

# SAVE OUR SCHOOL

**THE POCAHONTAS COMPLEX HAS BEEN TARGETED FOR DEMOLITION BY THE POWHATAN SCHOOL BOARD**

The board has voted 3-2 in favor of demolition, even though the Board of Supervisors has offered to take ownership, order new studies and if feasible, refurbish and repurpose the buildings.

**DESPITE SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY OPPOSITION, AND DESPITE MANY STAKEHOLDERS BEING UNAWARE OF WHAT'S HAPPENING, THE BOARD IS STILL SEEKING A DEMOLITION PERMIT**

Demolition is projected to cost close to a million dollars, turning a valuable community asset into a patch of dirt. How can you help pause the rush and possibly save Pocahontas? Turn over this flyer to see what can be done.

**REASONS TO STOP OR PAUSE DEMOLITION**

**ECONOMICALLY QUESTIONABLE**

Per the Board of Supervisors, project engineers have said it may be possible to restore rather than tear down the buildings

**IGNORES THE FULL HISTORY**

The school was the first countywide facility for Black students and genesis for Bell v Powhatan, the lawsuit that helped end Massive Resistance

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

There are possible mold and asbestos issues, which may cause harm to nearby residents, students and professionals if not handled optimally

**MORE USEFUL TO REHAB AND RE-PURPOSE**

Powhatan has opted previously to repair unhealthy buildings; numerous communities have repurposed historic schools to continue serving community

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP SAVE POCAHONTAS

1. Learn about the origin of this school, its notable alumni, and its significant role in history, so that you better understand and can inform others about why all of this complex is worth saving. From promoting academic excellence for Black students during segregation, to being home base for groundbreaking legal action during Massive Resistance to becoming a site and source for outstanding academic achievement, and the start of genuine racial healing and community enrichment, these buildings hold countless memories and powerful stories.
2. Consider how Powhatan previously has saved unsafe, unhealthy government-owned buildings and turned them into assets for the county— inclusive of the former white public school in the village and the War Memorial Building— both of which are central gathering places today.
3. Insist on updated information about cost/benefit analyses of demolition versus restoration. And insist that this information be better promoted to the public. The Board of Supervisors initially voted to fund demolition, based on the understanding that demolition was essential for health and safety reasons. It was later, according to the BOS, that project engineers called demolition ONE possible option— NOT the only option. A decision this consequential should have better advertising for maximum community input. Too many people are unaware.



*Other possible uses for this space— vocational education, youth enrichment, preschool services, a community center, affordable housing, and/or expansion of the African-American Cultural Arts Museum.. Any of these is better than demolishing valuable, historic community assets.*

4. CALL OR WRITE the school board members who have continued to press for demolition. If they don't know that Powhatan residents, business owners, taxpayers, Pocahontas alumni, historic preservationists, and other stakeholders are adamantly opposed to a rushed tear-down of this historic property, they will be less inclined to change course. They need to hear from everyone.

**Susan Smith— District 2— [susan.smith@powhatan.k12.va.us](mailto:susan.smith@powhatan.k12.va.us) 804-598-4943**

**Jeanne Wade— District 3— [jeanne.wade@powhatan.k12.va.us](mailto:jeanne.wade@powhatan.k12.va.us) 804-718-1067**

**James Taylor— District 4— [jtaylor@powhatan.k12.va.us](mailto:jtaylor@powhatan.k12.va.us) 804-727-9175**

5. SIGN THE PETITION to stop the demolition and then watch your email and social media for updates, including meetings where you may be able to speak into the public record. The petition:

<https://www.change.org/p/save-the-pocahontas-school-complex-from-planned-demolition>

**LEARN MORE, ASK QUESTIONS, OFFER IDEAS AND REQUEST A YARD SIGN:**

**VISIT: [www.savepocahontas.com](http://www.savepocahontas.com) WRITE: [mythoughts@savepocahontas.com](mailto:mythoughts@savepocahontas.com)**