

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received MAY 24 1984  
date entered JUN 22 1984

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Dunbar School  
and/or common H.F.V. Wilson Center

**2. Location**

street & number 13 "16" St. S.E. N/A not for publication  
city, town Ardmore N/A vicinity of  
state Oklahoma code 040 county Carter code 019

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Ardmore School District  
street & number 800 "M" NE Street  
city, town Ardmore N/A vicinity of state Oklahoma 73402

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of County Clerk  
street & number Carter County Courthouse  
city, town Ardmore state Oklahoma 73402

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Oklahoma Landmarks Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date 1983  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records Oklahoma Historic Preservation Office  
city, town Oklahoma City state Oklahoma 73105

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Dunbar School is a one-story, detached, educational building. It is approximately 60'X 80' and has a flat roof with 2' parapet. It has a red brick wall finish with the brick laid in the running bond. There is a header/stretcher course every seventh layer. A 30'X 55' addition was completed to the northeast corner of the facade in the 1950s.

The facade, or east side, has a band of seven fixed pane windows each with nine lights. To the south of the window band is the main entrance. Double metal doors are framed by masonry opening which has tudor arch at the top. The one-story addition located on northeast corner of facade has double metal doors on south wall, two large fixed pane windows each with thirty lights on east wall, and two large fixed pane windows each with twenty-four lights on north wall.

The remaining fenestration on north side, which is the original building, includes two bands of seven fixed pane windows each with nine lights. A single metal door is located in the center of the north side.

The south side has a small fixed pane window with nine lights in the center flanked by two bands of seven fixed pane windows each with nine lights.

The rear, or west side, has a band of seven fixed pane windows each with nine lights. On either side of the window band are larger openings which have been covered with wood paneling.

Decorative elements include stepped parapets on the projecting wings on north and south sides, plain masonry sills below all windows, a masonry frieze on all sides of the building, decorative brickwork above blind arcades of the north and south wings, a row-lock watertable, and ornate crest-like masonry elements in the center of the north and south wings.

The 30'X 55' addition does not detract from the architectural integrity of the original building because similar construction materials and fenestration were employed.

The building is well-landscaped with a variety of trees and shrubs. Handicap access has been provided to the southeast corner of the facade. The Dunbar School has remained intact for a period of more than 61 years.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) (Ethnic)
	<input type="checkbox"/> invention			

**Specific dates** 1922-1968

**Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Dunbar School is historically significant because: (1) it is the oldest and only remaining educational institution associated with the black community of Ardmore and (2) it is one of the few all-black elementary schools left in southern Oklahoma having been continuously used to educate young blacks from 1922 to 1968, a period of 46 years.

Ardmore was established in 1887 as a rail outlet for agricultural products when the Santa Fe extended its tracks across the Chickasaw Nation, Indian Territory. The area was heavily farmed, and cotton and cattle were the dominant agricultural activities. From 1890 to 1910, Ardmore's population growth was steady reaching 8,618 by shortly after statehood.

During the pre-statehood era, Ardmore attracted a sizeable black population which by 1910 had increased to 1,628, or roughly 19 percent of Ardmore's total population. According to Franklin's recent history of blacks in Oklahoma, Ardmore developed a black business district, one of about four or five in the State outside Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Ardmore's black community continued to grow during the period from 1910 to 1920 as it totaled more than 2,000 at the end of the decade. Under the provisions of the Oklahoma state constitution of 1907, separate schools for blacks and whites were to be provided by local communities. The funding for black schools, however, was different than for white schools. Black schools were allocated funds from only county tax assessments, whereas white schools were allotted funds from both school district property taxes as well as county tax levies. Based on this tax system, black schools in Oklahoma were underfunded. One of the bright spots for black education in southern Oklahoma was the all-black elementary school constructed in Ardmore in 1922. The Dunbar Elementary trained hundreds of black children during its 46 year history.

Situated in the black residential area of Ardmore, the Dunbar School served as a significant educational and social focal point for the black community. As a social institution, only the black churches of Ardmore were more central to the Ardmore black community than Dunbar Elementary. It was an important agent for solidifying black pride and cohesiveness during an era when Oklahoma was a segregated society.

Because of its significance to the black educational history of Ardmore, the school district remodeled the property in the 1950s and changed its name to H.F.V. Wilson to honor one of the outstanding black educators in Ardmore. Wilson had served as principal of Dunbar Elementary and later the all-black Douglass High School in Ardmore.

Since 1968, when the school operations ceased, the building has been used to house the Ardmore Head Start program which continues its educational significance to the City of Ardmore. For more than 60 years, Dunbar School has played a vital role in the educational and ethnic history of southern Oklahoma.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Personal Interview: H.F.V. Wilson, July, 1983

Morris, John W., Cities of Oklahoma. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one acre

1:24,000

Quadrangle name Ardmore East, OK.

Quadrangle scale 7.5 mins.

### UTM References

A 

114	671321410	81781231610
Zone	Easting	Northing

B 

Zone	Easting	Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 4, Block 390, Original Townsite of Ardmore, OK

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bryan Brown supervised by Dr. George O. Carney

organization Department of Geography date February, 1984

street & number Oklahoma State University telephone 405-624-6250

city or town Stillwater state Oklahoma 74078

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature C S Metcalf date 5-21-84

title date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Beth Groover date 6/22/84  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration