

Patrick Henry Elementary School

MS. ANNIE TURNER, PRINCIPAL
MS. CAMERON SNYDER, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

701 SOUTH HIGHLAND STREET • ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22204
OFFICE: 703-228-5820 • FAX: 703-486-8971
WEBSITE: WWW.APSVA.US/HENRY

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Arlington School Board Members

Ms. Nancy Van Doren, Chair
Dr. Barbara Kanninen, Vice Chair
Mr. Reid Goldstein, Member
Mr. James Lander, Member
Ms. Tannia Talento, Member

% Arlington School Board Office
1426 N Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22207

Dear School Board Members,

I write on behalf of the Naming Committee that was appointed to consider and recommend the name for the new elementary school that is being built for the Patrick Henry Elementary School community. I am pleased to report that the Naming Committee is recommending that the new school be named the **Alice West Fleet Elementary School**.

Alice West Fleet made remarkable and long-lasting contributions to our community and to the education of Arlington County students. Mrs. Fleet was a native Virginian, a granddaughter of slaves, and a long-time Arlington teacher, resident, community activist and leader. She overcame numerous obstacles and discrimination to achieve her lifelong dream of becoming a teacher, and she taught at four Arlington schools. She broke down racial barriers, serving as the first African-American reading teacher in Arlington and the first African-American teacher to teach in an all-white school in Arlington. In all areas of her life and service to the community, she rose above the expectations of the time and embraced leadership roles. Naming the school after her not only recognizes her achievements and contributions to our community, it also serves as an example to current and future generations of students of what's valued and possible in our wonderfully diverse community.

The Naming Committee was comprised of the following members:

- From Patrick Henry Elementary School:
 - Andrea Turner, Principal
 - Twila Glick, Staff Representative
 - Michelle Gentry, Parent Representative
- From Thomas Jefferson Middle School:
 - Christine Brittle, Parent Representative
 - Catrina Tangchittsumran, Staff Representative

- From the Neighborhoods that comprise the Patrick Henry Community:
 - Mahender Dudani, Arlington Heights Civic Association
 - Andrew Greenwood, Penrose Civic Association
 - Jennifer Everling, Douglas Park Civic Association
 - Sarah Kessler, Columbia Heights Civic Association
- Community Member-at-Large/SAWG Representative: Monique O'Grady
- Staff Liaison (non-voting): Linda Erdos

Patrick Henry Elementary School has become well-known for its academic excellence, rich diversity, supportive community, and high expectations for all students. Guided by this tradition of excellence, our Committee approached the naming process thoughtfully and deliberately. The Naming Committee met four times over the course of three months and had open and honest deliberations about the merits of keeping the current name versus selecting a new name. To help inform this decision, the Naming Committee solicited community feedback through two surveys available in multiple languages, which resulted in more than 1,000 responses.

Quantitative data from the surveys, qualitative data from community members, and independent research all helped inform this recommendation. The feedback from the community was mixed, with some people favoring keeping the existing name and others favoring changing it. In the absence of an overriding preference, the committee decided in favor of a new name, selected to commemorate the new building and to reflect the current values of the school. The Patrick Henry community prides itself on its diversity, and celebrates its status as the first integrated elementary school in Arlington. The new name is reflective of both those values.

We would also like to highlight and affirm our belief that what makes Patrick Henry Elementary School so special is the people that make up its community. While we are recommending a name change for the school, the essence of the school itself is its students, families, and staff, who will carry on the school's traditions in a new building with a new name.

It was an honor to chair this committee and thank you for the opportunity to participate in the naming process. Please know that the Naming Committee is available to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Andrea Turner, M.Ed.
Principal, Patrick Henry Elementary School
Chair, Naming Committee