

Burley High School Varsity Club

819 Henry Avenue
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903



February 14, 2011

Dr. Pamela R. Moran
Superintendent of Albemarle County Schools
401 McIntire Road
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Dear Dr. Moran,

Life at Jackson P. Burley High School during the time before desegregation was viewed by many as a time of deprivation, inequality and hardship. In order for the students to endure, they needed a strong supply of faith, hope, daily encouragement to pursue excellence plus dedicated and inspiring role models.

Many of the teachers at Burley were inspiring for many different reasons and touched the lives of many students. However, **Elmer F. Sampson** had the rare distinction of touching every student in the school. Whether you played an instrument or listened as the band performed, you were touched by what he modeled and produced.

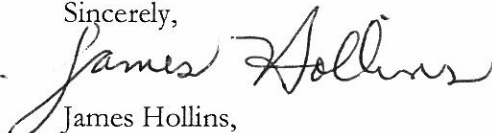
He was forceful, thorough, knowledgeable, direct, forthright and always encouraging. He took students who had little to no musical knowledge and taught them the rudiments of instrumentation and actually laid the foundation for many to go on to become excellent musicians. For those who didn't go on to become musicians, they learned music theory, and exposure to various music styles and composers. Through performances, the entire student body was exposed to many of the world's great musicians.

Mr. Sampson modeled respect and self-discipline and expected that from his students and all students. He modeled a strong work ethic and instilled that in his students. There were early morning practices and strict requirements for appearance which helped to shape and form students into individuals with pride and a sense of purpose. Also through him, many students were exposed for the first time to travel outside of their immediate areas through trips to away football games, parades, and band competition.

In fact, much of the success and richness of life that we enjoy today can be traced back to the examples and teachings of Elmer Sampson. We would very much like for the students coming through Burley Middle school to understand the strength of character of this man and hopefully they will be inspired to greatness. For these reasons, the Burley Varsity Club and alumni of Jackson P. Burley are asking you to consider naming the band room at Burley Middle School in honor of Elmer F. Sampson.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



James Hollins,
Burley Varsity Club Chair

James Holland, Chairman, Donald Byers, Secretary, George Lindsay, Treasurer

B.A. McCullough, Sgt. At-Arms