

Charlottesville



RESOLUTION
to
Commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Jefferson School

January 5, 2026

History and Significance

- Founded in 1926 as Charlottesville's first public high school for African American students after decades of advocacy by the Black community.
- The school's origin traces back to Freedmen's Bureau school (1865) and Jefferson Colored Graded School (1894)
- At the time it opened, it was one of only ten high schools for Black students in the state of Virginia
- Former students played a vital role in desegregation desegregating schools in the City following Supreme Court decision in Brown vs. The Board of Education
- Today, the site houses the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, preserving stories of resilience and excellence.



Benjamin Tonsler and Jefferson School graduates, 1908



RESOLUTION



What Council Is Authorizing

- City-sponsored commemorative display on designated poles along Main Street.
 - **Duration:** February 20, 2026 – February 20, 2027.
- **Design:** Banners featuring historic photographs of former students and school events.
- **City oversight:** Content, placement, and maintenance approved by City.





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