

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Fifth District High School  
Other Names/Site Number: The Houma Academy, Finding our Roots African American Museum  
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & Number: 918 Roussell St  
City or town: Houma State: LA County: Terrebonne  
Not for Publication:  Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:  
 national  state  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

*Kristin Sanders* 4/20/2018  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Kristin Sanders, State Historic Preservation Officer Date  
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
Signature of commenting official: Date  
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register  
 determined eligible for the National Register  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register  
other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

*James H. ...*  
Signature of the Keeper

6-18-2018

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public – Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public – Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	District
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Non-contributing	
1		Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Education: School

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.): Recreation and Culture: Museum

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.): Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals:  
Classical Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)  
foundation: Brick piers  
walls: Wood  
roof: Asphalt Shingles  
other: N/A

**Narrative Description**

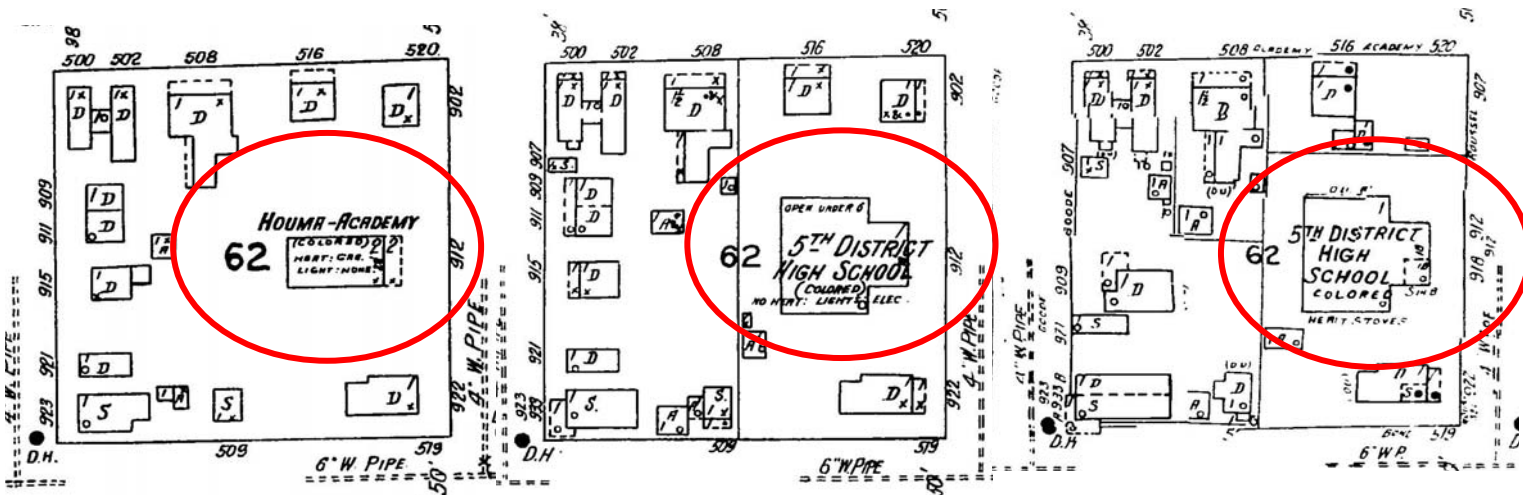
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

**Summary Paragraph**

Fifth District High School is located on Rousell Street at the southern end of downtown Houma in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana. Built in 1928, this simply designed frame school building is raised off the ground on brick piers almost a full story, clad in original wood siding, has replacement six over nine windows (within the original window frames), a central entry with double doors and multi lite wood transom above, and a hipped asphalt roof. A portion of the space underneath the school was filled in sometime between 1931 and 1947 as seen on Sanborn maps and Figure 1. The interior features a central hall with classrooms to each side. Some of the classrooms include their original bead board walls, ceilings, and blackboards (the others have it in intact, but it is covered with sheetrock or paneling). The floorplan has not changed and there have been cosmetic updates with new tile flooring and wall finishes. Besides that, the school itself retains a good degree of integrity and would be easily recognizable to alumni of the school. Thus, it remains eligible or listing on the National Register.

**Narrative Description**

The school, which is today used as a museum of African American history for the area, is virtually unchanged from the period when it also served as the secondary school for African American children. The building sits just a few blocks south of the Houma National Register Historic District in a mostly residential area of town. There was an earlier school on the site as seen on the 1924 Sanborn map below (left) that was two stories and a simple rectangular shape. The existing school was built in 1928 and can be seen on the 1931 Sanborn Map (center). The infill can be seen on the 1947 Sanborn (below right).



**Setting**

The area around the school is historically a residential area with several of the houses on the street dating to

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contemporaneous with the church or just after and a few more modern houses mixed in. Located two blocks west of the school is the former Houma Elementary, which was the originally an elementary for white children. This whole residential area is about 3-4 blocks from the main commercial area of Houma.

Façade (East), see photos 1-3, 8

The façade of this building has remained relatively unchanged since it was built in 1928. The central entry is recessed and has a set of modern double doors and within the original opening size. Above that is a 20 lite wooden transom. The door is located at a level between the ground and main floor. A portion of the open area under the building is enclosed for a small office space and was enclosed by 1947. On each side of the multi-lite transom is a set of double windows. Originally, these were 6/6 wood windows. Today, they are 9/6 aluminum windows within the original window size. The front three bays project out from the rest of the building to form the building's overall T shape (when viewed above from west to east). The façade of the rear section of the building has a set of double windows on each side. The roof is hipped. It looks like it was originally a hipped roof with a flat section in the center, but today, has a second hipped roof on top of that. The building still has its original wood siding. There is a metal awning over the entry door to the enclosed section. There is an added gable roof protecting the entry door that is supported by two simple rectangular posts.

North Elevation, see photos 2-5

The north elevation of the front section of the building has two sets of double windows. The north elevation of the rear section has a set of double windows, a single door with three lite transom, and another set of double windows. There is a set of stairs leading from the door to the ground.

Rear Elevation (West), see photos 5-6

The rear elevation has a central rear door that has been altered as seen by the cuts in the siding. It likely had a transom like the one on the front, but today, it just has a set of double doors. To the left of the entry is a set of double windows. To the right of the doors are two sets of double windows.

South Elevation, see photos 7-8

This elevation mirrors the north elevation on the main floor. The portion of the area underneath that is enclosed has one section of siding, and a single 6/6 aluminum windows in the other two enclosed sections. Based on the window type, we suspect that the upper floor windows were replaced at the same time that this section was enclosed.

Interior, see photos 9-15

Upon entering the building, there is a set of stairs that lead up to the main hallway. There are three doors on each side of the hallway leading into classrooms. On the right side, the rear two classrooms are connected by a wide opening. It currently has accordion doors in it to close the spaces off. To the right, there are three classrooms. A second set of stairs is found at the back of the hallway leading to the rear door. Some interior transom windows remain as well. Cosmetic updates in the building included new vinyl tile floors over the original wood floors, painted paneling added to some of the interior walls, and popcorn ceilings in the classroom spaces. Some of the original board walls are visible in some of the former class rooms (now used as museum exhibit spaces). Some of the original chalkboards also remain and can be seen under some of the museum exhibits.

Alterations and Integrity

As stated previously, the main alterations to the building are cosmetic updates to the interior of the school. Fifth District High School retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, craftsmanship, and overall materials. The school would be recognizable to any of the students who attended school here during the period of significance. Thus, it remains eligible for listing on the National Register.

**8. Statement of Significance**



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**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

<b>X</b>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

**Criteria Considerations:**

<b>X</b>	<b>A</b>	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
	<b>B</b>	Removed from its original location
	<b>C</b>	A birthplace or grave
	<b>D</b>	A cemetery
	<b>E</b>	A reconstructed building, object, or structure
	<b>F</b>	A commemorative property
	<b>G</b>	Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions.): Education; Ethnic Heritage: Black

**Period of Significance:** 1928-1950

**Significant Dates:** 1928

**Significant Person** (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

**Architect/Builder (last name, first name):** Reason, John

**Period of Significance (justification):** The period of significance begins with 1928, the year the school was built, and ends with 1950, the year that the school was no longer used.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary):** While the school building is owned by a religious organization, it is not being listed for religious significance. It is being listed for its educational significance.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Fifth District High School is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of education and ethnic heritage because it served as the earliest and only secondary school opportunity for African American students in Terrebonne Parish prior to 1950. Most significantly, it was the first high school in Terrebonne Parish for African Americans. The Fifth District High School provided students with a well-rounded educational foundation that enabled them to progress to college and pursue many different professions. The period of significance begins with the construction of the school in 1928 and terminates in 1950, the year the high school was closed.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

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## **History of Houma**

\*\*\*This history of Houma is taken from the Houma Historic District Additional Documentation. \*\*\*

Houma is the seat of government for Terrebonne Parish, one of Louisiana's southernmost parishes fronting onto the Gulf of Mexico. Roughly 40% of the parish's 2,080 square miles is water. During the historic period for this nomination, Houma was the only incorporated community in Terrebonne – the only town of any size. For perspective, the entire population of Terrebonne in 1940 was 35,880, with 9,052 of those people residing in Houma.

Terrebonne (“good earth” in French) was established as a parish in 1822. The town of Houma (named for the Houma Indians) was established to be the parish seat in 1834. In that year, Richard H. Grinage and Hubert M. Belanger donated one arpent of frontage on Bayou Terrebonne for the new governmental seat. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, agriculture (sugarcane) and the seafood industry dominated the local economy.

A seismic shift in the economy occurred in 1929, when oil was first discovered in the parish. The Texas Company (Texaco) brought in wells at Lake Pelto and Lake Barre in that year. The major field of Caillou Island started producing in 1930. Subsequent fields were Four Isle Bay (1934), Gibson (1937), Bourg (1952), Mosquito Island (1955), and East Caillou Island (1956). By 1965, there were some three dozen oil and gas fields in the parish (inshore) as well as 17 offshore wells in production. There were numerous major oil companies operating in Terrebonne (Texaco was the largest), as well as various smaller concerns. (Oil prosperity continued unabated until a slump in the 1980s.)

With all of this activity, the City of Houma emerged as the parish's oil service center – the epicenter of oil related services. Like Shreveport in northwest Louisiana, Houma was able to ride out the worst of the Depression so-to-speak because of booming oil prosperity. Various indices illustrate growth in the city in the 1930s. Population surged from 6,531 (1930 census) to 9,052 (1940), an increase of 38.6%. Post office receipts were up 72%; telephone installations, 137%; and bank deposits, 180%.<sup>1</sup>

### **Criterion A: Education and Ethnic History**

#### **Education for African Americans in Louisiana During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Following the Civil War, the Federal Reconstruction Legislation had passed laws opening up public schools to all races and providing state and federal money for the operation of such schools. A Freedmen's Bureau agent in Caddo Parish that same year stated that local whites were bitter about blacks attending school and there were no whites who attended the mixed race school in Shreveport. Even though the 1868 legislation was in place, that does not mean that segregation was nonexistent; rather it was commonplace, as it would be for the next 100 years in Shreveport.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, public education in Louisiana was in a terrible state of affairs. The state constitution of 1898 had legally mandated the already status quo segregation of schools by race, and at that time students of all races were severely underserved.<sup>2</sup> The state's public school system was characterized by crude, deteriorating school houses and abysmally low attendance. During the first two decades of the century, great improvements were made in school house construction, curriculum standardization, and attendance through transportation advances and consolidation. However, these developments generally applied only to the white schools. In Louisiana's underfunded dual school system,

<sup>1</sup> National Register of Historic Places, Houma Historic District (Boundary Increase, Decrease, and Additional Documentation, Houma, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000699.

<sup>2</sup> Rodney Cline, *Education in Louisiana – History and Development* (Baton Rouge: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1974), 34.

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African-American schools received little to no investment from their parish school boards. The disparity this created between the two separate and supposedly equal school systems was blatant.<sup>3</sup>

Following the adoption of the 1898 constitution and under the guidance of state superintendent T.H. Harris from 1908-1940, "public education in Louisiana was enabled to grow and develop to respectable status."<sup>4</sup> However, as mentioned above, this respectable status was true only for the white students and schools. Funding was tight and any resources spent on white schools spelled further detriment to African American Schools. The Concordia Parish superintendent even stated that money dedicated to African American education was spent on white schools because "it's the only way that we can have decent white schools here."<sup>5</sup> By the 1920s, 23 of Louisiana's parishes spent less than \$1 on African American education while they spent \$14-\$29 on each white student.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, the overall condition of education for African American children continued to be terribly poor. Throughout the state, the physical plant for white schools was valued at over \$6 million. The physical plant for African American schools was valued at just \$250,000. It is estimated that this number was even lower as the majority of schools for African Americans were actually churches or lodges and not actual public school buildings. In some cities, such as Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Shreveport, substantial school buildings were constructed. In smaller towns, one room or multiple room frame school houses were constructed, like the Bayou Paul School. The Rosenwald fund, which made many rural schools possible from 1916 to 1932, contributed to the construction of 392 schools as well as houses for teachers and shops.<sup>7</sup> For other places, like St. Gabriel whose school was not built as part of the Rosenwald Fund, schools were built by private African American organizations. It wouldn't be until the 1950s when more substantial separate school buildings larger than one room would be constructed.<sup>8</sup>

The 1898 Louisiana state constitution further cemented segregation as a way of life. A portion of the constitution required separate schools for whites and blacks. The separate schools for black students were far inferior to the schools for white students. By 1900, a typical school building was a single or small multiple room frame schools for its students. By the 1910s through the 1940s, the single and multiple room frame schools were being replaced with larger school buildings. Of these schools built for African American students, there are six that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Central Colored High School in Shreveport. Others include "training schools" like the Bossier Parish and Webster Parish Training Schools. These were set up to help teach industrial and vocational skills as well as teacher training.

In the 1950s, further strides were made in the construction of quality school buildings for African Americans. By this time, the wide disparity between the number and quality of public school buildings for African Americans versus those for whites was undeniable. The 1950s were ushered in by the filing of multiple lawsuits across the country challenging the constitutionality of "separate but equal" schooling and calling for the integration of schools. In 1952, New Orleans attorney, A. P. Tureaud filed *Earl Benjamin Bush et al. v. Orleans Parish School Board* for the integration of New Orleans schools. A suit was also filed for the integration of schools in St. Helena Parish, which lays two parishes west of West Feliciana. In the meantime, suits from other states were coming before the Supreme Court. Five became consolidated as *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. As the case awaited review by the Supreme Court, some states, like South Carolina and Mississippi made a last ditch effort to protect segregation by implementing programs of school equalization.

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<sup>3</sup> National Register Nomination, John S. Dawson High School, St. Francisville, West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000348.

<sup>4</sup> Laura Ewen Blokker "Education in Louisiana." Historic Context Prepared for the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation. May 15, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Blokker, pg. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, pg. 29.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> National Register Nomination, Beard Congregational Church, Erath, Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000699.

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Louisiana did not institute such a statewide program, but whether individual districts attempted to hold off integration by improving black schools is unclear. New modern facilities constructed for African Americans in the 1950s in Louisiana appear to have been derived from African American demands for equal facilities and from acknowledgement by school officials that new buildings were truly needed, even if white voters didn't always agree. Regardless of the impetus behind it, the construction of new modern schools in the 1950s provided African Americans with long awaited quality learning environments and was a source of pride for communities.<sup>9</sup>

### **Education in Houma and at Fifth District High School**

\*\*\*The following context for public schools in Houma is taken from the Houma Elementary School National Register Nomination. \*\*\*

#### **Public Schools in Houma:**

The history of white public education from 1898 to 1938 in Terrebonne Parish is chronicled, in fairly broad strokes, in a master's thesis by Henry L. Bourgeois written in 1938 (Department of Education, LSU). According to Mr. Bourgeois, there were two public school buildings in Houma in 1898: (1) the so-called "old corporation schoolhouse," built of hand hewn timbers; and (2) the old firemen's hall, which had been donated to the school board in 1896.

In 1905, the superintendent appeared before the school board, noting that the school attendance of 444 "was entirely too large for the accommodations." The public responded, writes Bourgeois, by voting a tax in 1906 "that started a decidedly progressive movement in the public schools." Built in 1908, the facility was called Terrebonne High School. It was at the back of the block where the Houma Elementary is located. Presumably it was typical of the period in educating all grades under the name high school. Bourgeois accords this school the most significance in his comments on the physical plant's development. Of brick construction with a tile roof, "it consisted of a basement and two stories, and boasted ten modern and well-equipped classrooms."

Increasing enrollment necessitated a new building, which was authorized in 1917 and erected in 1918. Per a Sanborn map of 1924, this larger three story building was located a block away from the 1908 school. Per an old postcard, the newer building was in the Classical Revival style. Both of the schools are labeled "Terrebonne High School" on the 1924 map. The same two schools (1908 and 1918) are shown on an early 1931 Sanborn map.

Bourgeois notes that "these accommodations sufficed for the city of Houma until 1931, when another brick structure [Houma Elementary], containing twenty classrooms, was erected." It was built at the front of the block where the old 1908 school was located. Per the 1947 Sanborn map, Houma Elementary is labeled elementary school; the 1908 building (no longer extant) is labeled "primary school;" the 1918 building (no longer extant) is labeled Terrebonne Jr. High; and a building constructed in 1940 housed Terrebonne High.<sup>10</sup>

While this information discusses public education for white students in Houma, there is limited published information on education for African American students in Houma. Prior to the Civil War, the only options available for black children was private. Young children who showed promise could be taught in the home of their master at his or her expense. Following emancipation, there was no true opportunity for a quality education for black children in the four parish area until the two academies (in Houma and in Belle Alliance) were built in the 1920s by the Louisiana Southern Baptist Association. The organization has been recognized

<sup>9</sup> National Register Nomination, John S. Dawson High School, St. Francisville, West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000348.

<sup>10</sup> National Register Nomination, Houma Elementary School, Houma, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, National Register # 15000347.



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for its work in education and charity and has played a strong role in providing educational opportunities for African Americans in the Houma area.<sup>11</sup>

Eleven years after the Civil War ended, the Louisiana Southern Baptist Association was formed. Chapters were created and the Houma area was defined as the fifth district of the association. This Fifth District Association was organized by Elders Isaiah Lawson, Thomas L. Rhodes, I. C. Stewart, and R. Coleman. Bishop Lawson was its first president. Then followed successively Bishops R. Coleman, I. H. Stewart and Dr. H. C. Cotton, who at the time (1912) stood as the Moses of this great Baptist host, numbering 3,200 as loyal Baptists as can be found anywhere in the Union. Dr. Cotton was a man who believed in doing things by DOING THEM. This fact is evidenced by what he and his great association did in the Houma area. For 23 years, he led them in the work of lifting up the men, women, and children "farthest down."

The Fifth District founded two academies -- one in Houma and another in Belle Alliance. Both of these schools have been powerful influences for good in this part of the state, expelling ignorance and vice. The cost of these school buildings was more than \$2,000 each. They were two-story frame buildings and were completed throughout, very well furnished with the latest improved desks and furniture. Dr. Cotton took a single church, the Israel Baptist Church, and erected the Israel Academy building at a cost of \$2,556.20. They were only six months and one day paying this amount.

There are two corner stones on the building. The corner stone on the far left column reads:

“Board of Directors  
Rev. H. Gary Pres.  
Rev. M. Williams V. Pres  
Rev. T. J. Ellis Secy  
Rev. K. Hadley Treas.  
Dr. C. D. Merritt  
B.S.M.D. Principal  
J. Reason Architect

The one on the far right column reads:

“Fifth District High School  
Organized and Built  
During the Presidency  
Of Rev. H.C. Cotton 1891  
1913 Donors Hon H.C.  
Minor Rev. J.L. Hawkins  
Rev. C. D. Reese Elected  
Pres. 1914. 1927 His Admi  
Nistration Was Spent  
In Accumalating (sp.) Funds  
For The Present Build  
Ing And Old Folks home  
Rev. F Hams Administra  
Tion 1927 1928 Rev. T. A.  
Collings. Elected 1928  
Rebuilt High School  
1928 1930 Officers  
Rev. T. A. Collins Pres

<sup>11</sup> Larry Charles, "LSBA Formed by Churches in 1876." *The Houma Daily Courier*, the *Terrebonne Press*, Oct. 8, 1972, Sunday, Section E.

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Rev. J. Taylor V. Pres  
Rev. JW Reed Rec Sec  
Rev. C. W. Wallace Cor Sec  
Rev. C. H. Merritt Trea”

The property in 1913 was as follows: two plots of ground, two school buildings, and a creditable Old Folks Home. The members of this District under their pioneer fathers and the great men they now have, have, without doubt, wrought well. Their present staff of officers (1913) follows: Bishop H. C. Cotton, President; Bishop C. D. Reese, Vice President; Professor D. F. Ross, A. M., LL. B., Recording Secretary; Bishop C. S. Collins, A. B., M. D., Corresponding Secretary; Elder T. L. Welch, Treasurer, and Bishop S. L. McComb, Missionary. S. S. Association Officers: Bishop O. Williams, President; Bishop J. W. Wickham, Recording Secretary; Prof. McWillis, Corresponding Secretary, and Elder T. L. Welch, Treasurer. P. S.--Since the above was written Elder Cotton has gone to his reward and Bishop Chas. D. Reese is now. <sup>12</sup>

A report was written in 1914 regarding the previous school and students. The principal was Thomas Dickerson and there was 128 students with the income of \$750 for tuition \$750 for salaries and expenses, the value and a description of the property and a recommendation for a larger school was mention in the report on February 1914. The school was rebuilt in its present location in 1928 and served as a school in the community from 1928 to 1930. It was also used as an overflow school when needed after another public school was open in 1930.

Other schools were built after Fifth District as the student population became too large for the building. In 1930, Charter members of the Terrebonne Colored Public School Club contributed eight hundred dollars to purchase the land from John Hite. In (1930) Houma Colored School later became Southside High and later Southdown (with a modern c. 1950s building replacing the earlier building). There were other public (Colored) schools in 1930 including Ardoyne and Smithridge.

The previously mentioned Southdown High School, which is misquoted in a 2014 article as “the only African American high school in the parish,” was recently demolished. A historic marker has been placed on its former site. This school was a mid-century modern school and featured the typical finger plan with multiple wings off a central core that was popular during the 1950s and 1960s. Greenwood Elementary provided primary education for black students in rural areas of Terrebonne Parish along Bayou Black about 14 miles northwest of downtown Houma. The school still stands today and is also a mic-century style school.<sup>13</sup> Today, Fifth District remains as the oldest historic school building associated with the African American community in Houma and Terrebonne Parish.

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### **Developmental History/Additional historic context information**

Marcus Christian, a well-known poet, teacher, librarian, and author, attended the first Houma Academy school from 1906-1917. He went on to Straight College where he continued his education.

## **9. Major Bibliographical Resources**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Batte, Jacob. “Former Student Remembers Blacks-Only High School.” [www.houmatoday.com](http://www.houmatoday.com). Dec. 26, 2014.

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<sup>12</sup> William Hicks. *History of Louisiana Negro Baptists from 1804 to 1914*. Academic Affairs Library, UNC-CH: Chapel Hill, NC: 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Jacob Batte. “Former Student Remembers Blacks-Only High School.” [www.houmatoday.com](http://www.houmatoday.com). Dec. 26, 2014.

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Blokker, Laura Ewen. "Education in Louisiana." Historic Context Prepared for the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation. May 15, 2012.

Charles, Larry. "LSBA Formed by Churches in 1876." *The Houma Daily Courier, the Terrebonne Press*, Oct. 8, 1972, Sunday, Section E.

Cline, Rodney. *Education in Louisiana – History and Development* (Baton Rouge: Claitor's Publishing Division, 1974), 34. Hicks, William. *History of Louisiana Negro Baptists from 1804 to 1914*. Academic Affairs Library, UNC-CH: Chapel Hill, NC: 2000.

National Register Nomination, Beard Congregational Church, Erath, Vermilion Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000699.

National Register Nomination, Houma Elementary School, Houma, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, National Register # 15000347.

National Register of Historic Places, Houma Historic District (Boundary Increase, Decrease, and Additional Documentation, Houma, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000699.

National Register Nomination, John S. Dawson High School, St. Francisville, West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, National Register #15000348.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):**           N/A          

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property:** Less than an acre

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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Terrebonne Parish, LA

County and State

Latitude: 29.591642 Longitude: -90.722022

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Three certain lots of ground situated in the Parish of Terrebonne, in Newtown in the rear of Houma, designated on a plan made by A. Jolet Jr. as Lots Four (4), Six (6) and Eight (8) in block No. Sixty two (62); measuring each sixty (60') feet front on Roussel St. by one hundred twenty (120) feet deep: together with all the buildings and improvement thereon. See submitted plat/boundary map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.) The boundaries chosen reflect the historic boundaries of the school.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Margie Scoby; Jessica Richardson (National Register Staff)

organization: Finding our Roots African American Museum

street & number: 918 Roussel Street

city or town: Houma

state: LA

zip code: 70360

e-mail: [findingourroots@yahoo.com](mailto:findingourroots@yahoo.com)

telephone: 985-855-9202

date: 9/27/17

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Fifth District High School

City or Vicinity: Houma

County: Terrebonne Parish

State: LA

Name of Photographer: Jessica Richardson

Date of Photographs: October 27, 2011

1 of 17: Façade of the school, camera facing northwest.

2 of 17: Northern elevation and façade of the school; camera facing west.

3 of 17: Northern elevation of the school; camera facing west.

4 of 17: Northern elevation and rear section of the school; camera facing northwest.

5 of 17: Northern and rear elevation of the school; camera facing south.

6 of 17: Rear doors for the school; camera facing east.

7 of 17: Southern elevation of the school; camera facing east.

Fifth District High School

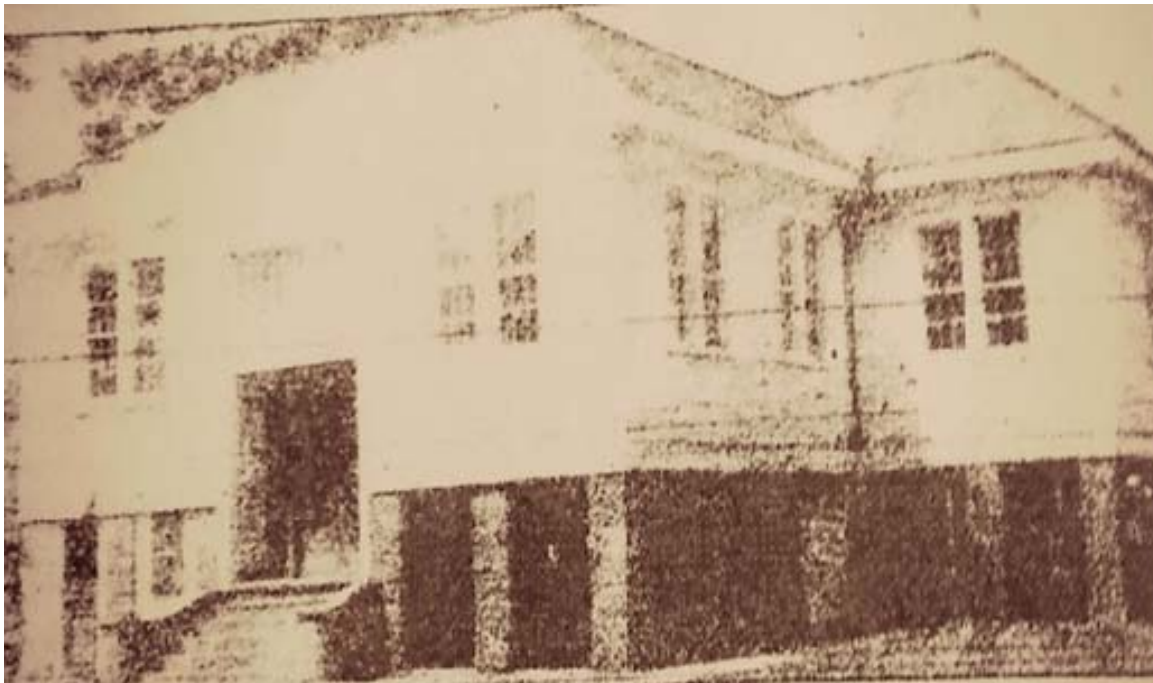
Name of Property

Terrebonne Parish, LA

County and State

- 8 of 17: Southern elevation and façade of the school; camera facing north.
- 9 of 17: View of main hallway; camera facing northwest.
- 10 of 17: View of one of the rear classrooms; camera facing northwest.
- 11 of 17: View of rear portion of hallway; camera facing northwest.
- 12 of 17: View of left rear classroom; camera facing west.
- 13 of 17: View of center left classroom; camera facing north.
- 14 of 17: View of center left classroom and chalkboard; camera facing west.
- 15 of 17: View of center left classroom; camera facing southwest.
- 16 of 17: View of plaque on front right pier.
- 17 of 17: View of plaque on front left pier.

Figure 1. Photo from c. 1947. Image courtesy of nomination preparer.

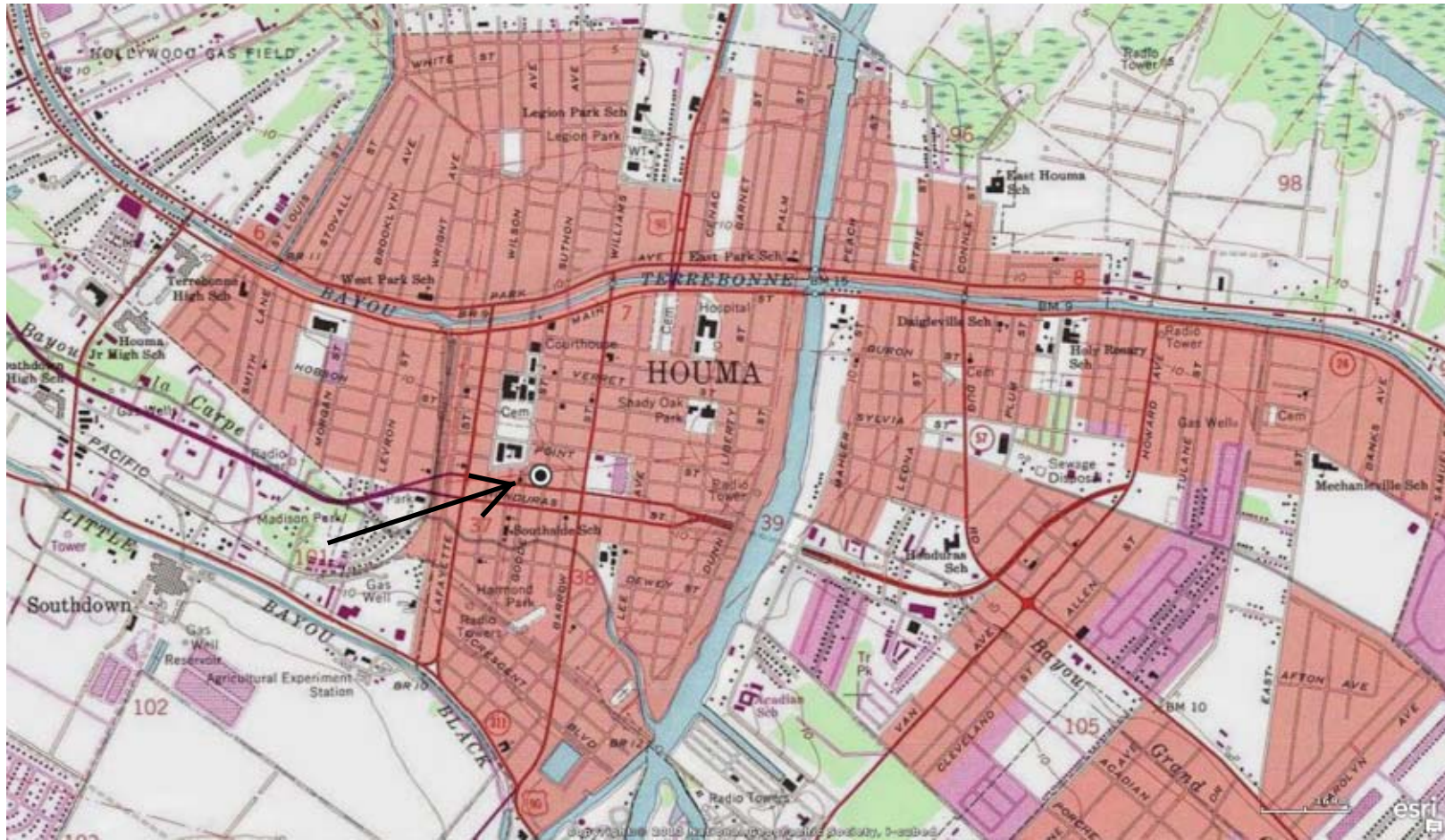


**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



### Fifth District High School, Terrebonne Parish, LA



Latitude: 29.591642 Longitude: -90.722022



# Fifth District High School

Terrebonne Parish, LA  
Lat/Long Map



29.591642, -90.722022

Academy St

Bond St

Goode St

Roussell St

Daspt St

3040

Google Earth

© 2018 Google



200 ft

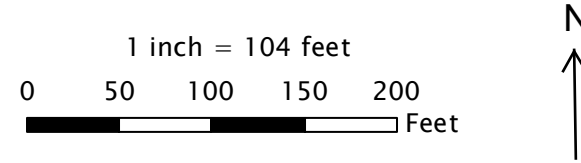


# Fifth District High School, Terrebonne Parish, LA



February 8, 2018

DISCLAIMER: Terrebonne Parish makes no warranty as to the reliability or accuracy of the base maps, their associated data tables or the original data collection process and is not responsible for the inaccuracies that could have occurred due to errors in the original data input or subsequent update process. User assumes all responsibility for verifying accuracy of data for any intended use.

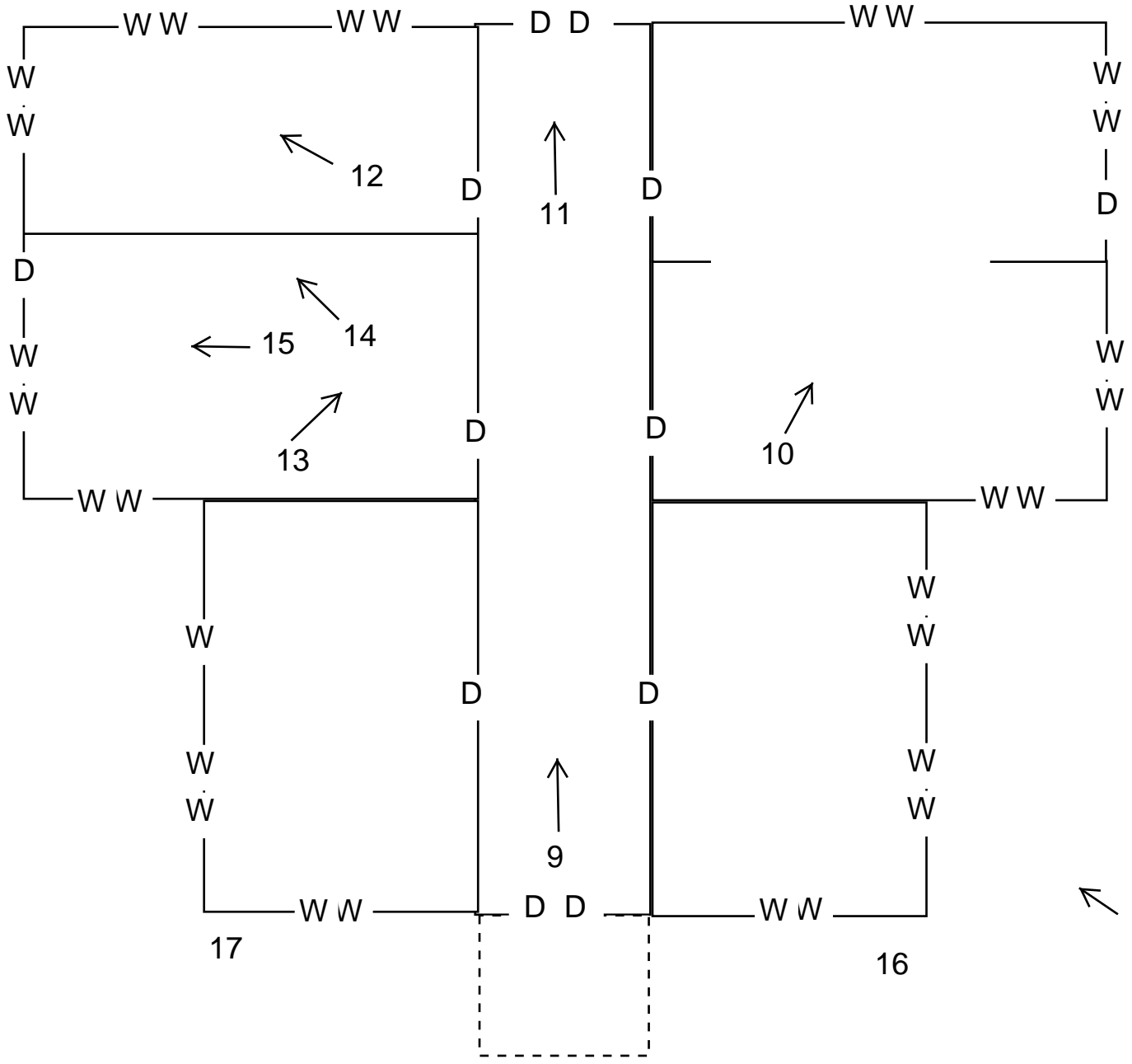




7 ↘

6 ↘

5 ↙



3 ↖ 4 ↖

8 ↗

Fifth District High School  
 Terrebonne Parish, LA  
 Photo Key

↗ N

1 ↑

2 ↖



FORAM

10000000





FORAAN





Small plaque or sign on the brick pillar, containing illegible text.





PLAQUE ON PILLAR





















FIFTH DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

ORGANIZED AND BUILT IN 1891









After waters on some of her children go down way to them in light land. A boat was left to shelter from the weather. As they were about to be murdered of themselves through the water. (Caption text is partially illegible)





McGhee 1861-1912



McGhee was not simply a lawyer... he was a... (text partially obscured)

The civil rights movement was a worldwide series of political movements for equality before the law that peaked in the 1950s. The main aim of the movements for civil rights included ensuring that the rights of all people are equally protected by the law, including the rights of minorities and women's rights.

With the protection of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution and the Civil Rights Act of 1866, African Americans enjoyed the right to vote, actively participate in public life, acquire the land of former owners, secure employment, and use public facilities. Opponents of this progress, however, sought to strip the former slaves' freedom and began undoing the gains for which many had



Thurgood Marshall  
1901-1991  
Thurgood Marshall was the first African American woman to become a Supreme Court Justice. She was a brilliant lawyer and civil rights activist. She argued the case of Brown v. Board of Education before the Supreme Court, which ruled that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional.

Do Not Touch



During the Civil and segregation eras, many African American business owners had to face discrimination from white customers. Some businesses had to be closed or operated in a way that was less profitable. Some businesses had to be closed or operated in a way that was less profitable.

COLORED ONLY







Small informational text block, likely describing the illustration or the broader context of the slave trade.



In all about 500,000 slaves were transported to the U.S. Nearly half of American slaves were transported here illegally after the U.S. government outlawed the importation of slaves in 1808. This legislation was prompted partially by fear that the U.S. might experience a slave rebellion similar to the Haitian Revolution if they continued to take new African slaves. But due to lax government enforcement, as late as 1859 in America's large port cities there were still ships being outfitted to transport slaves.



GREAT SALE OF SLAVES

SLAVE DEPOT



Small informational text block, likely describing the ship model or the slave trade.



Small informational text block, likely describing the photograph or the broader context of the slave trade.













FIFTH DISTRICT  
HIGH SCHOOL

ORGANIZED AND BUILT  
DURING THE PRESIDENCY  
OF REV. H. C. COTTON 1891  
1913 DONORS. HON H. C.  
MINOR REV. J. L. HAWKINS  
REV. C. D. REESE ELECTED  
PRES. 1914. 1927 HIS ADMI  
NISTRATION WAS SPENT  
IN ACCUMALATING FUNDS  
FOR THE PRESENT BUILD  
ING AND OLD FOLKS HOME  
REV. F HAMS ADMINISTRA  
TION 1927 1928 REV. T. A.  
COLLINS. ELECTED 1928  
REBUILT HIGH SCHOOL  
1928 1930 OFFICERS  
REV. T. A. COLLINS PRES  
REV. J. TAYLOR. V. PRES  
REV. J W REED REC SEC  
REV. C. W. WALLACE COR SEC  
REV. C. H MERRITT TREA



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

REV. H. GARY. PRES.

REV. M. WILLIAMS V. PRES.

REV. T. J. ELLIS SECY

REV. K. HADLEY TREAS.

DR. C. D. MERRITT

B. S. M. D. PRINCIPAL

J. REASON. ARCHITECT



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 5/10/2018      Date of Pending List: 5/30/2018      Date of 16th Day: 6/14/2018      Date of 45th Day: 6/25/2018      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      6/18/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



No response  
received - JR  
5/4/18

BILLY NUNGESSER  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**State of Louisiana**  
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM  
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

BILL CODY  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

February 5, 2018

Anne Picou  
317 Goode St  
Houma, LA 70361

Dear Ms. Picou:

We are pleased to inform you that the historic property listed below will be considered by the State National Register Review Committee for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

**Fifth District High School  
Terrebonne Parish, LA**

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of historic properties worthy of preservation. Listing on the National Register provides recognition and assists in preserving our Nation's heritage. Listing of a property provides recognition of its historic significance and assures protective review of federal projects that might adversely affect the character of the historic property. If the property is listed on the National Register, tax credits for rehabilitation and other beneficial provisions may apply. Listing in the National Register does not place limitations on the property by the federal or state government. Public visitation rights are not required of owners. The government will not attach restrictive covenants to the property or seek to acquire them. A draft copy of the nomination and attachment is included with this letter.

One of your responsibilities as a Certified Local Government (CLG) is to review pending National Register nominations of properties within your community. This is required, in part, to detect any errors in fact, but also to provide local insight or knowledge concerning the property. I hope that you will consider the nomination for this property at your next meeting. After providing a reasonable opportunity for public comment, the Houma Historic District Commission shall fill out the attached CLG review form as to whether or not, in their opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. Within 60 calendar days of notice from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the chief elected official shall transmit their report to the SHPO. If the SHPO does not receive the report and recommendation within 60 calendar days, the nomination process will continue. All comments received will be forwarded to the SHPO Director and the National Register Review Committee for consideration along with the nomination.

We have scheduled the nomination for presentation to the National Register Review Committee on **Thursday, April 12, 2018**, and would like to receive your comments by that time in fulfillment of the comment period. This letter serves as notification initiating the sixty-day comment period.

Anne Picou  
February 5, 2018  
Page 2

You are invited to attend the National Register Review Committee meeting at which the nomination will be officially considered. The location and time have not been confirmed yet, but will be found on our website. Should you have any questions about this nomination, please contact Jessica Richardson at 225-219-4595 or at [jrichardson@crt.la.gov](mailto:jrichardson@crt.la.gov).

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristin Sanders". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Kristin Sanders  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer



**HOUMA HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REPORT FOR:  
FITH DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL  
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION**

**NAME OF CLG:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPERTY NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PROPERTY ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE SENT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE OF NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING:** \_\_\_\_\_

Does the nomination meet the Criteria for Listing on the National Register of Historic Places?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Criterion: A \_\_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_\_

Has public comment been included? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Explain:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Commission recommends that the property or properties should be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Commission would like to make the following recommendations regarding the nomination (use additional sheets if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Commission recommends that the property or properties should not be listed on the National Register of Historic Places for the following reasons:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Commission chooses not to make a recommendation on this nomination for the following reasons:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Historic District Commission Chair (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Elected Official (Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This report and recommendation should be mailed to:

National Register Coordinator  
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation  
PO Box 44247  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Questions about this form may be directed to the National Register Coordinator – Jessica Richardson at 225-215-4595 or [jrichardson@crt.la.gov](mailto:jrichardson@crt.la.gov).





BILLY NUNGESSER  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**State of Louisiana**  
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM  
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

RICHARD H. HARTLEY  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

KRISTIN P. SANDERS  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DATE: May 9, 2018

TO: Mr. James Gabbert  
National Park Service Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

FROM: Jessica Richardson, National Register Coordinator  
Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation

RE: Fifth District High School, Terrebonne Parish, LA



Jim,

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the National Register Documentation for the Fifth District High School to be placed in the National Register of Historic Places. Should you have any questions, please contact me at 225-219-4595, or [jrichardson@crt.la.gov](mailto:jrichardson@crt.la.gov).

Thanks,

Jessica 

Enclosures:

- CD with PDF of the National Register of Historic Places nomination form
- CD with electronic images (tiff format)
- Physical Transmission Letter
- Physical Signature Page, with original signature
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

Comments:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Please ensure that this nomination receives substantive review
- \_\_\_\_\_ This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- \_\_\_\_\_ The enclosed owner(s) objection(s) do \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ constitute a majority of property owners. (Publicly owned property)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other: