

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MP-2290

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: Lafayette Elementary School
Other names/site number: _____
Name of related multiple property listing:
Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 5701 Broad Branch Road, NW
City or town: Washington State: D.C. County: _____
Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national ___ statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria:
X A ___ B X C ___ D

DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO 2/22/2018
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
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 Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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:)

Patrick Anderson
Signature of the Keeper

3/30/2018
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	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.)

EDUCATION/School

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick and Wood

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Lafayette Elementary School was constructed between 1931 and 1942 based on a standardized plan developed in the late 1920s by Municipal Architect Albert Harris. The school, designed in the Colonial Revival style, consists of a two-and-one-half story rectangular central block with north and south two-story wings connected to the central block through hyphens forming a U-shaped plan with a central front court area (Photo 1). The original building was constructed in three phases due to fiscal constraints. The north classroom wing was completed, first in 1931, followed by the central block and south classroom wings, completed in 1938. Some interior shell spaces were completed in 1942. In the late 1970s, the original academic spaces were converted to an “open classroom” plan to support the then-current teaching pedagogy. In addition to these interior alterations, a cafeteria wing having a semi-circular footprint was built on the east side of the center block, a gymnasium was added to the southeast and an early learning center addition was constructed on the southwest edge of the site along Northampton Street.

In 2016, Lafayette Elementary School underwent a major renovation and addition. The 1970s additions on the east elevations of the historic building were removed and new classrooms and student service spaces were constructed in their place. A new gymnasium was constructed in place of the 1970s south addition, fronting Northampton Street. This gymnasium wing, connected lightly to the southeast corner of the original building, is otherwise physically separated from the historic building and appears as a freestanding structure from the public right-of-way. These new additions, all built of red brick with white trim have been designed to complement the Colonial Revival architecture of the original building. Part of the 2016

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renovations have also been undertaken to reverse the open classroom design by reconstructing the original corridor plan with partitioned classrooms.

Narrative Description

Site

The Lafayette Elementary School is located at the intersection of Broad Branch Road and Northampton Street NW in the Chevy Chase neighborhood of Washington, D.C. The school sits on a city square bounded by Northampton Street, NW; 33rd Street, NW; Quesada Street, NW; and Broad Branch Road, NW and is a multi-use, primarily municipally-owned parcel that also contains the Lafayette Recreation Center and the expansive Lafayette Park, which occupies the north half of the reservation. The Lafayette Elementary School, with its playing fields, occupies most of the south half of the square. The school's public entrance is orientated towards Broad Branch Road while the school's student activities are oriented to the east toward the playing fields.

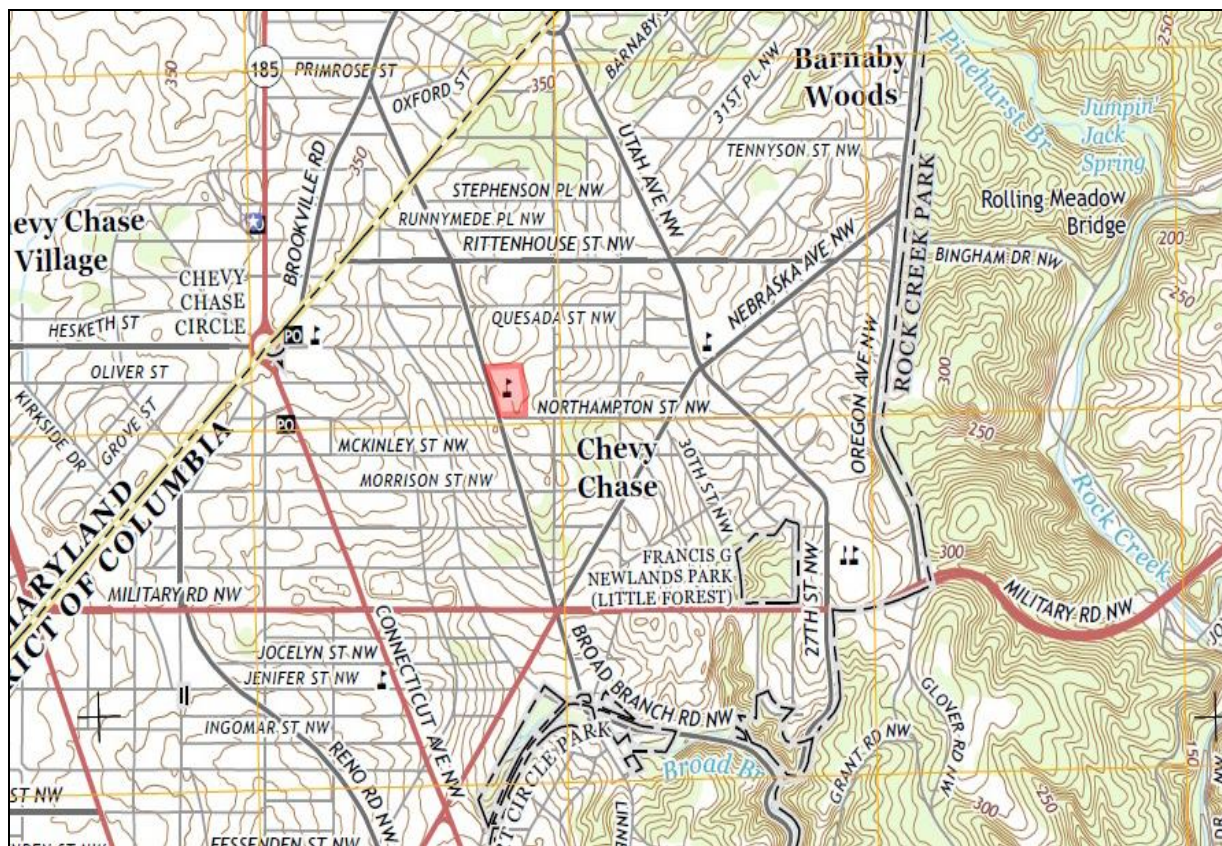


Figure 1: USGS Quad Map, Washington West, 2014
United States Geological Survey

The site, historically hilly terrain, was terraced at the time of the school's construction to provide level building and field play areas. The park sits atop the highest terrace while the school and

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associated playing fields occupy the middle and lower terraces respectively. The embankments of the terraces along Broad Branch Road, Quesada Street and 33rd Street are landscaped with vegetation, mostly small plants and bushes (Photo 2). Sidewalks into the park, school and playing fields have concrete or brick steps providing access from street level to the top of the terraces (Photo 3). Although the paths and steps have been replaced and the topography somewhat altered by re-grading, the building sits upon a natural berm that survives as a significant historic feature of the landscape.

Original Construction (1931-1942)

The Lafayette School building faces Broad Branch Road and consists of the central block and wings, constructed in two stages between 1931 and 1938. The design for the building is based on Albert Harris's standardized plan consisting of a central, two-and-one-half story rectangular main block flanked by two-story wings connected to the north and south sides of the main block through two-story hyphens

Portions of the central block, both wings, and the hyphens are set on a stone foundation with brick walls above laid in six-course bond with limestone quoins at the corners. The building is covered with intersecting hipped roofs with projecting gables in the front facades of the central block and end wings, and a belfry tower rising from the roof of the center block. The brick walls are lit by symmetrically arranged windows on both the first and second stories. Typically, the windows are 12/12 double-hung sash with limestone sills, capped by jack arch lintels with limestone keystones. The original painted wood windows featured twelve-over-twelve lights. During the 1970s construction, the wood windows were replaced with aluminum double hung windows with false muntins in a nine-over-nine pattern. The 2016 project replaced the windows with aluminum double hung windows with false muntins in the original twelve-over-twelve pattern.

The central main block consists of a two-and-one half story projecting pavilion capped by a slate-clad, front-gabled roof facing Broad Branch Road (Photo 4). A wooden cornice extends around all sides of the central main block (Photo 5), while a wooden cupola with an octagonal plan rises atop its brick pedestal at the ridge line of the main block (Photo 6). The brick pedestal is capped by a wood cornice which supports a solid wood balustrade featuring incised rectangular panels. The cupola features arched windows in its four principal elevations, separated at chamfered corners by paired Tuscan pilasters. The arched openings hold long, 24-light windows capped by an arched lunette. The cupola is capped by a metal clad dome topped by a metal weather vane.

The west (front) elevation of the central block is divided into three bays, defined by three, double-height arched brick openings on the first story and three single windows above. The arched openings lead into an entrance vestibule which in turn provides access to three principal entry doors that lead into the building proper. Each of these three door openings features a pair of wood paneled doors capped by rectangular transoms. Each entrance is recessed and framed by wood surrounds with paneled side-walls. The central entrance is capped by a pediment, while

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the flanking doors have simple architrave surrounds. The second story above the arched openings features 12/12 double-hung replacement windows with jack-arched brick lintels with stone keystones, and stone sills. A circular nine-light window pierces the gable end. The circular window is enclosed by soldier course brick surrounds with four limestone keystones at the top, bottom, and both sides of the window. The gabled end is accented with a raking wood cornice with returns at each corner (Photo 7).

The north and south wings of the building are both two stories tall, three bays wide and fourteen bays deep (Photos 8 and 9) thus forming a U-shaped footprint with a court in front of the central block created between the side wings. The wings are connected to the central block by two-story, gabled-roof hyphens with double-hung windows at both the first and second stories. The wings are constructed of brick, set upon stone foundations, and are covered with hipped roofs with centrally located wood cupolas at the center of each. A wood cornice extends around the wings.

The west (front) facades of the wings facing Broad Branch Road are identically arranged. They are divided into three vertical parts consisting of a central, front gabled pavilion with an entrance in the first story, and flanking side wings. The walls are constructed of brick and accentuated by limestone quoins at the corners of the wings and at the edges of the central pavilion, distinguishing it from the side bays. The entry doors, located on-center of these central pavilions, are raised above grade and reached by stone steps that lead to a landing and portico in front of the entry doors. The portico consists of pairs of attenuated Tuscan wood columns and pilasters supporting a flat roof with a decorative metal balustrade atop it. The entry doors, set into the brick wall and protected by the portico, are double-leaf, wood paneled doors with painted paneled wood side and ceiling panels. A carved wood fanlight surmounts the entry doors.

Arched "Palladian" windows occupy the center of the pavilions at the second story, above the entry doors. The Palladian windows are comprised of a central double-hung window with a nine-over-nine lite configuration, and two slender side two-over-two, double-hung windows. Originally of wood, the new replacement windows are aluminum, but match the historic in light configuration and profiles. The center window is capped by a six-light arched transom with false muntins in an arched tracery pattern. Incised arched square panels adorn the arch above the window units (Photo 10).

The bays to either side of the central pavilions feature rectangular shaped blind windows in the first story and stone recessed panels above.

The wings extend fourteen bays deep with windows arranged in a 4-1-4-1-4 pattern (Photo 11). On the interior court side of the wings, single-story, polygonal window bays project from the first story of both wings towards the west front of the wings. These bays are of wood and feature a set of three double-hung 9/9 windows in the wider, front-facing segment of the bay, and 6/6 windows in the angled side bays. The windows have recessed panels below the wood sills and

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are separated by narrow pilasters supporting the wood frieze and cornice above. A sloped copper roof caps each bay (Photo 12).

2016 Renovations

In 2016, the Lafayette Elementary School was renovated as part of a modernization project for District of Columbia Public Schools. This project resulted in the demolition of the 1977 additions and the construction of above and below-grade additions on the eastern half of the building to provide classroom and other student service spaces (Photo 13). The new additions mimic the U-shaped configuration of the original school with two east projecting wings and a center recessed terrace and “porch”. A separate gymnasium wing was also constructed at the location of the 1977 south wing (Photo 14). A newly constructed hyphen connects the gymnasium to the south wing of the original school.

The two classroom wing additions built onto the east ends of the original north and south wing are identical in size, scale, and massing and were designed to be compatible with the Colonial Revival architecture of the original building. These additions are two-story, three-by-eleven bay, rectangular structures capped with a flat roof, each wing featuring a projecting rectangular bay on its east elevation. The exterior elevations of the wings are faced with brick with a molded belt-cornice located to align with the cornice on the original buildings (Photo 15). The fenestration on the north and south elevations are nearly identical to that on the original wings. Eleven one-over-one, double-hung windows with false muntins giving a twelve-over-twelve appearance are aligned on the first and second stories with the windows in the original wings. Each window is capped with a jack-arch lintel, matching those on the original building.

The new classroom wings project out toward the east playing fields creating a protected recessed raised terrace in the center. The east end of each wing includes a projecting bay on the first floor consisting of three pairs of fixed picture windows with recessed panels below the window sills. The window pairs are separated by attenuated Tuscan columns, similar in detail to the original entry court bays. Larger Tuscan columns highlight the corners of the bays. Above the bay is a recessed opening with three pairs of fixed picture windows under the continuous cornice and decorative patterned balustrade above set into the brick parapet. The west wall of the recessed center terrace is a one-story glass enclosed “porch” consisting of seven pairs of picture windows with recessed panels below separated by engaged Tuscan columns. A molded entablature and decorative molded balustrade cap the “porch” construction (Photo 16). The sides of the new wings form the north and south walls of the center recessed terrace. Painted wood door surrounds and decorative pediments, removed and salvaged from the original building, were restored, repaired and installed in this center terrace to provide secondary entrances to the school from the terrace. Set back from the “glass infilled” porch, the main building continues the facades of the wings with brick walls and typical punched windows with jack arches and cast stone keystones.

Connecting the existing and new academic wings to the south gym addition is a one-story hyphen. The east elevation of the connector matches the “porch” aesthetic of the center protected terrace and consists of seven bays separated by engaged Tuscan columns. Two of the bays have

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entry doors with transoms while the remaining five bays feature the same paired picture windows with recessed panels. As in the center terrace, the connector is topped with the same entablature and decorative balustrade.

The new gymnasium wing addition is south of the original building and includes a full-size gymnasium, a portico entrance and a multipurpose room/auxiliary gym. The west portion of the addition is the gymnasium. It is a high-bay, one-story, three-by-nine bay, brick-faced, rectangular wing capped by a synthetic slate clad, front-gabled roof. The west (front) elevation contains three bays. The center bay contains a large arched opening with high windows and molded recessed panels below (Photo 17). The two bays on both sides of the center bay contain large multi-pane, picture windows. The south elevation has bays delineated by engaged piers (Photo 18). The center six bays contain paired multi-light high picture windows located just below the roof line. Below the windows are patterned brick panels. Adjacent to the gym is the south gym portico entrance. The entrance is a two story three bay wide hyphen between the gym and the multipurpose room. The first floor of the entrance features a recessed portico with engaged and freestanding Tuscan columns supporting an entablature and second floor. The second floor mimics the first floors three bays with windows and molded trim. To the east of the entrance portico is the multipurpose room "pavilion". The pavilion is a one-by-four bay, side-gabled, pavilion orientated perpendicular with the primary rectangular mass of the structure. The east elevation of this side-gabled pavilion is divided into four bays by five engaged brick piers. Paired, twelve-light picture windows with false muntins are located within each of the four bays just below the roofline with brick patterned panels below the south elevation contains a large arched opening with triple multi-light windows and molded recessed panels below. The entire gym wing has a continuous molded cornice matching the cornice on the remainder of the addition.

Interior

The interior of both the north and south wings and the original center main block of the original building were all substantially renovated as part of the 1977 modernization of the school. For both wings, the original central corridor plan was replaced with open concept learning centers. Partitions to classrooms were removed creating an open space floor plan for most of the first and second floors. Small rooms were created for storage, project areas, and teacher preparation areas. Most of these areas lacked notable historic features and were finished with tile floors and drop ceilings. Temporary partitions, arranged between many of the square columns that extended through the center of the long axis of the building, were installed by teachers to enclose learning areas. The 2016 renovation to the school restored the original central corridor and returned the classrooms to a more traditional partitioned room arrangement accessed from the central corridor. Also during the 1977 renovation, the plaster that once lined the inside of the building's perimeter walls was removed leaving only exposed brick. As part of the 2016 project, the insides of these exterior walls were insulated, the walls furred out and new drywall installed with new resin window sills and painted wood window jamb extensions.

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The only extant interior feature in both the north and south wing classrooms areas remaining from the original building are the window seats built into the interior of the bay windows facing the central courtyard (Photo 19). These window seats consist of a wood bench with paneled backing containing recessed squares built into the space created by the bay window. Radiators were enclosed below the seat and grills were recessed in the seat backs. As part of the 2016 renovation, the window seats were stripped of paint, repaired and re-stained. Grills were cleaned and reinstalled. Radiators, though abandoned for the new HVAC system, were left in place.

The original stairwells located at the west end of the north and south wings are intact. The stairs are steel with concrete infill and slate treads and landings. The steel risers featured incised rectangular detailing. Metal guards and newel posts supported stained wood handrails. Walls of the stairs were tiled up to approximately six feet with 4x4 tile set in a stacked bond. As part of the 2016 renovation, the stair was fully rehabilitated, except for the wall tile which was removed and replaced with new subway tile as part of lead remediation. The Palladian windows at the stair landings which had been painted in 1977 were stripped and stained (Photo 20).

The interior of the central block of the school was also heavily renovated during the 1977 modernization. It contained the main lobby and the school library along with a few administrative offices. The original entry foyer located between the lobby and the main entrance of the school is the only part of the central bay that contains original features (Photo 21). The walls of the foyer contain wood wainscoting with recessed square panels. The wainscoting matches wood molding over the doorways. The north and south ends of the foyer contain arched doorways trimmed with wood. These arched openings lead to alcoves containing an exhibit wall on the north and the security entrance on the south. Two doorways on the east side of the entry foyer provide access to the main lobby. Both doorways are capped by rectangular, thirteen-light transoms.

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Photo 1: Lafayette Elementary School, West Elevation, Looking East
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 2: Front Access along Broad Branch Road, Looking North
EHT Traceries, July 2014

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Photo 3: Steps to Lafayette Recreation Center, Looking east
Hartman-Cox, August 2016



Photo 4: West Elevation of Central Block and South Wing, Looking Southeast
EHT Traceries, June 2014

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Photo 5: Detail of Cornice on Central Block, Looking Northeast
EHT Tracerics, Inc., June 2014



Photo 6: Detail of Cupola on Central Block, Looking East
EHT Tracerics, Inc., June 2014

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Photo 7: Central Pavilion, Looking East
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 8: North Wing, West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast
EHT Tracerics, Inc., June 2014

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Photo 9 South Wing, West and North Elevations, Looking Southeast
EHT Tracerics, Inc., June 2014

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Photo 10: South Wing Entry Portico, Looking East
Hartman-Cox, February 2017

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Photo 11: North Wing, North Elevation, Looking Southeast
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 12: Bay Window on North Wing, Looking South
Hartman-Cox, February 2017

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Photo 13: West Wing and Addition, Looking South
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 14: Gymnasium Wing (2016), Looking East
Hartman-Cox, February 2013

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Photo 15: East Wing Additions, Looking Southwest
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 16: East Wing Additions with Central Pavilion, Looking Northwest
Hartman-Cox, February 2017

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Photo 17: Gymnasium Wing (2016), Looking East
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 18: Gymnasium Wing (2016), Looking North
Hartman-Cox, February 2017

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Photo 19: Interior of Classroom, Looking South
Hartman-Cox, February 2017



Photo 20: Interior of Palladian Window, Looking West
Hartman-Cox, February 2017

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Photo 21: Interior of Entry Foyer, Looking South
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. 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.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1931-1942

Significant Dates

1931-1942 (Original Construction)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Albert Harris

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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.)

Named in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette, the Lafayette Elementary School is a three-part Colonial Revival-style brick school building with a central pavilion and two forward projecting side wings creating a U-shaped footprint enclosing a front courtyard area. The school was begun in 1931 and subsequently expanded according to its original three-part “extensible” design to accommodate rapid growth of the Chevy Chase suburban community. Lafayette was one of several schools erected in 1931-1932, the consequence of a five-year plan for new schools enacted in 1925. This major building campaign was intended to relieve overcrowding in the city’s school system, but additional population growth due to the expansion of the federal government during the Depression continued to outpace construction. The first wing of Lafayette was scarcely finished when the need for more space became obvious. It took a decade before sufficient funds were available to build out the entire school which underwent additions and interior build-outs during the late 1930s until 1942.

During the 1970s, Lafayette Elementary was modernized with comprehensive interior renovations, including an “open” floor plan and the conversion of the auditorium/gymnasium to office and classroom space. A new gym and a new classroom wing were added to the east (rear) of the school building as well. In 2016, these additions were demolished and replaced with new additions that were designed compatibly with the historic building’s red-brick, Colonial Revival style of architecture.

Lafayette Elementary School meets National Register Criteria A and C under the National Register Multiple Property Listing *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960* at the local level of significance related to the educational expansion in the District of Columbia school system during the early twentieth century. Architecturally, Lafayette Elementary qualifies under the Associated Property Type: The Office of the Municipal Architect, Albert L. Harris as one of the most fully realized examples of a model “extensible” school. Extensible schools were a clever response to demographic changes and fiscal constraints and to the architectural challenge of having to expand. Developed in the late 1920s by Municipal Architect Albert Harris, and first implemented in the prototype Langdon Elementary (designed 1928, completed 1930), the idea was to design buildings that would be built out incrementally, as the need demanded and funds allowed, but at each stage resulting in a pleasing, self-contained composition. There were different forms of the extensible school, but the most ambitious for elementary schools was the H- or U-shaped building enclosing an entrance courtyard, providing plenty of outdoor space and natural light. At complete build-out, this model elementary school consisted of two, mirror-image, eight- to twelve-classroom wings joined by hyphens to a central administrative and auditorium wing, as at Lafayette. And like Lafayette, they typically began with a single wing, architecturally and functionally self-contained, combining both teaching and administration. Many of the schools never grew beyond this stage, but Lafayette is a complete example and the largest of the extensible elementary schools.

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The period of significance for the school includes the entire period of initial construction, from 1931-1942. No other significant changes occurred to the school until renovations in 1977 which resulted in the redesign of interior spaces and the construction of a cafeteria and south wing addition. The 2016 renovation removed these additions, and built new ones in their place, and at the same time undertook a full renovation of the 1931-42 historic building. Although the 2016 additions are substantial in footprint, they are located at the rear of the building, or set apart from it, leaving the historic core of the building fully intact. The Lafayette Elementary School thus retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, setting, feeling, and association. Many of the original Colonial Revival design and features associated with Harris's original plain remain intact.

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

The Lafayette Elementary School is significant in the areas of Education, and Community Planning and Development. The school's construction represented a major initiative by the city to expand educational facilities into its expanding suburbs during the early to mid-twentieth century. Largely in response to suburban growth which had fueled development in the city's periphery for decades, the District of Columbia began an intense school building effort during much of the interwar years between World War I and World War II. The foundation of this effort was the Five-Year School Building Program Act passed by Congress in 1925. The five-year school building program alleviated overcrowding and congestion that plagued District schools. Most of the schools constructed during earlier eras were built to hold smaller student populations in more confined inner-city locations. The Five-Year School Building Program addressed the needs for construction in the expanding suburban areas. Delays in program funding reflected the economic downturn from the Great Depression that derailed the construction of many schools. Most of the school projects were ultimately completed during the 1930s.

The Lafayette Elementary School is significant within the context of the Five-Year School Building Program as an integral component of the largest phase of school construction. It was also the largest school constructed in its division. The Lafayette Elementary School was part of the most aggressive period of school construction resulting in the creation of 133 elementary school new classrooms in a period of just 18 months between 1931 and 1932. This provided the most significant answer to school overcrowding at this time. When finally completed in 1938, the Lafayette Elementary School was noted as having the largest enrollment in its division.

The Lafayette Elementary School is also significant in the area of Architecture. The standardized plans designed by District of Columbia Municipal Architect Albert Harris reflect the realities of educational funding in the District and represent a superior response to the need to design a school building that could be constructed economically, in phases, while maintaining the principles of the Colonial Revival aesthetic. Harris considered the Colonial Revival readily adaptable to municipal buildings in a variety of scales, forms, and settings. Beyond their

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programmatically flexible, Colonial Revival styles, Harris felt, conveyed a sense of dignity, simplicity, and permanence, all traceable to their roots in Colonial and Federal America.

Perhaps no work of Harris embodied his Colonial Revival tastes more than the standardized plan he developed specifically for elementary schools. These designs, adopted by the Board of Education in 1928, feature two separate identical two-story winged pavilions attached by hyphens to a central block containing the school's auditorium/gymnasium. The design was noted for its symmetry in scale, composition, plan, and massing. It also embodied characteristic Colonial Revival details, including the use of cupolas, stone quoins, Palladian windows, classical cornice details, and formal entrances with standard Colonial Revival surrounds located inside classically inspired porticos.

The Lafayette Elementary School is an excellent example of the physical embodiment of Harris's standardized design for elementary schools. Most of the original exterior design of the school remains intact, consisting of the classroom wings flanking and attached through hyphens to a central main block featuring a large cupola. In addition to the cupola, much of the original Colonial Revival detailing on the building remains intact, including stone quoins, cornice elements, Palladian window trim, and formal entries with classically inspired surrounds and classical entry porticos. The symmetry related to overall scale and massing of major components of the design and overall scale of the entire building reflects the balance and proportions embodied in Harris's 1928 standardized design.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Lafayette Elementary School's construction resulted from the passing of the Five-Year Building Act for District of Columbia Schools enacted by Congress on 26 February 1925.¹ Congress enacted the building program as part of the modernization of the District's schools to address deteriorated school facilities and severe overcrowding.

After the turn of the century, the Board of Education's concerns for the health and welfare of students led to initiatives to improve school facilities, and modernization of the District of Columbia school system began. The old schools, constructed during the nineteenth century, relied on natural light and were heated by hot air furnaces. Many of the District's schools were also located on small lots that either did not afford playgrounds or the playgrounds were too small. The first significant legislation addressing improvements to school facilities was legislation enacted on 20 June 1906, which reorganized the educational system for the District of Columbia. This legislation addressed the need for the abandonment of old schools constructed in the 1870s and 1880s that were either obsolete or were no longer used due to population demographic changes. To do this, Congress provided funding for the construction of new schools. Between 1908 and 1920, the Board of Education constructed or renovated more than 30 elementary schools. Suburban expansion played a large role in the location of the new schools.

¹ Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 1927-1928:52.

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Many of the new schools were located in new suburban neighborhoods, whose growth on the periphery of the cities was fueled by streetcars and eventually the automobile. The Board of Education abandoned older schools in central city neighborhoods whose resident population was dramatically shrinking as people relocated to the suburbs.²

Even with many new schools being built, school construction was not keeping pace with growing student populations, fueled by increasing growth of communities like Chevy Chase. Between 1910 and 1920, elementary school enrollment increased from 49,481 to 56,526. The kindergarten population alone rose from 2991 to 4392.³ Schools coped with the growing populations in many ways. The Board of Education enlarged class sizes and occasionally acquired rental buildings for classrooms. Probably the most popular solution was the use of portable classrooms. The Board of Education sanctioned the construction of portable classrooms on school reservations where overcrowding conditions required immediate alleviation.

On 1 July 1920, Dr. Frank Ballou became the new superintendent of the District's public schools. Dr. Ballou would devote much of his tenure as superintendent over the next 23 years fighting for improved educational facilities. Originally from Fort Jackson, New York, Dr. Ballou received a B.S. in Education from Columbia Teacher's College, an M.A. from the University of Cincinnati, and a Ph.D. from Harvard. After serving as assistant superintendent of schools in Boston, he assumed a similar assistant administrator position in the District of Columbia shortly after World War II. More than 60 new schools were constructed over his tenure. Many described Dr. Ballou as having a combination of knowledge and energy that was best served in the school systems annual funding battle with Congress.⁴

Almost immediately upon assuming the duties as school superintendent, Dr. Ballou relentlessly petitioned Congress to provide funding for a new school building program that would help alleviate the problem with school overcrowding. Eventually convinced of the seriousness of the situation, Congress passed the enabling legislation for the Five-Year School Building Program on 26 February 1925. The building program provided for the construction of new schools and the expanding of existing schools necessary to meet program goals that involved the:

- abandonment of all portable classrooms;
- abandonment of all schools recommended for abandonment in 1908; and
- to reduce class size below 40 students.⁵

Congress set appropriations at \$4,000,000 for each year up to \$20,000,000 total for the program. Under the act, the Board of Education planned to construct 15 new school buildings and 28 additions to existing buildings and enlarge playgrounds at 26 elementary schools.⁶ However, by

² Robert Haycock, "Sixty Years of the Public Schools of the District of Columbia", Columbia Historical Society Records, v. 48, 1946-1947:48-53.

³ Haycock 1946-1947:67.

⁴ The Washington Post, 3 February 1955, 18.

⁵ Haycock, 71

⁶ Haycock, 72

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1928, the Board of Education acknowledged that appropriations had not been sufficient to achieve planned goals under the five year program and were calling on Congress for funding of a second five year building program to commence in 1930.⁷ Budget considerations likely resulted in a reduction of appropriations for the program. Congress continued to cut funding in the years that followed. Signs of economic troubles at the dawn of the Great Depression forced Congress to adopt a policy of enforced economy, limiting expenditures for domestic programs.⁸

In part because of the funding shortages, but also because of the changing nature of elementary schools in the District of Columbia, the Board of Education adopted a new standardized plan for elementary school construction at its 3 October 1928 meeting. In the face of funding shortages, the new plan allowed for buildings to be constructed in phases, thereby allowing for only a portion of the design to be constructed for the school to be functional. Remaining portions of the school could be built in later years as more funding became available. To limit costly excavations, the new design limited basement space. Excavation was provided for only areas containing the heating plant and janitor's quarters. Elementary schools were also redesigned for the practical reason that the District of Columbia school systems had evolved from a two school 8-4 plan to a three school 6-3-3 plan. Under the former arrangement, grades 1-8 were taught in the elementary school and grades 9-12 were taught in the high schools. Under the 6-3-3 plan, a new middle school was developed, allowing for elementary school to house only grades 1-6.⁹

Albert Harris, the Municipal Architect of the District of Columbia, headed the design efforts for the District's school system. Harris was born in Wales in 1869 and immigrated to Washington DC at a young age. After receiving his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from George Washington University, he joined the prominent D.C. firm Hornblower & Marshall. After ascending to a partnership in that firm, Harris was appointed Municipal Architect in 1921 and remained in that position until his sudden death in 1933.¹⁰ The Office of the Municipal Architect was charged with the design of municipal buildings, including firehouses, police stations, and schools. During his tenure, Harris developed a recognizable prototype for academic buildings, favoring Colonial and Renaissance Revival style buildings whose exterior massing presented clearly defined programmatic divisions. Examples of school buildings designed during Harris's tenure as Municipal Architect include Roosevelt High School, Francis Junior High School, Garnet-Patterson Junior High School, J.F. Cook School, Stuart-Hobson Middle School, Gordon Junior High School, Key Elementary School, Murch Elementary School, McKinley Senior High School, and Langdon Elementary School. The abilities of Harris were highly regarded both by the Board of Education and the Commission of Fine Arts who, after the architect's death, published these praises:

The Commission of Fine Arts in discussions with the exceptionally able municipal architect, the late Albert L. Harris, realized the opportunity to adopt a general type of architecture for school and engine houses and police stations, as also gasoline service stations in the District of Columbia. The so-called Georgian style is flexible in

⁷ Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 1927-1928:52.

⁸ Haycock, 71

⁹ Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 1928-1929:4.

¹⁰ *Washington Evening Star*, 24 February 1933.

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it uses and gives the maximum of light and air...As a result of this decision the District buildings are simple, commodious, and of good proportion...Appropriateness, dignity, simplicity, and permanence have thus been gained. Differences in use have given sufficient individuality to the structures...The Theodore Roosevelt and the Woodrow Wilson High Schools, large structures, are other examples of the dignity, good taste, and adaptability of the colonial architecture.¹¹

Harris's Colonial Revival design preferences were closely aligned with the ideals and preferences of the Commission of Fine Arts. Congress established the Commission of Fine Arts in 1910 and charged the organization with the review of the designs of the Office of the Municipal Architect. Early on, the Commission favored design elements for schools that reflected uniformity and symmetry that incorporated Colonial Revival elements. This often placed the commission at odds with Harris's predecessor, Snowden Ashford, who favored more eclectic designs based on Gothic and Tudor influences. The appointment of Harris to the post of Municipal Architect proved to make for a better working relationship between the Office of the Municipal Architect and the Commission of Fine Arts as it related to school design.¹²

After the passing of the five-year building program, Harris, accompanied by Superintendent Frank Ballou and board member Ernest Greenwood, embarked upon a tour of recently constructed schools in 1925. The purpose of these site visits was to observe and learn concepts that might work well and be adapted to new school construction for the District. The three men visited schools as far away as Rochester, New York. Harris also traveled overseas to study municipal designs in Italy and France.¹³

Whatever the influence of his travels, Harris's designs addressed needs particular to the District. His design for new elementary schools provided for between 16 and 20 rooms and kept excavation to a minimum. The design reflected the Colonial Revival stylistic influences based on symmetrical proportions favored by the Commission of Fine Arts that could be constructed in stages as funding became available. It provided for a main central building block, capped by a large cupola and containing an entry portico. Harris designed the central block primarily to house the school's administrative offices and the auditorium/gymnasium.¹⁴ Classrooms were designed to be housed in wings located in separate buildings attached to both sides of the main block through hyphens. Colonial Revival design elements were carried on through these wings, which featured symmetrical facades and classical entry porticos with doorways containing elaborate surrounds. The new designs received praise for its more pleasing proportions that allowed for more architectural elaboration and landscaping. A description of the school plan and illustration that was published in *School life* in 1920 and reprinted in the Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 1928-1929:

...whereas the former type was shaped like the letter T, the new type may be conceived as like the letter E, with the tongue of the letter reversed. Reduced to two-stories, the building covers more ground area.

¹¹ Commission of Fine Arts, *Twelfth Report of the Commission of Fine Arts, 1929-1934*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1936), 79-80.

¹² Kimberly Prothro Williams, *Schools For All, A History of DC Public School Buildings 1804-1960*:15-16.

¹³ Kent C. Boese, Blanche Kelso Bruce School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2013

¹⁴ Kent C. Boese, Blanche Kelso Bruce School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2013

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Between two wings, a central auditorium, ornamented by an attractive cupola, is set back, thus affording more light and air to all parts of the structure. Using the colonial style of architecture, many pleasing effects have developed here and in the most satisfactory way. The approach to the main entrance is made attractive by appropriate landscaping. Improving the outlook upon this garden spot, bay windows are provided in the rooms facing the front area from the two wings...On the ground floor a combination of assembly-gymnasium is provided in the central unit...On the second floor over the main entrance is a large alcove which may be used very effectively for exhibits or as a museum. There have been provided an office for the principal, the unusual storerooms, and a well-equipped teacher's room with a kitchenette.¹⁵

Harris's elementary school design was first exemplified in the construction of the Langdon School, completed in 1929. An increase in school construction occurred in the years that followed. The upturn in construction was possibly a result of the new economical designs, but probably also reflected increase funding provided for school construction. The construction of 133 elementary school classrooms in a period of 18 months during 1931 and 1932 represented the largest program authorized by Congress for school construction to that time. The 1930-31 Report of the Board of Education identified the new schools part of the building program and their estimated dates of completion (Table 1).¹⁶

Schools part of the 1931-1932 Building Program

<i>School</i>	<i>Division</i>	<i>Number of Classrooms</i>	<i>Estimate Date of Completion</i>
<i>Noyes</i>	5	4	1 June 1931
<i>Mann</i>	1	8	30 July 1931
<i>Deanwood</i>	8	4	17 August 1931
<i>Congress Heights</i>	7	4	2 September 1931
<i>Whittier</i>	3	8	5 September 1931
<i>Lafayette</i>	1	8	30 September 1931
<i>Anthony Bowen</i>	13	12	30 September 1931
<i>Young</i>	13	11	1 October 1931
<i>Murch</i>	1	4	15 November 1931
<i>Shepherd</i>	3	4	15 November 1931
<i>Woodridge</i>	5	4	5 December 1931
<i>Key</i>	1	4	30 December 1931
<i>Janney</i>	1	8	6 January 1932
<i>Stoddard</i>	1	8	20 January 1932
<i>Orr</i>	7	6	17 February 1932
<i>Hearst</i>	10	8	21 February 1932
<i>Douglas – Simmons</i>	12	8	1 July 1932
<i>Harrison</i>	10	8	1 September 1932
<i>Giddings</i>	13	12	1 September 1932
<i>TOTAL</i>		133	

¹⁵ Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 1928-1929:4.

¹⁶ Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, 1930-1931:92.

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The Lafayette Elementary School was constructed as part of the 1931-1932 building program. Efforts to construct the school date to the initiation of the five-year building program. In May 1925, the Board of Education requested \$60,000 for site acquisition for the new school to be located in Chevy Chase. The site chosen was the southern end of Square 2012, located between Broad Branch Road, Northampton Street, Patterson Avenue, and Thirty-Third Street, N.W.¹⁷

Square 2012 had previously been part of the Jones farm during the mid-nineteenth century. The farmhouse, constructed by 1859, remains extant and is currently located at 3326 Quesada Street.¹⁸ By the 1880s, portions of the Jones farm had been subdivided for settlement. By 1887, J. H. Collins had purchased the William's property.¹⁹ By 1903, William Kiefer had constructed buildings south of the J.H. Collins's residence on Broad Branch Road. Two additional homes facing Broad Branch Road were constructed north of Hyson's property belonging to the Dorsey family and Mary Moten. By this time, Joseph Johnson had also built a home on a 62-acre lot immediately west of the Dorsey house.²⁰ This land pattern remained until the 1920s when all of these buildings were demolished prior to the construction of Lafayette Elementary School.

Although the Board of Education had requested appropriations for site acquisition in 1925, additional funding requests were made in 1926 and 1927, indicating funding was not forthcoming for the years the previous requests were made. The District of Columbia finally purchased the site for the school on 8 August 1928 for \$57,517.45.²¹ The Board of Education again sought funding for the construction of the school following site acquisition. In May 1929, the Board requested \$185,000 for the construction of an eight-room school building with an auditorium/gymnasium. Congress funded the school's construction through the Appropriation's Act of 1931. However, plans for the construction of the auditorium/ gymnasium were eliminated and Congress appropriated a total of \$140,000 for the construction of the eight-room school.²² In the meantime, the Board of Education erected portable classrooms at the corner of 33rd Street and Northampton Avenue to house students with immediate placement needs. The Lafayette school's humble beginnings were noted as, "two portables and a mudhole."²³

The Office of the Municipal Architect of the District of Columbia started working drawings for the building on 25 August 1930 and completed the drawings on 8 November 1930. Charles S. Bennett, Inc. won the bid to construct the school in December 1930, and the contract was

¹⁷ Jane Donovan and Brian McClure, *Lafayette Life: Words and Images Since 1928*, 1999:14.

¹⁸ District of Columbia Historic Preservation Office, 2014

¹⁹ Hopkins 1887

²⁰ Baist 1907, Volume 3 Plat 22

²¹ Jane Donovan and Brian McClure, *Lafayette Life: Words and Images Since 1928*, 1999:14.

²² Minutes of the Board of Education 1930-1931:74

²³ Donovan and McClure, 1999:14

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executed on 16 January 1931.²⁴ A week prior, at its 7 January 1931 meeting, the Board of Education approved the new school's name after the Marquis de Lafayette.²⁵

The first phase of construction executed under the initial contract allowed for the construction of only the north wing of the school. The interior consisted of two stories, each with a double pile of rooms arranged around a central corridor extending down the long axis of the building. The first floor contained kindergarten, first and sixth grade, and home arts classrooms, along with a wood working shop and the principal's office and teacher's rooms at the north end of the hall. The first floor also contained separate bathrooms for boys and girls and a storeroom. The second floor contained first, second, third, fourth, and fifth grade classrooms along with two storerooms and separate boys and girl's bathrooms. Stairwells for access to the second floor were located at both ends of the corridor.²⁶

The design for the Lafayette elementary school also reflected Colonial Revival influences that were part of the Harris's standardized design for elementary schools. The building's hipped roof exhibited cornice detailing with dentils. A cupola with a pyramidal roof capped with a finial was designed to stand at the center of the roof.²⁷ Facades exhibited symmetrical massing and proportions, with stone quoins accenting the corners of the building. The front elevation featured a short, gable-front projecting bay containing a portico with paired columns. The main formal entrance under the portico contained double-leaf doors capped by a fanlight. A Palladian window pierced the second story immediately above the formal entrance. The rear elevation likewise contained a centrally located double-paneled door with typical Colonial Revival surrounds consisting of pilasters capped by a gabled pediment. A fanlight motif was located above the door. Side elevations contained even fenestration consisting of rows of single windows in grouped 4-1-4-1-4 patterns. Windows consisted of twelve-over-twelve, double-hung, wood-sash units with limestone sills, brick jack arches with limestone keystones. The only interruption of the fenestration was a single bay window located near the west end of the first story of the south elevation.

This first phase of the Lafayette Elementary School was completed by 15 June 1931. The final cost to build the school amounted to \$103,390, less than the \$140,000 budgeted for construction. The school opened on 21 September 1931, but was not dedicated until November of that year.²⁸ Dr. Ballou remarked at the dedication ceremony held on 9 November 1931, "District Residents are fortunate in these times when many municipalities are curtailing their education programs to cope with the financial depression which is gripping virtually every other city."²⁹ He further noted that the District was fortunate to have had the largest school building budget in its history

²⁴ Donovan and McClure, 1999:15-16

²⁵ Minutes of the Board of Education, Vol. 31, 7 January 1931:3

²⁶ D.C. Office of the Municipal Architect, Design Plans for School Building at Northampton and Broad Brach Road, November 1930.

²⁷ The cupola illustrated on design plans was never constructed. Instead, a more simple square cupola with louvered windows was constructed in its place.

²⁸ Report of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia 1931-1932:44

²⁹ Washington Evening Star 10 November 1931

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despite the hard times much of the rest of the country was facing. Rabbi Abram Simon, President of the School Board, also spoke at the dedication and declared the opening of Lafayette School, "...signified the addition of spiritual wealth to the riches of the community."³⁰ Paul Claudel, French Ambassador to the U.S., had planned to be in attendance to present the school with a portrait of Marquis de Lafayette, who the school was named after, as a gift of the French Government. However, the picture did not arrive in time for the dedication. As a final formal act, Albert Harris presented the keys of the school to the principal, Miss Sarah Holland.³¹

Even with the completion of construction, the school felt incomplete, notwithstanding the fact that construction had not commenced on either the auditorium/gymnasium center block or the south classroom wing. The area behind or east of the school where athletic fields stand today consisted of dense woods in 1931. There were also no tennis courts or park area for recreation. The only thing in place at this time was a small macadam playground. The teachers taught general subject matter courses in the classroom building. The school retained no special subject matter teachers. However, a music teacher did visit the school on a regular basis to conduct classes.³²

Within a year of its opening, it became apparent that the Lafayette School's eight classroom building was insufficient to house all the students enrolled at the school. The existing eight classroom building held a capacity for 320 students, but 401 students were enrolled there in the fall of 1932, requiring the Board of Education to bring portable classrooms on site to house almost 100 students.³³ Complaints concerning school overcrowding were initially offset by the understanding that the north wing and central block that contained the auditorium/gymnasium for the school would be constructed in future stages. However, appropriations for those stages in the years that followed initial construction were not forthcoming, as funding for District schools declined after 1931. Annual appropriations for the entire school system decreased from \$13,892,390 in 1931 to \$8,540,713 in 1934 and appropriations for the building program declined from \$2,720,000 in 1932 to \$1,473,500 in 1933.³⁴

The Lafayette Home and School Association repeatedly petitioned the Board of Education to commence further construction to expand the Lafayette school. Dr. Ballou and the Board of Education continued their annual petition Congress for funding for the District's schools. However, the future stages of completing the Lafayette Elementary School continued to be delayed until 1937. Possibly because of the unyielding pressure of the Home and School Association or because of the realization that school's overcrowding had reached a critical juncture, the Board of Education finally acquired funding to complete the Lafayette school.³⁵

³⁰ Washington Evening Star 10 November 1931

³¹ Washington Evening Star, 10 November 1931

³² Donovan and McClure 1999:18

³³ Washington Post, 3 December 1932

³⁴ Annual Report of Dr. Frank W. Ballou, Superintendent of Schools, 1932-1933.

³⁵ Donovan and McClure 1999:26

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Construction of a second classroom wing, to house 580 students, and the auditorium/gymnasium building commenced in late 1937. The Board of Education intended the completion of the final stages to relieve overcrowding conditions at Lafayette Elementary School that had resulted in the need for the use of two portables and to transport one class of students to E.D. Brown School.³⁶ The new construction cost an estimated \$200,000.³⁷ Although some funding for District school construction projects was made possible through Public Works Administration (PWA) funding, the remaining stages of the Lafayette Elementary School were not completed through funding associated with this New Deal program.³⁸ However, crews employed under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) landscaped the grounds around the school and installed new playground equipment.³⁹ The work on the expansion of the school was completed on 20 April 1938 (Figure 22). After an inspection of the new facilities a week later, the inspection committee recommended the Board of Education approved completion of the contract and authorize immediate occupancy.⁴⁰ At the time of the completion of the final stage of the school in 1938 Lafayette Elementary contained more classrooms and held the largest enrollment than any other elementary school in its division.⁴¹ Even so, the second story of the south wing remained unfinished due to the continual problem with funding delays. It was not until early 1942 that the Board of Education allocated \$45,000 for the completion of six rooms on the second floor of the south wing. Finishing the Lafayette School was needed so that the E. V. Brown School could be closed by September 1942.⁴²

While no major additions or improvements to the Lafayette Elementary School occurred for the next 35 years, issues with overcrowding persisted. The proposed solution during the 1950s involved redistricting with Murch Elementary School. However, under heavy opposition from local parents, the Board of Education decided against this action.⁴³ By the early 1970s, continual pressures with alleviating overcrowding forced school officials to finally consider constructing an addition to Lafayette. In 1970, the Board of Education approved a plan to provide two portable classrooms to alleviate overcrowding at the school. After the school system added a third portable, redistricting was again proposed. Not wanting to engage in the same fallout as they had witnessed in the 1950s, the school board acquiesced to the desire to modernize the school.⁴⁴

Pressure from the community for school modernization at Lafayette resulted in the formation of a modernization committee consisting of 29 people, with Dr. Albert Gollins as its first chair. The committee spent nearly three years researching and developing conceptual ideas that they

³⁶ Washington Post, 3 December 1932

³⁷ Washington Post 5 May 1938

³⁸ District of Columbia Report of the Board of Education, "School Achievement in Twenty Years Summary Covering July 1, 1920 to June 30, 1940", 30 June 1941

³⁹ Donovan and McClure 1999:28

⁴⁰ Minutes of the Board of Education, 27 April 1938

⁴¹ Washington Post, 5 May 1938

⁴² Minutes of the Board of Education, 21 January 1942

⁴³ Donovan and McClure 1999:39

⁴⁴ Donovan and McClure 1999:64

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presented to the Board of Education. In 1976, with the Board's blessing, Home School Association president Patricia Drayne and the modernization committee chair Carolyn Harwood presented their proposal to the community. First, they laid out the necessary construction and improvements needed to fix outdated systems and structural problems which included updating the electrical system and the unreliable heating source and the need to address the continual overcrowding of the school by providing additional learning space. Drayne and Harwood also explained that modernization meant changing the ways teachers taught their classes in relation to the physical layout of the classroom space. What they proposed involved renovating the interior of the entire existing structure to provide an open class room plan. Lafayette's existing 24 classrooms would be converted into 4 learning centers. Each learning center would accommodate 150 students. The primary space consisted of a large open area roughly the size of three classrooms and several smaller enclosed or partially enclosed areas that could be used as conference rooms, small unit classrooms, and teacher preparation rooms. Space was also provided for art and science instruction and a kitchen area. Between the two classroom wings would be offices for the school administrators, counsellors, and the school nurse. The new wing would include a gymnasium, a music room, and two early childhood learning centers for pre-school, kindergarten and first grades classes. Additional space for an auditorium/cafeteria would be constructed onto the east, or rear, side of the existing central block of the school.⁴⁵

Lafayette's new principal Michael Hirsch supported the new proposal for open space learning focusing on education centers. Parents were equally supportive. Under this system, students would no longer be confined to classrooms, but would move from one learning center to another where teachers could instruct smaller groups more efficiently in less time. The open learning system allowed teachers to concentrate on instructing based on subject matter specialties rather than providing all-purpose education. It was also argued that students learned more in this system because it required them to participate more actively in the learning system.⁴⁶

With broad based community support and Board of Education approval, construction occurred in two major stages. During the first stage the old auditorium in the central block of the old school was converted into office space, the new addition was constructed onto the south end of the existing school, and the new auditorium-cafeteria was constructed onto the rear of the center block of the school building. After completion of the first stage, the school system arranged for the temporary transfer of students from the existing buildings so that renovations of the learning centers could commence. The modernization plan also included landscape renovations around the existing and new portions of the school. The approach to the school's front entrance along Broad Branch Road was regraded and a new courtyard was constructed between the two wings, leading to the main entrance in the center block. Improvements to athletic fields and playground facilities involved adding new playground equipment, resurfacing the basketball courts, and improving the track and athletic field east of the school building.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Lafayette Home School Association, *Modernization Comes to Lafayette*, 1976:1-3

⁴⁶ Donovan and McClure 1999:66

⁴⁷ Lafayette Home School Association, 1976:2

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The modernization of Lafayette Elementary School costs a total of 4.5 million dollars. Architect Arthur Cotton Moore provided the designs for the project. Moore, a native of Washington D.C., was a Graduate of Princeton University School of Architecture in 1960. Since the 1970s, Moore has been one of the most respected architects working in Washington D.C. Some of his most notable commissions include the renovation of the Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress (1980), the renovation of the Old Post Office Pavilion and Clock Tower (1980, 1983), the renovation of Duke Ellington School of the Performing Arts (1981), and the construction of the Washington Harbor Complex (1985) in Georgetown. The school opened its new facilities for the first time in the fall of 1977.⁴⁸ The modernization of the school increased the capacity of the building to accommodate 790 students.

A second modernization effort began in June 2015 and was completed in early 2017 with the aim to increase the size of the school from 113,600 square feet to 120,000 feet. The 1977 additions were demolished and replaced with new additions constructed onto the east end of the classroom wings and a new gymnasium wing constructed south of the original school. Project goals were to increase school capacity from 700 to 805 students.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Robert Benedetto, Jane Donovan and Kathleen Duvall. *Historical Dictionary of Washington, D.C.*, 2003:150.

⁴⁹ DC Department of General Services, Lafayette Elementary School Project. Accessed online at <http://dgs.dc.gov/page/lafayette-elementary-school-project>

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Lafayette Elementary School
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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): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 5.92

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 38.965879° Longitude: -77.068377°
2. Latitude: 38.965861° Longitude: -77.067175°

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- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 3. Latitude: 38.966343° | Longitude: -77.067125° |
| 4. Latitude: 38.966330° | Longitude: -77.066468° |
| 5. Latitude: 38.967651° | Longitude: -77.066479° |
| 6. Latitude: 38.967210° | Longitude: -77.067607° |
| 7. Latitude: 38.967133° | Longitude: -77.067938° |
| 8. Latitude: 38.967164° | Longitude: -77.067956° |
| 9. Latitude: 38.967156° | Longitude: -77.068045° |
| 10. Latitude: 38.967111° | Longitude: -77.068241° |
| 11. Latitude: 38.967148° | Longitude: -77.068320° |
| 12. Latitude: 38.967107° | Longitude: -77.068493° |
| 13. Latitude: 38.966996° | Longitude: -77.068557° |
| 14. Latitude: 38.966937° | Longitude: -77.068924° |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

National Register boundaries for the Lafayette Elementary School include all of Parcel 809 of Square 2012. This includes the current property boundaries for the school, which comprises most of Square 2012, with the exception of multiple privately owned lots containing houses located at the southeast corner of the square. Square 2012 is bounded by Broad Branch Road to the west, Northampton Street to the south, 33rd Street to the east, and The Lafayette Recreation Center, which comprises most of Square 2011, to the north

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The current property boundaries of the school also represent the historic property boundaries of the school. These boundaries encompass the entire Lafayette Elementary School, along with the courtyard located in front (west) of the main entrance, hardcourt areas north of the school building and athletics fields east of the school building.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Eric Griffitts
organization: EHT Traceries
street & number: 1121 5th Street, NW
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20001
e-mail eric.griffitts@traceries.com
telephone: 202-393-1199
date: June 22, 2016

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.)

Lafayette Elementary School
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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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

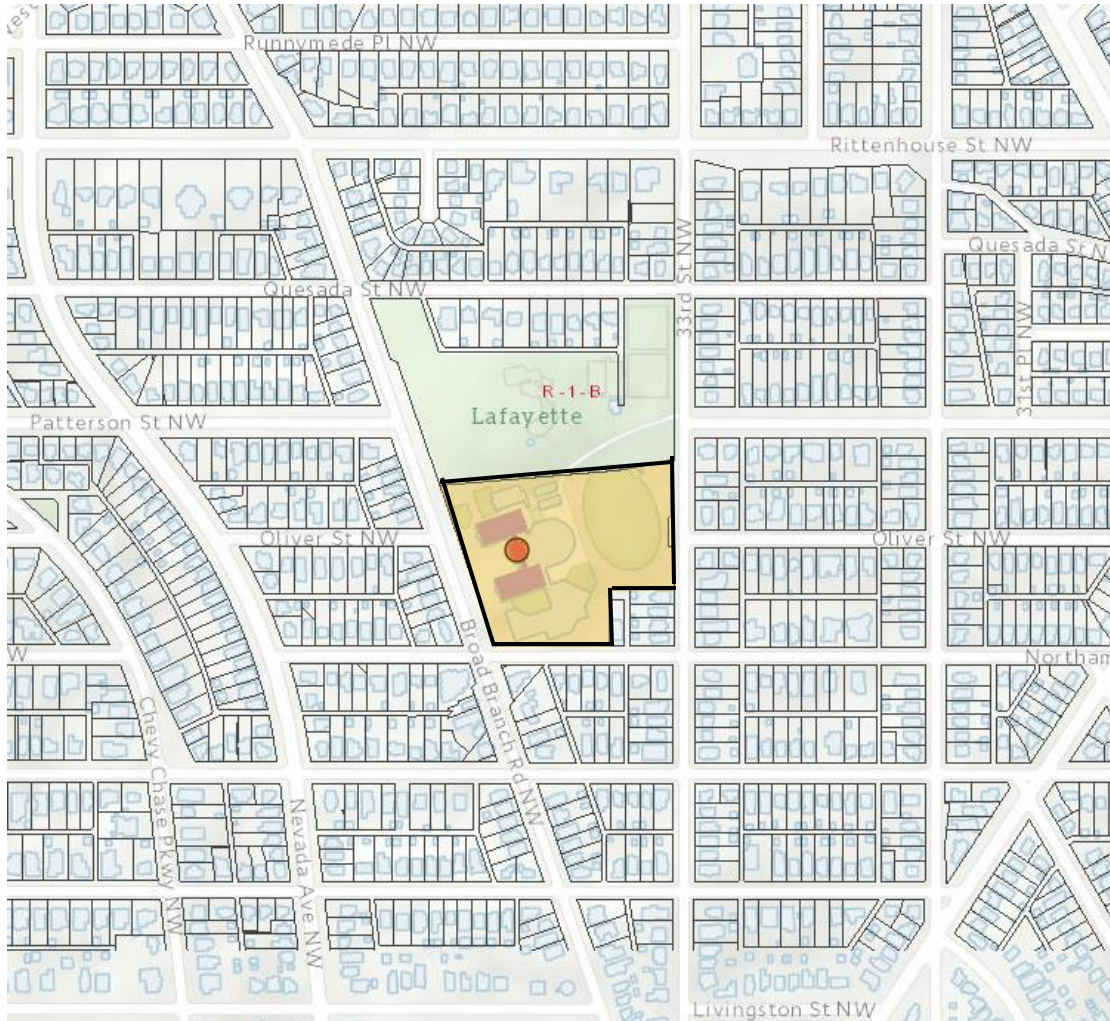
Name of Property: Lafayette Elementary
City or Vicinity: Chevy Chase, Washington, D.C.
County: State: DC
Photographer: Eric Griffitts and Hartman-Cox
Date Photographed: June and July 2014; August and February 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 01 of 21: Lafayette Elementary School, West Elevation, Looking East
- 02 of 21: Front Access along Broad Branch Road, Looking North
- 03 of 21: Steps to Lafayette Recreation Center, Looking East
- 04 of 21: West Elevation of Central Block and South Wing, Looking Southeast
- 05 of 21: Detail of Cornice on Central Block, Looking Northeast
- 06 of 21: Detail of Cupola on Central Block, Looking East
- 07 of 21: Central Pavilion, Looking East
- 08 of 21: North Wing, West and South Elevations, Looking Northeast
- 09 of 21: South Wing, West and North Elevations, Looking Southeast
- 10 of 21: South Wing Entry Portico, Looking East
- 11 of 21: North Wing, North Elevation, Looking Southeast
- 12 of 21: Bay Window on North Wing, Looking South
- 13 of 21: West Wing and Addition, Looking South
- 14 of 21: Gymnasium Wing (2016), Looking East
- 15 of 21: East Wing Additions, Looking Southwest
- 16 of 21: East Wing Additions with Central Pavilion, Looking Northwest
- 17 of 21: Gymnasium Wing (2016), Looking East
- 18 of 21: Gymnasium Wing (2016), Looking North
- 19 of 21: Interior of Classroom, Looking South
- 20 of 21: Interior of Palladian Window, Looking West
- 21 of 21: Interior of Entry Foyer, Looking South

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**Site Map Showing National Register Boundaries of Lafayette Elementary School
Parcel 809 Square 2012
(DC Property Quest Map, 2017)**

Lafayette Elementary School
Name of Property

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County and State

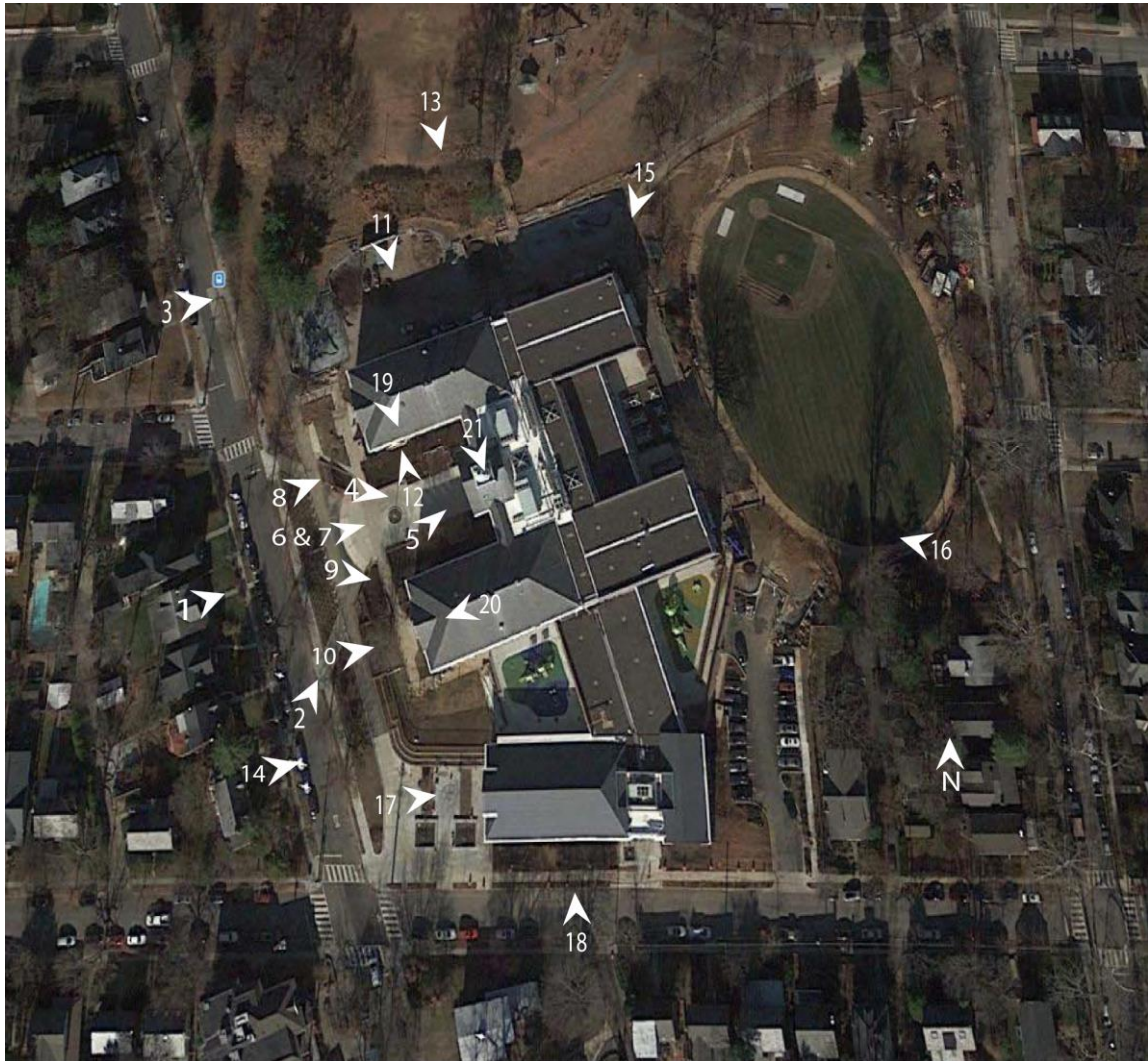


Photo Key Map



LAFAYETTE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Pre-K Open House
Friday, August 22
2:00 PM

5701
BROAD BRANCH RD.

















LAURETTA SCHOOL

LONG FENCE



















LAPAVETTE

Handicap Accessible
No Parking
No Stopping
No Standing







WELCOME TO
OUR SCHOOL.
Please sign in
at the security
desk and proceed
to the main office.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Lafayette Elementary School

Multiple Name:

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received: 2/23/2018 Date of Pending List: 3/14/2018 Date of 16th Day: 3/29/2018 Date of 45th Day: 4/9/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100002290

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

X Accept Return Reject 3/30/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary
Comments:

Recommendation/
Criteria Accept, National Register Criteria A and C.

Reviewer Patrick Andrus *Patrick Andrus* Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2218 Date 3/30/2018

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.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: February 22, 2018

TO: Patrick Andrus

FROM: Kim Williams *KW*

RE: Transmittal Letter for Lafayette Elementary School National Register Nomination

Please find enclosed three disks for the Lafayette Elementary School National Register nomination. The enclosed disks, Disk 1 (of 3) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination. The enclosed Disks 2 and 3 contain photographs as per the NR photo requirements.