrell, *Reaping the Whirlwind*, 161.

⁵² Wyatt quoted in Melody Kitchens, "Notasulga High School's history includes some turbulent times," *Tuskegee News*, February 23, 2012. Also see "Bar Notasulga Mayor, U.S. Asks," *Birmingham Post-Herald*, February 6, 1964; Don McKee, "10-Day-Old Fire Law Used To Bar Negroes From School," *The Montgomery Advertiser*, February 6, 1964.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

fire at the town water plant, the mayor said, kept him from adding new students, period.⁵³ The U.S. Attorney General immediately asked for an injunction forbidding the mayor from interfering with school desegregation in the case of *U.S. v. Rea*. It was granted and by February 13, African American students returned to Macon County High School. The next day, the federal district court ruled in the case that the mayor must cease his opposition to the school’s desegregation, describing the mayor’s fire code excuse as a “devious means of interfering with the court’s order” and as a “subterfuge.”⁵⁴ Once the African American students returned, the white students boycotted the school and Governor Wallace wondered out loud if such a situation could remain in place—the schools might have to be closed for economic reasons.



Figure 1: Alabama Highway Patrol at Macon County High School, February 5, 1964 (Shiloh Rosenwald School Museum, Notasulga, Alabama).

African American students in 1964 did not encounter a welcoming environment at Macon County High School. Martha Sullins Slocum recalled:

We would ride by these people every day and they’d be standing out there with their guns. Mr. D. W. Clements, the principal, tried to help us. I think he was threatened also; in fact, I know he was. Some days people would throw rocks through the windows, and they’d have firecrackers tied to them and they’d explode. We began to get jumpy. We could not go outside because there was fear for our lives. I was afraid they might shoot me. Almost every day when we arrived there would be fresh signs painted on the school—ugly things, calling us names. I would receive phone calls; it would always be a man or woman warning not to appear at the school the next day or I might not ever return home. People would drive by the house and throw firecrackers in the

⁵³ “Six Negroes Barred at Alabama School,” *New York Times*, February 6, 1964.

⁵⁴ *U.S. v. Rea* (231 F.Supp. 772, 1964). Also see “White Boycott Hits 2D Alabama School,” *New York Times*, February 12, 1964.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

yard. Some of us really began to get nervous. But we stayed with it. The more they did, the more determined we became.⁵⁵

Sullins Slocum recalled the protection of U.S. Marshals. “I was concentrating on being the best student I could be; the more work the teachers gave me, the harder I worked. The others did the same, because we had something to prove.”⁵⁶

Also in February, attorney Fred Gray realized that Governor Wallace’s actions had actually opened a very interesting legal door. If the Governor, in his role as ex officio head of the State Board of Education, could order the closing of a public school to enforce segregation, in opposition to the actions of the local school board, he also held the reverse power: to ignore local control and open all public schools in the state for desegregation. In Gray’s amendment to the original 1963 lawsuit of *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, he broadened the case to include the governor, the State Board of Education, and other state officials, thus implicating the state in maintaining segregation in education. He petitioned the federal district court to require the state to file a complete reorganization of the state public school system on a “nonracial basis” and to stop using public monies to fund private, segregated schools. Gray’s amended lawsuit was a lightning bolt across the state. The Alabama Board of Education on February 18 formally advised Governor Wallace that the local board, not the State Board of Education, had “authority to transfer pupils and teachers from one school to another, to close public schools within a municipality, to provide transportation, and to make grants-in-aid to school children.”⁵⁷ By the end of the month, the Macon County Board of Education, following the State Board’s guidance, finally submitted a desegregation plan to the federal court, as required in the fall of 1963. The plan provided for very gradual integration, beginning with the senior year of high school in September 1964 that would follow the Alabama Pupil Placement Law and give the local school board chair the authority to approve any transfers. The plan made no promises to desegregate the schools or to desegregate faculties and staffs at the school.⁵⁸

The U.S. District Court also took note of the amended lawsuit and extended its temporary restraining order barring Governor Wallace and the State Board from interfering with school desegregation in Macon County. Before a final determination was made, the court asked the local board, the state, and the plaintiffs to prepare briefs that addressed six specific questions, including should the court declare the Alabama grants-in-aid for private, segregated schools unconstitutional; should the Governor and the State Board be enjoined from interfering with local school boards and the process of desegregation; should they issue an order desegregating all elementary and secondary public schools in Alabama; and is the Alabama Public Placement Law unconstitutional.⁵⁹

As the legal debates took place, violent segregationists took center stage in Notasulga. Worried about their children’s safety, African American parents Detroit Lee and Palmer Sullins followed the bus to school each

⁵⁵ Frank Sikora, *The Judge: The Life & Opinions of Alabama’s Frank M. Johnson, Jr.* (River City Publishers, 1992), 171.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ U.S. Civil Rights Commission, 18-19; Landsberg, 880-881; Wendy Parker, “Why Alabama School Desegregation Succeeded (And Failed).” *Case Western Reserve Law Review* 67:4 (2017): 1096-1097.

⁵⁸ U.S. Civil Rights Commission, 18.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 20.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

day for weeks to ensure safe arrivals.⁶⁰ Vile messages were painted on the school walls: “Judge Johnson and Bobby Kennedy’s school. Godfathers of all n—s,” and added below “Step by step, one more day, n—r. Damn n—r, damn n—r, damn n—r. You done been told once.”⁶¹ African American parent Willamena Jones described another incident in which “the black students were burned in effigy” near the graffiti’s location.⁶² Early in the morning on April 18, 1964, a more extreme action took place. Segregationists firebombed Macon County High School, destroying approximately one-third of the New Deal-era building, the one-third that housed the high school department where the African American students had attended.⁶³

Citing the damage to the building and public safety concerns, local officials moved to close the school but the federal district court stopped them. It ordered that the undamaged part of the school building was still safe to use, and that the African American students could not be sent to the all-African American Tuskegee Institute High School. The students stayed, and readied for graduation, until the day all six were called to a meeting with the principal at the auditorium. Martha Sullins Slocum recalled the sudden ceremony: “three boys, Anthony Lee (the lead plaintiff in the federal case), Willie Wyatt, and Robert Judkins, were due to graduate. Principal Clements, however, said ‘he had received a threat—and you could see it in his eyes—and that if he attempted to hold a graduation ceremony the place would be blown up.’ And he said, ‘I am sorry that there isn’t time to invite your parents and friends but I’m afraid for your lives.’”⁶⁴

According to historian Frank Sikora, the resulting graduation ceremony “was one of the most unusual graduation ceremonies in Alabama history. There was no one in the audience save the three girls who were underclassmen, the principal, and several teachers” and Robert Anderson, a Notasulga native who was then a student at Auburn University. Anderson remembered:

I just wanted to come by and see what would happen. I knew there had been all the anger over these students, but in my heart I believed in the public education system. So I sat there and these six Negroes came in, three girls sat in the audience section, the three senior boys sat up on the stage. There was a brief ceremony, very brief. There hadn’t even been the time, I’m told, to invite the parents to the ceremony. And almost as quickly as it began, it was over. But then one of the girls [Patricia Jones] got up and walked to the stage, followed by the other two and they all three began singing the song, ‘No Man Is an Island.’ I don’t think anything has ever moved me as did that song. The entire issue of desegregation of schools seemed to hang in that moment. Here were these kids singing a song like that, one with hope in it, after all they’d been through. I knew then that I wanted to help in some way and restore some order to our town, because I had been born and raised in Notasulga. I made up my mind that I was going to be an educator and work in my hometown.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Bogardus, 29.

⁶¹ Graffiti noted in Sikora, 172.

⁶² Bogardus, 29.

⁶³ Rex Thomas, “Arson Is Suspected in Notasulga Blaze,” *The Montgomery Advertiser*, April 19, 1964. Also see “Fire Marshal Says Macon Blaze Arson,” *The Montgomery Advertiser*, April 21, 1964; “Boycotted School Awards Diplomas to Three Negroes,” *Southern School News*, June 1964.

⁶⁴ Sikora, 172

⁶⁵ Sikora, 172-173.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

“We weren’t conscious what we’re doing would then make history today,” as Anthony Lee told *Opelika-Auburn News* in May 2012. “We were just trying to get a good, basic education.”⁶⁶ The school was closed for repairs in 1964-1965.

The second federal remedial order in 1964 followed Anthony Lee’s “graduation” from Macon County High School in May 1964. In July, a week and a half after the Congressional approval of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the district court found “the State of Alabama has an official policy favoring racial segregation in public education,” and that, it “has operated and presently operates a dual school system based upon race.” Indeed, it was the clear intent of state officials “to prevent or impede any desegregation through their unlawful interference with the city and county school boards’ attempting to comply with the law.” The court’s ruling was limited in that it did not order, yet, the total desegregation of public schools in Alabama as a good faith effort to allow state officials to comply with the order. The court closed by noting: “it is only a question of time until such illegal and unconstitutional support of the segregated school systems must cease. These State officials and the local school officials are now put on notice that within a reasonable time this Court will expect and require such support to cease. These school officials should now proceed to formulate and place into effect plans designed to make the distribution of public funds to the various schools throughout the State of Alabama only to those schools and school systems that have proceeded with “deliberate speed” in the desegregation of their schools and school systems as required by *Brown v. Board of Education*.”⁶⁷

The decision raised the very real possibility that the federal courts would order desegregation of public schools, which encouraged proponents of integration, panicked segregationists across Alabama, and caught the attention of media outlets elsewhere. In the August 1964 edition of *Southern School News*, Jack Greenberg of the NAACP called the new ruling in the *Lee* case “the most sweeping decree in the history of the Legal Defense Fund’s school integration campaign.” Richmond Flowers, Alabama’s attorney general at the time, noted the ruling was “the most far-reaching decision since the 1954 [*Brown*] decision” and asserted that the court had introduced a “new concept in school desegregation cases.”⁶⁸ The *Birmingham News* described the decision as “landmark” and a “predicate for more drastic action.”⁶⁹ Newspapers across the country reported the new ruling. A Virginia newspaper pondered the decision’s implications in its own state, informing its readers, “A major lawsuit seeking a withdrawal of state funds from segregated public or private schools may be in store for Virginia, the offspring of a federal court decision in Alabama.” The piece concluded by noting that Virginia’s attorney general was “interested in studying the implications of the Alabama decision.”⁷⁰ Other newspapers throughout the country and elsewhere ran the news about the 1964 *Lee* decision under titles such as “Wallace, Alabama Board Ordered to Quit Blocking Integration Plan” (*Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*, Fort Worth, Texas); “Court Orders Alabama School Desegregation” (*News and Observer*, Raleigh, North Carolina); “Order to Wallace: Hands Off Schools” (*The Sheboygan Press*,

⁶⁶ Jake Winfrey, “Macon County pioneers graduate 48 years later,” *Opelika-Auburn News*, May 23, 2012.

⁶⁷ *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, 267 F.Supp.458 (1967).

⁶⁸ “Court Rules Desegregation is Responsibility of the State,” *Southern School News*, August 1964; Bagley, *Politics of White Rights*, 89.

⁶⁹ Bagley, *Politics of White Rights*, 89.

⁷⁰ “Major Suit to Cut Off Tuition Grants Likely,” *The Progress-Index*, Petersburg, Virginia, July 17, 1964.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

Sheboygan, Wisconsin); “Don’t Meddle, Alabama Told” (*The Vancouver Sun*, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada).⁷¹

Desegregation Proceeds at Macon County High School, 1965-1970

When the school reopened with its new International Style buildings (replacements for the Spanish Revival wing bombed two years earlier) in 1965-1966 segregation remained the norm, with the private Macon Academy gaining white students while the public schools remained mostly African American, a pattern true in the state generally. Even by 1966 out of over 294,000 African American public school students in Alabama, only 1,009 attended schools with whites.⁷² That June, a federal appeals court frankly stated that “The time was [has?] come for foot-dragging public school boards to move with celerity toward desegregation.”⁷³ Moreover, the recently established U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare threatened to limit federal funding from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to school districts out of compliance with desegregation orders once it issued its initial guidelines for desegregation. The federal courts and HEW gave school districts one year to eliminate segregation practices and processes. Governor George Wallace had no plans to comply with the federal directives. In 1966 he convinced a special legislative session to declare the HEW guidelines null and void and to promise that state funds would replace any federal funds lost by maintaining a largely segregated school system. He further threatened that Alabama State Troopers would stop African American educators from teaching in white schools.⁷⁴

In March 1967 the federal district court delivered a new ruling in the *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* case that a segregated school system still existed in Alabama and must be ended.⁷⁵ The judges also struck down as unconstitutional the Pupil Placement Act, which local education boards had effectively used to bar African Americans to attend all-white schools.⁷⁶ The new ruling allowed for so-called “freedom-of-choice” plans that kept desegregation limited until early 1970 when Judge Johnson ruled that freedom-of-choice plans would be judged by their effectiveness, complete desegregation had to be achieved, and divided the initial case into individual suits covering the different Alabama school districts that the federal courts would oversee.⁷⁷ After this ruling, schools that remained segregated were required to undergo compulsory assignment for the 1970 fall semester. By the end of 1970, the state boasted one of the most integrated school systems in the nation with 36.5% of African American students in Alabama attending public schools with a white majority. This number was a substantial improvement from 8.6% two years before, and compared favorably to the nationwide 33% of African American public school students that attended

⁷¹ “Wallace, Alabama Board Ordered to Quit Blocking Integration Plan,” *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*, July 14, 1964; “Court Orders Alabama School Desegregation,” *News and Observer*, Raleigh, North Carolina, July 15, 1964; “Order to Wallace: Hands Off Schools,” *The Sheboygan Press*, July 14, 1964; “Don’t Meddle, Alabama Told,” *The Vancouver Sun*, Vancouver, July 14, 1964.

⁷² Landsberg (2016), 19, 28.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁷⁵ Governor Lurleen Wallace, George Wallace’s wife, challenged the statewide order to desegregate in *Wallace vs. United States*, after which the Supreme Court upheld the 1967 ruling in *Lee vs. Macon County School Board*.

⁷⁶ Schexnayder, “Lee v. Macon County Board of Education.”

⁷⁷ Parker, “Why Alabama School Integration Succeeded,” 1103-1104.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

majority white schools.⁷⁸

Desegregation at Macon County High School began with the youngest of students in 1966-1967. There had been no African American high school students since the graduation of 1964 and the school's new Head Start program became one of the focal points of its integration. The federal government initiated the Head Start program in the 1960s as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty to aid in the development of children from low-income families, with particular focus on preparing them for school.⁷⁹ Implemented as a federal program on the heels of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the ideals and implications of the Head Start program were in some ways connected to those of the Civil Rights Movement and efforts to integrate schools, though these connections were downplayed by the Johnson administration for fear that the Head Start program would not survive.⁸⁰ Certainly, white parents in Notasulga initially refused to send their children to the integrated Head Start program, despite the positive impact early schooling could provide.

Macon County High School's initial Head Start program in 1966, located in the newly constructed International Style classroom wing, served 27 white children then two black children were enrolled. As principal Harold A. Manley recalled, "we had some loose tongues around here ... and in about two hours there weren't but three white children left." Football coach Dwight Sanderson recalled that Manley, because of his efforts to integrate the school, was not always popular with the community, but the "school may not have survived without him."⁸¹ Manley transported the two black children himself and tried to convince white parents to send their children, but the summer 1966 program ended with just seven children, two black and five white.

When the school's Head Start program began its new year in April 1967, the school enrolled seven black children and 23 white children. Manley knew that the numbers still skewed white but he was encouraged by having successful integrated meetings of white and black parents. The administration and design of Head Start as a Community Action Program of the federal Office of Economic Opportunity "provided opportunities for parents...to create institutional change at the local level" by way of "maximum feasible participation" in the running of the local programs.⁸² The new Head Start program at Macon County High School and Manley's formation of a committee of both white and black parents to support it were an example of this federal objective in action.

Manley hoped that the 1967-68 school year would attract more African Americans because the Head Start program was getting whites used to the idea of a desegregated student body. "We give these Head Start kids the complete run of the campus. They're all over the playground. The other kids see them there every day."⁸³ Members of the Tuskegee Civic Association in May 1967 asked Mrs. Inez Pitts, director of Macon

⁷⁸ Landsberg, *Lee v. Macon County*, 17, 35. Integration rates found in Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of the Secretary HEW, *News for Release in A.M. Papers, Friday, June 18, 1971*.

⁷⁹ Edward Zigler and Sally J. Styfco, *The Hidden History of Head Start* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4-6.

⁸⁰ Beverly Tomek, "A Stalking Horse for the Civil Rights Movement": Head Start and the Legacy of the Freedom Schools," *The Southern Quarterly: A Journal of Art and Letters in the South*, 51, no.1 (Fall 2014), 121.

⁸¹ Dwight Sanderson, interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, March 12, 2018.

⁸² Crystal R. Sanders, *A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi's Black Freedom Struggle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 2.

⁸³ Mary Ellen Gale, "Head Start Growing in Notasulga," *Southern Courier*, May 20-21, 1967.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

County Head Start, whether the agency considered seven black children out of thirty a fair representation. Pitts admitted that the number needed to be far greater but that African American parents feared losing their jobs or even their lives if they sent their children to the school's Head Start. "[T]he Negro people in Notasulga are reluctant to go to that school."⁸⁴

Alabama's compliance with federal school desegregation orders moved forward from 1968 to 1970. In Notasulga, the Ledyard family was the trailblazer, having committed three children—Craig, Valarie, and Beverly—to enroll at Macon County High School for a full academic year, 1969-70. Craig Ledyard became the first African American to participate in the school athletic teams as he started on the varsity basketball team. For the 1970-1971 school year, board officials, led by African American Superintendent Ulysses Byas, finally implemented full desegregation. African Americans gained a majority of the Macon County Board of Education in 1970. They advertised nationally for an African American educator to lead the system, and chose Dr. Byas, who started June 1970 as the first elected black school superintendent in Macon County, Alabama, and the Southeast. The federal court desegregation order and the political shift in the Macon County Board of Education that brought Dr. Byas to the county also pushed the integration of the faculty. Dr. Byas saw that integration as being one of his first priorities. Winifred Davis and Geraldine Frazier were among the first African American educators, and both had a lasting influence, according to interviews with alumni.⁸⁵

To lead the integration process at Notasulga, Byas hired Robert Anderson to be principal at Macon County High School and Anderson would become a key figure leading to desegregation success. It was also around the early 1970s when the school's name changed from Macon County High School to Notasulga High School.⁸⁶ Anderson (1942-2012) wasn't even thirty years old when he accepted the position from Macon County Superintendent Byas. But he had proven his mettle to both whites and blacks when he moved quickly in the spring of 1970 to convince the community not to fight the coming desegregation process. According to the background facts in the 1992 ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals in its *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*⁸⁷:

A math teacher by the name of Robert Anderson and two other faculty members at Notasulga [coaches Dwight Sanderson and Buddy Knapp] undertook to achieve what appeared to be impossible; they sought to stem "white flight" to the newly-created private academies and thereby establish at Notasulga an integrated, nonracially identifiable school. While segregationists traveled door-to-door attempting to convince whites to flee the public school system, Anderson traveled door-to-door with the opposite message. Anderson handed out printed handbills touting the advantages of federal and state funded public schools and equating the placement of children in the newly-created private academies to sending them to unlicensed doctors. These efforts met with limited success; the student enrollment for the 1970-71 school

⁸⁴ Mary Ellen Gale, "TCA Discusses Notasulga Class," *ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Time Line: Notasulga High School, Macon County, Alabama* (typescript, 2016) in author's possession with thanks to Roy "Buddy" Knapp for compiling this material; Marilyn Robinson, *Making A Way: Ulysses Byas: First Black School Superintendent in the Southeast* (Bloomington, IN: Inspiring Voices, 2013), 1, 56.

⁸⁶ Robinson, *Making A Way*, 38.

⁸⁷ *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, 970 F.2d 767 (1992)

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

year was 30% white, rather than the 50% white enrollment that should have resulted from the district zoning. Some "white flight" had occurred.

But once Byas named Anderson as principal, the latter worked with coaches Sanderson and Knapp to reverse the pattern of white flight. They became known as the "Team," three young white educators who endured much criticism and hostility from the surrounding white community and were given a wary eye from the African American community. Anderson certainly was the leader and became almost an apostle for desegregation as a key to keeping a high school in Notasulga. The court of appeals noted in 1992:

Eventually, the community, both white and black, began to rally in support of his efforts. In the 1971-72 school year, white students began to return to Notasulga from the private academies. By the 1973-74 school year, the student enrollment at Notasulga was 52% black and 48% white, with 259 black students and 240 white students. Racial balance had been achieved. Thus, notwithstanding its disheartening beginning, integration was achieved at Notasulga in 1973.⁸⁸

The success of what was called the "Team" at Notasulga High School was grounded in the strategy that successful, integrated extracurricular activities, be they sports, clubs, or band (added 1973-1974 by Brenda Knapp), were the best way to get the students together, after which, the "Team" hoped, the parents could set aside prejudice and work for the betterment of the school. In a 2018 interview, Dwight Sanderson noted that the strategy took dedication. To ensure that African American students were included on his football roster, Sanderson personally provided rides for players from Tuskegee (because the only high school in Tuskegee was the all African American Tuskegee Institute High School) after each practice and game. Eventually he purchased a truck for the commute so the players "didn't have to ride in each other's laps."⁸⁹

Commentators across the globe took notice of what happened at Notasulga High School from 1970 to 1974. B. Drummond Ayres, Jr., of the *New York Times* remarked in a May 13, 1974 feature story that efforts to desegregate had met with the most success in the rural South because there "blacks and whites often live next to one another, either on farms or in small towns. Thus, it is difficult to justify segregated schools on the basis of housing patterns, the justification that has kept so many Northern and Southern cities segregated."⁹⁰ Ayres chose Notasulga as a national example of how desegregation could work. He interviewed Robert Anderson, who admitted "It was tough going at first . . . There were four or five of us—several coaches [Sanderson and Knapp], a former school board member [Guthrie], an insurance man—and we just began to talk to folks and say that the town and the county would never survive if we destroyed public education. Some people got mad at us. I got threats. My girl left me. I moved out of town to a safer apartment. But then, slowly, white kids started to come back."⁹¹ Almost fifty years later, alumni recalled that the high school kids "molded together as one"

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Dwight Sanderson, interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, March 12, 2018.

⁹⁰ B. Drummond Ayres, Jr., "Desegregation of Southern Schools Since '54 Produces Confusing Patterns of Impressive Gains, Bitter Setbacks," *New York Times*, May 13, 1974.

⁹¹ Ibid.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

and were determined to succeed every time they heard the words “you’re not going to do this.”⁹²

Anderson in 1974 further explained to Ayres that a strategy of equality was a crucial component: “we made sure that everybody, black and white, got treated the same, punished the same, everything, right down to making cheerleading squads 50-50.”⁹³ Notasulga High School senior, Willie Woods, an African American, agreed: “When we were first all thrown together, everybody stood around just waiting for trouble. But everybody got treated the same and we soon discovered—sports helped a lot—that we were pretty much alike.”⁹⁴ Gary James, a white student, pointed out that kids elsewhere in the county who attended either all-black public schools or the all-white private academy “just don’t know what life is all about these days. They’re living out of it in a phony world.”⁹⁵ Anderson knew what had happened at Notasulga was rare but he refused to see it as exceptional: “All I know is that my kids, black and white, do O.K. and the blacks no longer are going to school in tarpaper shacks.”⁹⁶

The *New York Times* article was an attempt to get in front of an international documentary, prepared by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) in partnership with California public television station KOCE-TV, due to premier in England on May 15 as part of BBC2’s documentary series, *Man Alive*.⁹⁷ Titled “Deep South, Deep North,” the producers wanted a program that would show more of a grassroots reaction twenty years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. As one of the crew members explained, the goal was “to reveal a process—the American political process. On film are people, places, and situations which are indices of this process. Beneath the research, reporting, and film techniques is a high regard for America’s ability for self-analysis and criticism.”⁹⁸ Reporters first filmed scenes from a basketball game, at the extant gymnasium, between Notasulga and Catholic high schools. They then returned to add context to a place where segregationists had burned a 1/3 of the school some ten years earlier. In the fall, the documentary received national exposure through the Public Broadcasting System. The *Detroit Free-Press* described it as an “excellent documentary from the BBC dealing with the 20 years since the Supreme Court decision which struck down the concept of ‘separate but equal.’”⁹⁹ The *Opelika News*, in anticipation of the national broadcast, interviewed Jeremy James, the lead reporter for the BBC documentary. James told the Opelika newspaper: “it’s remarkable what has happened here. If they can solve problems the people say they had in Notasulga, any town in American can solve its problems.”¹⁰⁰

Local media eventually picked up on this theme. In a September 1975 issue of the *Auburn Plainsman*, the student newspaper of Auburn University, Steele Holman remarked: “there are plenty of people in Boston and other cities facing integration who should hear about the town, because over the last 10 years Notasulga has changed from a town of racial hatred and fear so strong that a school was burned, into a town of racial

⁹² Comments by Obadiah Threadgill, Mike Berry, and Valarie Clark at Notasulga High School public meeting, October 5, 2017.

⁹³ Ayres, Jr., “Desegregation.”

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ David Hudson, “The Filming of ‘Deep South, Deep North,’” *American Cinematographer* (June 1974); 694-695.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 744.

⁹⁹ “TV Listings: Special of the Week,” *Detroit Free Press*, September 1, 1974.

¹⁰⁰ Clipping of Opelika News story, “Notasulga to Make National Television,” Timeline of Notasulga High School, section 4, page 5.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

harmony with a school that's a showplace for peaceful intermingling between the races."¹⁰¹

Successful sports teams were vital in keeping the entire community engaged with the high school as it re-established itself in the first half of the 1970s. Wayne Martin noted in the *Birmingham News* in 1972: "It's been a long road back, but now maybe the football team is ready to make Notasulga something more than just a dot on the map."¹⁰² Dwight Sanderson's success in football was replicated by Buddy Knapp in basketball and together the two brought athletic prominence to the school's programs. As Sanderson told George Smith of the *Anniston Star* in March 1974, "I think the school has played a big, big role in bringing the town back together and I'm sure the winning has helped."¹⁰³

Alumni also credit the determination of teachers such as Geraldine Frazier, Winifred Davis, Gwendolyn Butler, Neal Jobe, and Bea Jobe in building a quality academic environment to match the prowess in athletics and music.¹⁰⁴ In a 1990 discussion with University of Alabama student Melinda Bogardus, Winifred Davis recalled the "positive example" set by faculty members who "ate lunch together, joked with one another, and ... openly discussed integration in afternoon meetings."¹⁰⁵ Davis relayed the concerns of the African American community to the Notasulga's staff who worked to increase parental approval by offering more courses and establishing clubs.¹⁰⁶

Postscript: A Generation of Desegregation, 1974-1992

The leadership of Robert Anderson, his coaches and his faculty combined with the determination of black and white parents in northern Macon County to achieve a generation of education in an integrated facility. According to the statement of facts in the 1992 U.S. Appeals Court ruling of *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*:

Through the continued efforts of Robert Anderson and the continued support of the community, Notasulga has remained integrated for nearly 20 years. Throughout this time, it has maintained a total student population that is between 40% and 50% white; in the 1990-91 school year, its total enrollment was 57% black and 43% white, with 359 black students and 273 white students, and its high school enrollment (grades nine through twelve) was 64% black and 36% white, with 122 black students and 68 white students. Notasulga's faculty is 60% black and 40% white, and its extracurricular clubs, athletic programs, and other activities are similarly racially balanced. To its integrated student body, Notasulga offers a quality education. High school students at Notasulga choose from a well-rounded curriculum; they may choose to pursue a standard diploma or, through an honors program, an advanced diploma, which prepares them for college. Notasulga has also been successful in maintaining a healthy enrollment; its enrollment has increased by

¹⁰¹ Newspaper clipping of "Notasulga teaches a racial lesson" in *Timeline of Notasulga High School*.

¹⁰² Wayne Martin, "Notasulga hopes its dismal decade is over," *Birmingham News*, October 16, 1972.

¹⁰³ George Smith, "Notasulga is back—no joke!" *Anniston Star*, March 1974 clipping in *Timeline of Notasulga High School*.

¹⁰⁴ Notasulga High School public meeting with the author, January 2018; Roy "Buddy" Knapp to Carroll Van West, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation files, October 15, 2017.

¹⁰⁵ Bogardus, 39.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 39-40.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

27% since 1973, while those in the remainder of the county have decreased. Since 1974, Notasulga has received national attention as a model for the successful integration of southern schools.”¹⁰⁷

The strategy of using extracurricular sports, music, and clubs as a way of encouraging black and white students to get to know each other and work together stayed in place. The school’s teams were very successful in the 1970s and 1980s. Sanderson was placed in the Hall of Fame of the Alabama High School Athletic Association in 2016; similar honors have gone to Knapp in Georgia in 2012 and former Notasulga High School trainer and coach Anita Wheelers Clark in Oklahoma in 2016. Most recently, in 2018, Notasulga’s first African American head basketball coach, Obadiah Threadgill, joined the Alabama High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. Coaching at Notasulga from 1981 to 2002, Threadgill won three state championships in 1987, 1992, and 2001.¹⁰⁸

Perhaps the highlight of public recognition of the achievement at Notasulga during the 1970s came in 1980 when Robert Kennedy, Jr., the nephew of President John Kennedy and the son of the once detested Attorney General Robert Kennedy, accepted an invitation from Robert Anderson to speak at the commencement ceremony of Notasulga High School in 1980. Kennedy, Jr., told the students and their parents, "What you've done here in Notasulga ... is a shining example not only for Alabama and the South but the nation and the entire world.”¹⁰⁹

But in 1991-92, that “shining example” was threatened by the same federal court supervision that allowed for desegregation to begin at Notasulga a generation earlier. The majority African American county school board wanted to close Notasulga High School in order to maintain a single modern comprehensive high school, Booker T. Washington High School in Tuskegee. The school board emphasized that maintaining a small high school in Notasulga was not cost effective nor did students there receive the academic opportunities that a comprehensive high school would provide. The future of Notasulga High was uncertain. “For the past 15 years Notasulga High School, with 57 percent black students and 43 percent white, has basked modestly in its status as perhaps the only truly integrated public school in the Alabama Black Belt,” reported Adam Nossiter in the *Atlanta Journal/Constitution* on June 30, 1992. “But those days look numbered now.”¹¹⁰

In 1991, the county board had filed a petition in district court, under the *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* ruling, asking for permission to close the high school program at Notasulga. Led by Robert Anderson, a group of students, their parents, and community members filed a counter petition asking the court not to allow the closure of the county’s only integrated high school in favor of a single, almost totally (an estimated 94 percent) African American high school at Tuskegee. School board members argued that if a racial imbalance existed it was because white parents removed their children from the public school system; thus the school board was not being discriminatory. Officials also pointed out the new comprehensive high school would be able to offer courses in the sciences that

¹⁰⁷ *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* (1992)

¹⁰⁸ Bill Plott, “Obadiah Threadgill legacy stretches four generations,” *Opelika-Auburn News*, March 16, 2018.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Adam Nossiter, “Alabama school fights for its racial mix,” *Atlanta Journal/Constitution*, June 30, 1993.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

Notasulga would never have the facilities to offer. The pro-Notasulga High School supporters countered that the all-important student-teacher ratio was higher thus stronger at Notasulga and there was high parental involvement in the school that would be sacrificed. The district court heard compelling testimony from former superintendent Dr. Ulysses Byas: “The Notasulga High School over the twenty-one years has provided not only integrated education, but integrated extracurricular activities. And it’s in extracurricular activities that people are elected presidents of student councils and secretaries and where they are elected captains of teams and they’re elected queens ...students are given the opportunity to exert and to develop leadership potential.”¹¹¹

The federal district court denied the school board petition to close Notasulga not because it was discriminatory but because the move would result in the establishment of a single-race school system in Macon County by eliminating the one successful integrated school. The school board immediately appealed, and administrators at Notasulga High School feared the worse from the federal Appeals Court at the July 10, 1992 hearing. The chair of the local Save Our School Committee, Al Redding, predicted: “I know for a fact that the kids in Macon County will never go to an integrated system if they do away with this school. ...The racism is actually on the other foot.”¹¹² Principal Robert Anderson sadly observed “I would have bet my life 15 or 20 years ago that I would not be at this point today. . . I’m still almost stunned that we’re at this point.”¹¹³

The stunning news, however, was the Appeals Court upheld the district court and denied the petition of the school board to close Notasulga High School. In its August 18, 1992 decision, the Appeals Court admitted that it was “presented with a novel issue,” since the case began with schools strictly segregated into white and black, and the white schools were substantially better funded. In the subsequent years, “the bright hope for integration” happened only at Notasulga, where today there is “a quality curriculum; parental involvement in the school is exemplary; and it maintains a student enrollment that is of an ideal size...Notasulga has not only accomplished the basic constitutional goals established by *Brown* and its progeny, it has fulfilled the objective of racial harmony that is the very spirit of *Brown*.”¹¹⁴ Plaintiff Ishbah Cox recalled the struggle that Notasulga continued to face even after the favorable 1992 decision. Within Macon County, Cox said the school was “punished” for not consolidating and “suffered with a lack of resources,” but “we did grand things with limited resources. I would not trade my time at Notasulga for anything. I’m proud to be from there.”¹¹⁵

The ever-changing interpretation of *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, one of the most important civil rights cases in federal law, had shaped Notasulga High School for almost 30 years. In 1992 residents and school officials had little reason to think that the foundation they had built together would not last for decades to come. “Yet even using school desegregation litigation to protect white students and their preference to keep open the only integrated school eventually proved futile,” explains legal historian Wendy Parker. “That school is now over ninety-nine percent African

¹¹¹ *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* (1992).
¹¹² Nossiter.
¹¹³ *Ibid.*
¹¹⁴ *Lee v. Macon County Board of Education* (1992).
¹¹⁵ Ishbah Cox, interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, September 4, 2018.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

American, and only a handful of white students attend any public school in Macon County. In 2006, when the federal courts ruled that Macon County was in compliance with its desegregation orders and thus ended the original lawsuit, the school district had an African American superintendent, an all African American school board, and a faculty and staff over ninety-five percent African American. Governor Wallace’s promise of ‘segregation tomorrow’ has come true for the public schools in Macon County.”¹¹⁶

Criterion C Significance: Architecture

Macon County High School, with its original 1935-1936 auditorium and classroom wing, is eligible under Criterion C for local significance as Macon County’s only example of a New Deal era Spanish Colonial Revival Style design in a public building. Constructed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) as a symmetrical three-part building, the remaining two-thirds exude the character-defining features of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture with its smooth stucco walls, Mission-shaped parapets, and prominent arched-shaped windows and entries. The major historic change to this building came in 1964-1966 with the construction of an International Style classroom wing that replaced the original Spanish Colonial Revival wing destroyed by a segregationist bombing during the school’s 1964 integration. Other historic building periods include 1954 when a detached, International Style gym was erected. These mid-20th century building additions to the Macon County High School campus lend it additional architectural significance as they are local examples of public school architecture from this era. The historic sections of the campus are clearly delineated and recognizable from later modifications and expansion of school facilities that date from late 20th century and into the early 21st century.

According to a 1936 article in the *Tuskegee News*, a building committee appointed by the Macon County Board of Education inspected “a number of school buildings at different places,” ultimately deciding “upon a building which would house both the elementary and high school – a one story structure of Spanish architecture.”¹¹⁷ The building’s Spanish Colonial Revival Style is expressed by its smooth stucco walls, the auditorium’s triple-arched entrance, the arcade connecting the auditorium and the classroom wing, and the classroom wing’s Mission-shaped parapets. Other Spanish Colonial Revival features include the multi-color tile bands and geometric designs that highlight the cornice of the auditorium and prominent corners of the classroom wing. Throughout both the auditorium and classroom wing, character-defining features of New Deal-era craftsmanship exist in original wood flooring, trim, and the stage. The Spanish Colonial Style was not unknown in Alabama public school architecture, and it is likely that the committee appointed to oversee the Macon County High School building was aware of Spanish Colonial Revival Style school buildings nearby in the Black Belt. A very similar, three-building execution of the Spanish Colonial Revival Style for a public school building is the c.1929 Holtville High School (listed in the Alabama Register in 1977) at Deatsville, Elmore County, Alabama, about 40 miles west of Notasulga. According to the documentation for the building, State Superintendent of Education A.F. Harmon patterned the Deatsville building “after a

¹¹⁶ Parker, “Why School Desegregation Succeeded,” 1109.

¹¹⁷ “Notasulga’s Educational System Among the Best,” *Tuskegee News*, Tuskegee, Alabama, October 29, 1936.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

school in a little western town in California”¹¹⁸ where the revival of interest in Spanish-influenced design initially gained footing after the Panama-California Exposition of 1915 showcased the style.

Though Holtville High School provides a clear precedent for the Spanish Colonial Revival Style executed at Macon County High School, the influence of this style on public school buildings was seen earlier in Alabama. Seven years before school officials erected Holtville High School and twelve years before the WPA’s construction of Macon County High School, the Pintlala School (listed in the Alabama Register in 1992) for white children in Montgomery County was erected in the Spanish Colonial Revival Style. Similar to Holtville and Macon County High Schools, the c.1923 Pintlala School building has three parts, a recessed central auditorium building attached to flanking wings by arcades, all covered in stucco, and also features a Mission-shaped parapet still visible on the building today. The auditorium’s triple arched façade and recessed entry is particularly similar to those of the later Holtville High School and Macon County High School. Another, much more elaborate and larger scale example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture in Alabama’s public school buildings is the c.1926 National Register-listed Murphy High School (Mobile High School) in Mobile County.

While the Spanish Colonial Revival Style was certainly present in Alabama around the time of Macon County High School’s 1935-1936 construction, other historic revival styles were also popular for public school buildings. The Classical Revival Style Tallassee Junior-Senior High School was built in Elmore County the same year (1929) as the Spanish Revival Holtsville School, and both buildings were used by the National Association of Schoolhouse Planning to illustrate the types of public school buildings being erected in the South during the time, indicating the use of historic Revival Styles as a popular option. Though the Holtsville High School and the Tallassee High Schools were of different architectural styles, they shared similar characteristics in their three-part building design with auditorium in the middle and flanking classrooms, as well as the arcades that connected these parts.¹¹⁹ The Killen Junior High and Elementary School (listed in the Alabama Register in 1998) in Lauderdale County, was built c.1935 with funds from the New Deal’s Public Works Administration around the same time as Macon County High School. Killen also has three parts, two classroom wings flanking a central auditorium building, but exhibits a restrained Classical Revival Style in its pilasters and semi-circular windows located on the gable ends of the façade. Despite the different architectural styles, the interior of the Killen school’s auditorium bears substantial resemblance to the auditorium at Macon County High School, particularly in regards to the shape of the stage and scale and size of the proscenium arch.¹²⁰

The International Style west classroom wing of Macon County High School, constructed 1965-1966, is not architecturally compatible with the original WPA Spanish Colonial Revival design but represents the violent opposition to the school’s integration in 1964, a significant historic event of its past. An excellent example of mid-century modern design for a public school, its International Style effects include its low profile, flat roof, and bands of casement windows. Though the lunchroom and vocational education buildings that were

¹¹⁸ Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage documentation form, “Holtville High School,” Deatsville, Elmore County, listed May 18, 1977.

¹¹⁹ “National Authorities Notes Elmore County School Buildings,” *Wetumpka Herald*, April 24, 1930.

¹²⁰ Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage, “Killen Junior High School and Elementary School,” Killen, Lauderdale County, listed October 7, 1998.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

also built 1965-1966 lack the many striking bands of casement windows, their subtle, low-profile design and flat roofs are typical of the era's public school buildings. To the east of the school's circular driveway is a mid-century styled gymnasium, which was added to the school campus in 1954. These minimal, mid-20th century International Style designs for public schools are seen throughout the state and are represented by several properties listed in the Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage. The flat roof, horizontal massing, and window styles of Macon County High School's mid-20th century buildings are shared by the 1950s and 1967 classroom wings of the historic Macon County Training School in Tuskegee. Other schools across the state that exhibit International Style influence include but are not limited to the D.A. Smith School in Dale County which was originally built in 1952 and has several subsequent mid-20th century additions; the c.1960 Mack M. Matthews School in Dale County; the 1961 Academy High School gym in Pike County; and the 1962 G.W. Watts School in Wilcox County.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (Insert bibliography here- cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Primary Sources

- “A Petition to the Macon County Board of Education to Desegregate Public Schools Under Your Jurisdiction.” September 12, 1962. Notasulga High School Files, Notasulga, AL.
- Ayers, B. Drummond Jr. “Desegregation of Southern Schools Since ’54 Produces Confusing Patterns of Impressive Gains, Bitter Setbacks.” *New York Times*, May 13, 1974.
- “Bar Notasulga Mayor, U.S. Asks.” *Birmingham Post-Herald*, February 6, 1964.
- Connell, Lenda Jo. Interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan. MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, April 3, 2018.
- “Court Orders Alabama School Desegregation.” *The News and Observer*, Raleigh, North Carolina, July 15, 1964.
- “Court Rules Desegregation is Responsibility of the State.” *Southern School News*, August 1964.
- Cox, Ishbah. Interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan. MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, September 4, 2018.
- Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of the Secretary HEW. *News for Release in A.M. Papers, Friday, June 18, 1970.*
- “Don’t Meddle, Alabama Told.” *The Vancouver Sun*, July 14, 1964.
- “Fire Marshal Says Macon Blaze Arson.” *The Montgomery Advertiser*, April 21, 1964.
- Gale, Mary Ellen. “Head Start Growing in Notasulga.” *Southern Courier*, May 20-21, 1967.
- Gale, Mary Ellen. “TCA Discusses Notasulga Class.” *Southern Courier*, May 20-21, 1967.
- Hudson, David. “The Filming of ‘Deep South, Deep North.’” *American Cinematographer* (June 1974): 694-695.
- Joseph, D.V. Letter to the editor. *Montgomery Advertiser*, March 1, 1937.
- Kitchens, Melody. “Notasulga High School’s history includes some turbulent times.” *Tuskegee News*, February 23, 2012.
- Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, 267 F.Supp.458 (1967).
- Lee v. Macon County Board of Education*, 970 F.2d 767 (1992).
- “Major Suit to Cut Off Tuition Grants Likely.” *The Progress-Index*, Petersburg, Virginia, July 17, 1964.
- Martin, Wayne. “Notasulga hopes its dismal decade is over.” *Birmingham News*, October 16, 1972.
- McKee, Don. “10-Day-Old Fire Law Used To Bar Negroes From School.” *The Montgomery Advertiser*, February 6, 1964.
- “National Authorities Notes Elmore County School Buildings.” *Wetumpka Herald*, April 24, 1930.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

- Nossiter, Adam. "Alabama school fights for its racial mix." *Atlanta Journal/Constitution*, June 30, 1993.
- "Notasulga's Educational System Among the Best." *Tuskegee News*, October 29, 1936.
- "Order to Wallace: Hands Off School." *The Sheboygan Press*, July 14, 1964.
- Pace, Paul. "Barn Arson Investigated." *Alabama Journal*, February 5, 1964.
- Six Negroes Barred at Alabama School." *New York Times*, February 6, 1964.
- Stephenson, Stuart X. "Photographer Roughed Up, Camera Smashed In Tense Notasulga Scene." *The Montgomery Advertiser*, February 6, 1964.
- Thomas, Rex. "Arson Is Suspected in Notasulga Blaze." *The Montgomery Advertiser*, April 19, 1964.
- Sanderson, Dwight. Interview by Colbi Layne W. Hogan. MTSU Center for Historic Preservation, March 12, 2018.
- "The Notasulga School – The Result of Vision and Determination." *Tuskegee News*, September 17, 1937.
- Time Line: Notasulga High School, Macon County, Alabama* (typescript, 2016). In author's possession with thanks to Roy "Buddy" Knapp for compiling this material, National Register Files, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation.
- "Boycotted School Awards Diplomas to Three Negroes." *Southern School News*, June 1964.
- "TV Listings: Special of the Week." *Detroit Free Press*, September 1, 1974.
- U.S. Civil Rights Commission. *1964 Staff Report*. Washington, D.C.: U. S. Civil Rights Commission, n. d. [1965].
- U.S. v. Rea* , 231 F.Supp. 772 (1964).
- "Wallace, Alabama Ordered to Quit Blocking Integration Plan." *Ft. Worth Star-Telegram*, July 14, 1964.
- "White Boycott Hits 2D Alabama School." *New York Times*, February 12, 1964.

Secondary Sources

- Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage, "Holtville High School," Deatsville, Elmore County, listed May 18, 1977.
- Alabama Register of Landmarks and Heritage, "Killen Junior High School and Elementary School," Killen, Lauderdale County, listed October 7, 1998.
- Ashmore, Harry S. *The Negro and the Schools*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954.
- Bagley, Joseph. *The Politics of White Rights: Race, Justice, and Integrating Alabama's Schools*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2018.
- Bogardus, Melinda. *The History of Notasulga High School*. University of Alabama: Student Coalition for Community Health, August 1990.
- Bond, Horace Mann. *Negro Education in Alabama: A Study of Cotton and Steel*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1994.
- Daughterity, Brian J. and Charles C. Bolton, eds. *With All Deliberate Speed: Implementing Brown v. Board of Education*. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2008.

Macon County High School

Macon, AL

Name of Property

County and State

-
- Day, John Kyle. *The Southern Manifesto: Massive Resistance and the Fight to Preserve Segregation*. Oxford: University of Mississippi Press, 2014.
- Frederick, Jeff. *Stand Up for Alabama: Governor George Wallace*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007.
- Harris, James Tyra. "Alabama Reaction to the Brown Decision, 1954-1956: A Case Study in Early Massive Resistance." PhD diss., Middle Tennessee State University, 1975.
- Hoffschwelle, Mary S. *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006.
- Johnson, Charles S. *Shadow of the Plantation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934.
- Landsberg, Brian K. "Lee v. Macon County Board of Education: The Possibilities of Federal Enforcement of Equal Educational Opportunity." *Duke Journal of Constitutional Law and Public Policy*, 12:1 (2016).
- Ludlam, Diane, "First School Integration Shattered '63-64 year." *The Montgomery Advertiser*, July 23, 1983.
- Muse, Benjamin. *Ten Years of Prelude: The Story of Integration Since the Supreme Court's 1954 Decision*. New York: The Viking Press, 1964.
- Myers, John B. "The Education of the Alabama Freedmen during Presidential Reconstruction." *The Journal of Negro Education* 40, no.2 (Spring 1971): 163-171.
- National Register of Historic Places, Shiloh Missionary Baptist and Rosenwald School, Notasulga, Macon County, Alabama, National Register #10000522.
- Norrell, Robert J. *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Civil Rights Movement in Tuskegee*. New York: Knopf, 1985.
- _____. "Reaping the Whirlwind: Change and Conflict in Macon County, Alabama, 1941-1972." PhD diss., University of Virginia, 1983.
- Parker, Wendy. "Connecting the Dots: Grutter, School Desegregation, and Federalism." *William and Mary Law Review* 45:4 (2004): 1691-1768.
- _____. "Why Alabama School Desegregation Succeeded (And Failed)." *Case Western Reserve Law Review* 67:4 (2017): 1091-1119.
- Reports of the Committees: 30th Congress, 1st Session – 48th Congress, 2nd Session, Volume 2, Part 2*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1872.
- Sanders, Crystal R. *A Chance for Change: Head Start and Mississippi's Black Freedom Struggle*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016.
- Sherer, Robert G. *Subordination or Liberation? The Development and Conflicting Theories of Black Education in 19th Century Alabama*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1977.
- Sikora, Frank. *The Judge: The Life & Opinions of Alabama's Frank M. Johnson, Jr.* N.P.: River City Publishers, 1992.
- Tomek, Beverly. "A Stalking Horse for the Civil Rights Movement": Head Start and the Legacy of the Freedom Schools." *The Southern Quarterly: A Journal for Arts and Letters in the South* 52, no.1 (Fall 2014): 115-133.
- United States Census Bureau. *Classified Population of the State and Territories by Counties on the First Day of June 1860*. Table No. 2 "Population by Color and Condition."

Macon County High School
 Name of Property

Macon, AL
 County and State

United States Census Bureau. *Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 Population: Characteristics of the Population*. Table No. 21 "Composition of the Population by Counties."

Winfrey, Jake. "Macon County pioneers graduate 48 years later." *Opelika-Auburn News*, May 23, 2012.

Zigler, Edward, and Sally J. Styfco. *The Hidden History of Head Start*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)		State Historic Preservation Office
	previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency
	previously determined eligible by the National Register		Federal agency
	designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government
	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #		University
	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #		Other
	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):			

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 13 **USGS Quadrangle** Notasulga

(Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates. Delete the other.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

*the seven coordinates are listed clockwise beginning with the NW corner

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. NW corner: Latitude: 32.560540 | Longitude: -85.663204 |
| 2. NE corner: Latitude: 32.560534 | Longitude: -85.660887 |
| 3. Latitude: 32.559430 | Longitude: -85.660887 |
| 4. SE corner: Latitude: 32.557609 | Longitude: -85.661787 |
| 5. SW corner Latitude: 32.557636 | Longitude: -85.662870 |
| 6. Latitude: 32.558665 | Longitude: -85.663389 |
| 7. Latitude: 32.559634 | Longitude: -85.663379 |

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

Notasulga High School's campus is comprised of one parcel totaling thirteen acres in Macon County, Alabama, as identified on the attached tax map as parcel 03 03 08 4 000 001.000.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the nominated property encompass all of the resources associated with the property's established periods of significance.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

Name Carroll Van West, Savannah Grandey, and Colbi Layne Hogan

Organization Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University

Street & Number 1301 E. Main St., Box 80 Date July 27, 2020

City or Town Murfreesboro Telephone 615-494-8938

E-mail Savannah.Grandey@mtsu.edu State TN Zip Code 37132

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 map.
- **Photographs** (refer to National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

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.

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: Macon County High School
City or Vicinity: Notasulga
County: Macon State: Alabama
Photographer: Carroll Van West and Savannah Grandey
Dates Photographed: October 5, 2017 and November 18, 2019

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

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0001

Overview of detached gym and Spanish Colonial Revival buildings, facing southeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0002

Overview of International Style west classroom and vocational education buildings, facing southwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0003

Overview of Spanish Colonial Revival classroom building and auditorium, facing south

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0004

Façade of auditorium, facing south

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0005

Northeast oblique of auditorium, facing southwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0006

Northwest corner of east classroom building, modified windows, facing east

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0007

Detail of east classroom building's north façade entrance, facing south

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0008

East elevation of east classroom building, facing northwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0009

South elevations of auditorium and east classroom building, facing northwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0010

South elevation of auditorium, facing northeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0011

East elevation of International Style west classroom building and covered walkway connecting building to auditorium, facing north

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0012

Northwest oblique of auditorium and covered walkway to west classroom building, facing southeast

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0013

Façade of west classroom building, facing southeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0014

Split-level end of west classroom building and vocational education building, facing southwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0015

Covered walkway between west classroom building and vocational education building, facing south

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0016

Northeast oblique of vocational education building, facing southwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0017

Northwest oblique of vocational education building, facing southeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0018

South elevation of vocational education building and covered walkway to west classroom building

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0019

South elevation of west classroom building and west elevation of lunchroom building, facing northeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0020

Southwest oblique of lunchroom building, facing northeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0021

Covered walkway between lunchroom building and non-contributing classroom building

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0022

Fenestration along south elevation of west classroom building

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0023

East elevation of lunchroom building, west entrance to auditorium, and north entrance to non-contributing classroom building, facing south

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0024

Northeast oblique of non-contributing classroom building with non-contributing play area in foreground, facing southwest

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0025

Northwest oblique of gymnasium, facing southeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0026

Southwest oblique of gymnasium, facing northeast

AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0027

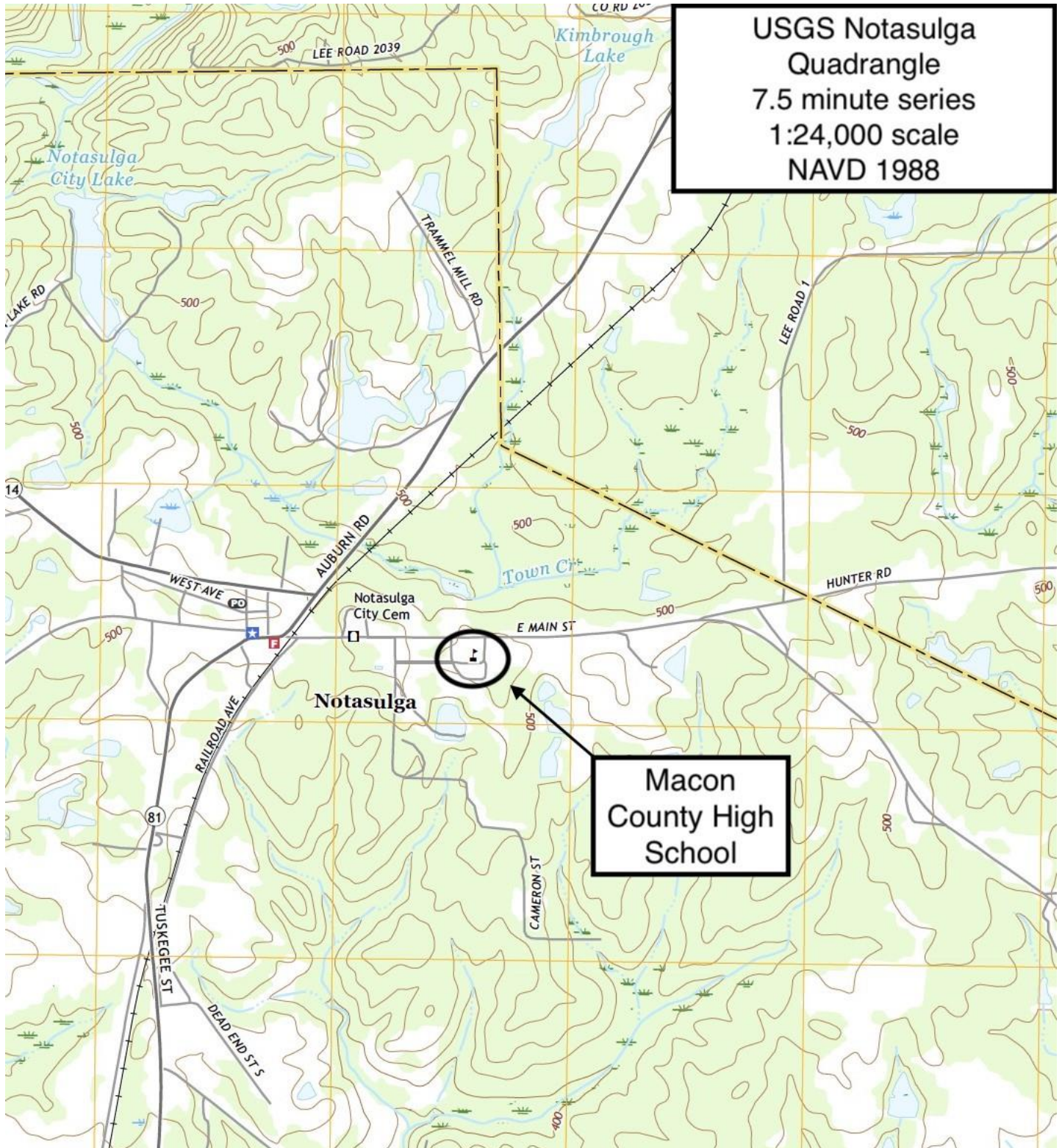
Non-contributing playground near southeast corner of gym, facing east

<u>Macon County High School</u> Name of Property	<u>Macon, AL</u> County and State
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0028 Façade of ticket and concessions building at football field, facing southwest	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0029 Football field, facing south	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0030 Northeast oblique of fieldhouse located near northwest corner of football field, facing southwest	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0031 Southeast oblique of non-contributing metal building, facing northwest	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0032 Interior, auditorium's south wall and stage, facing south	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0033 Interior, auditorium's north wall with mural, facing northwest	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0034 Interior, main entrance into east classroom building, facing north	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0035 Interior, main hallway in east classroom building, facing south	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0036 Interior, entrance into west classroom building, facing north	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0037 Interior, main hallway of west classroom building, facing west	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0038 Interior, typical classroom in west classroom building, facing southeast	
AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_0039 Interior, lunchroom building, lunchroom, facing southwest	

Macon County High School
Name of Property

Macon, AL
County and State

Location Map



Macon County High School
Name of Property

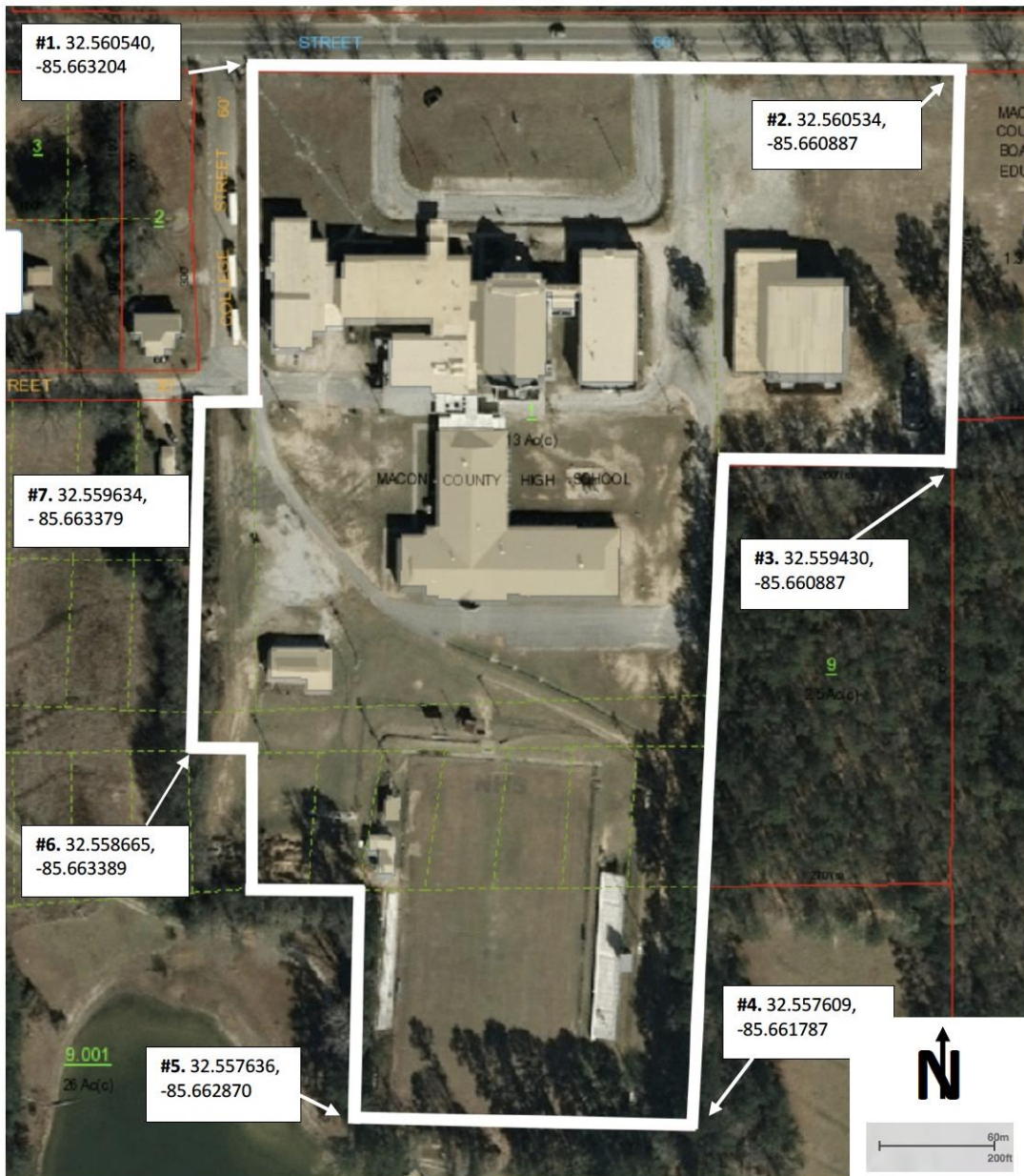
Macon, AL
County and State

Boundary Map

Macon County, AL tax map

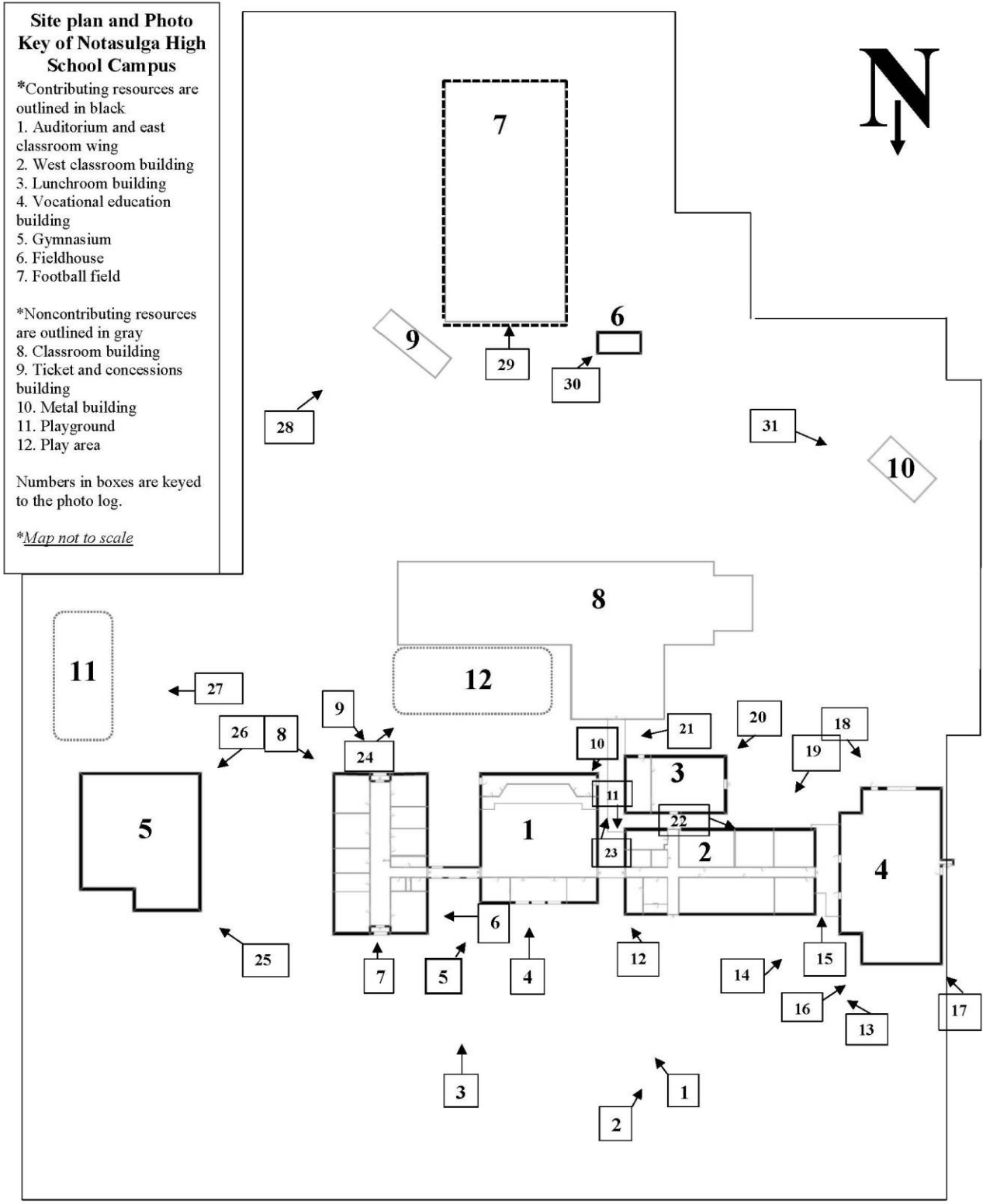
Parcel 03 03 08 4 000 001.00 outlined

*This map represents the boundaries of the nominated parcel with coordinates (WGS84) provided for the northwest, northeast, southeast, and southwest corners. The base map is dated and does not include all non-contributing resources.



Macon County High School
 Name of Property

Macon, AL
 County and State

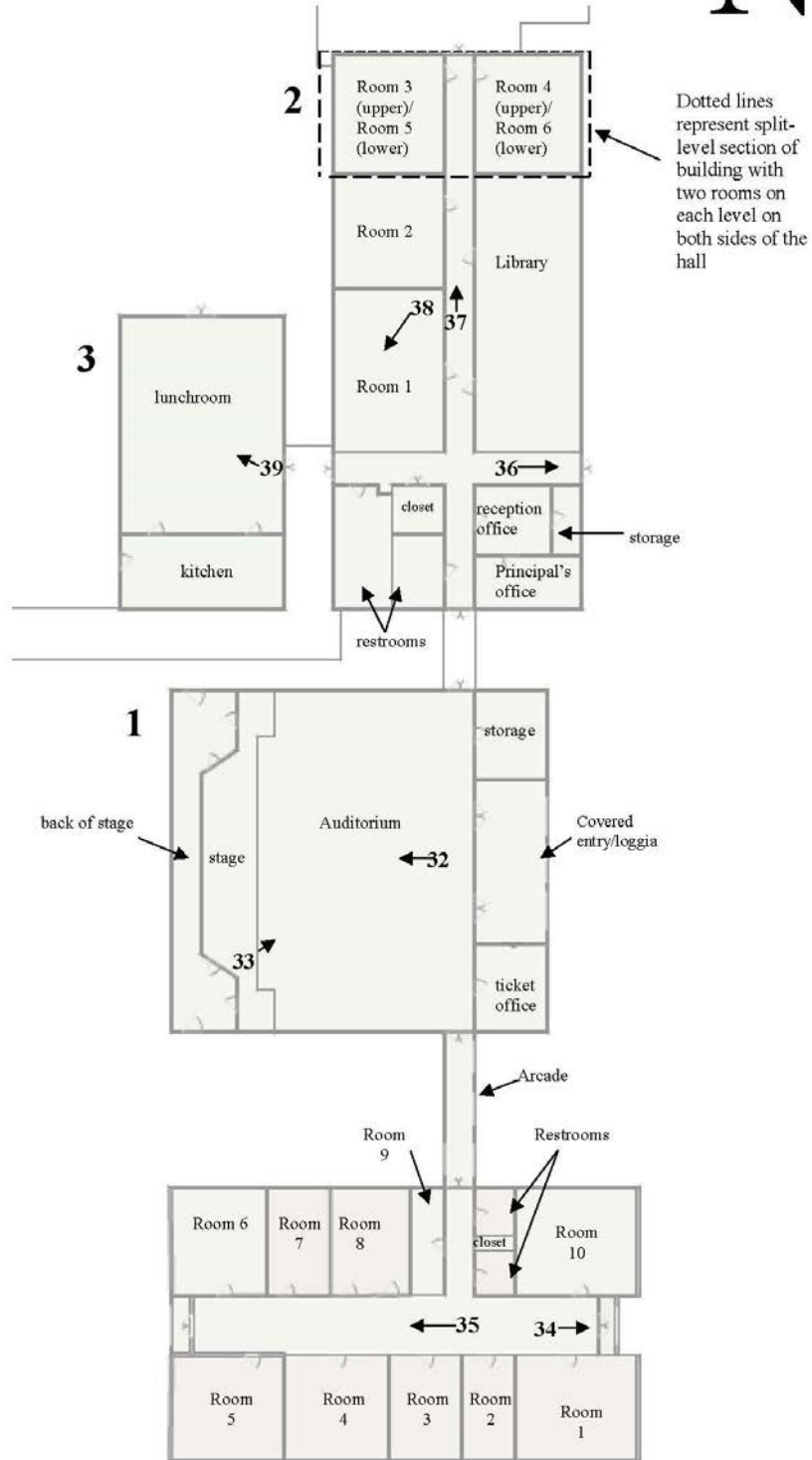


East Main Street

Macon County High School
 Name of Property

Macon, AL
 County and State

- Photo Key of Interiors**
**not to scale*
1. Auditorium and east classroom building
 2. West classroom building
 3. Lunchroom building





NOTASULGA
HIGH SCHOOL

EDDIE R. HULL
THE M. V. GARDNER

NOTASULGA
HIGH SCHOOL

NOTASULGA
HIGH SCHOOL

NOTASULGA
HIGH SCHOOL



NOTASULGA
HIGH
SCHOOL





NOTASHUGA
HIGH
SCHOOL









THE BLACK COLLEGE LIAISON

GETTING THE STAGE FOR...

OFFICE: 800-833-3333 | www.SouthernCollege.edu





STATES SERVICE
TRAY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 10/1/2020 Date of Pending List: 10/19/2020 Date of 16th Day: 11/3/2020 Date of 45th Day: 11/16/2020 Date of Weekly List: 11/20/2020

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 11/16/2020 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Lisa Deline Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2239 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION

468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-0900
334-242-3184 / Fax: 334-240-3477

Lisa D. Jones
Executive Director
State Historic Preservation Officer

October 1, 2020

Ms. Joy Beasley
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

Accompanying the electronic submission of this letter, please find the nomination form and supporting documentation to be considered for listing the following Alabama resource in the National Register of Historic Places:

Macon County High School
Notasulga, Macon County, Alabama

In accordance with the instructions for electronic submissions, two files are being submitted with this letter. One file (AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_form.pdf) contains the signed nomination, photo log, and maps. The second file (AL_Macon County_Macon County High School_photos.pdf) contains ten (10) of the thirty-nine (39) photos. The following photos are included in the PDF:

- Photos #1-3 (pp. 1-3)
- Photo #13 (p. 4)
- Photos #24-25 (pp. 5-6)
- Photo #28 (p. 7)
- Photo #33 (p. 8)
- Photo #35 (p. 9)
- Photo #38 (p. 10)

Your consideration of this National Register of Historic Places nomination is appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Anne Wofford".

Lee Anne Wofford
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

LAW/edc