

# Public Comments for Virtual School Board Meetings #48

My public comments are related to: \* General Public Comments

Topic \* Renaming T.C. Williams High School

Name \* Brenda Messiah Fortune

What is your relationship to ACPS? \* Community Member

**To include your comments as part of the Public Comments agenda item at weekly Special Called School Board Meetings, enter your comments here:**

There's talk of renaming the TC Williams High School and I, as alum, strongly recommend the high school be named after a long-time Alexandrian family of educators. Rev. Andrew Warren Adkins and his wife Mattie Hamlett Adkins were both educators whose five of six children, as well as their grandson, were all educators.

Rev. Andrew Warren Adkins focused on education and founded the Parker Gray High School where he began teaching the first high school classes there for Alexandria's minority community. His wife Mattie Hamlett Adkins was also teacher. Their offspring are as follows:

Son -Dr. Rutherford Hamlet Adkins had appointments at Virginia State College, Tennessee State University, the U.S. Naval Academy, and Georgia Institute of Technology as well as being president at Fisk University and Knoxville College.

Daughter - Andretta Adkins Alexander was a mathematician and former NSA code breaker.

Daughter - Barbara Adkins Ridley was a librarian with Fairfax County Public Schools, Hampton University, Howard University, Virginia State College, and in Richmond Public Schools, retiring in 1993. Also, she volunteered in tutoring and serving in various libraries, including the library at Goodwin House.

Daughter - Theresa Edwina Adkins Lenoir joined the faculty of New York University as a teaching social worker, training young social workers. Also, she served as Youth Choir Director for the 9th Street Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Ohio; Choir Director for the Good Street Baptist Church, Dallas, Texas; President of the St. Louis, Missouri, Jack and Jill Chapter; and President of the St. Louis and Greater New York Chapters of The Links, Incorporated.

Son - Dr. Aldrich Wendell Adkins taught and conducted music for the Spelman College Choir, Virginia State College Choir, Virginia Union University and Southern University.

Son - Robert Hamilton Adkins, a veteran of the Korean War, taught chemistry and science and coached track and field at Parker Gray High School, and later taught at T. C. Williams High School, the first integrated school in Alexandria.

---

Grandson – Terry Roger Adkins was an art professor at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design at the time of his death and he taught at Kentucky State, Norfolk State University and Cal State University, Chico.

I think it appropriate to name the school (using the first initial of each first name and the family last name) B.A.R.R.A.T.T. Adkins High School since that last name is a synonym for education in Alexandria.

Thank you for your consideration. Sincerely, Brenda Messiah Fortune  
(class of 1971)

---