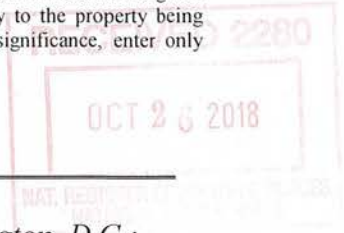


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MP3213

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: Theodore Roosevelt Senior High 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: 4301 13th Street, NW

City or town: Washington State: DC County: 001

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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

<u>David Maloney</u> <u>DAVID MALONEY / DC SHPO</u> <u>10/12/2018</u>	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>DC HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE</u>	
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

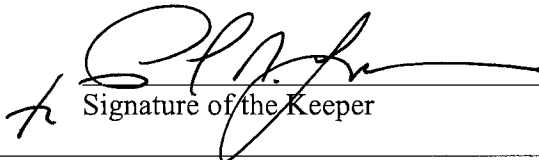
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4. National Park Service Certification

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:)


Signature of the Keeper

12/3/2018
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>1</u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</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 EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL

Georgian Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation/Walls: BRICK, Roof:
STONE/Slate, Other: STONE/Limestone

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

As executed between 1928 and 1932, Roosevelt High School is an impressive Colonial Revival-style, five-part plan building designed by the Office of the Municipal Architect under the leadership of Albert Harris. The building features a long, three-story central block connected to two-story side wings (pavilions) serving as the gymnasium and auditorium, via one-story hyphens. Both the central block and the side pavilions are clad in red brick, laid in Flemish bond with limestone trimming. The hipped roofs of the main block and side pavilions are covered in slate, while the gable roofs of the hyphens are sheathed in standing seam metal. The building features a giant-order, semi-circular limestone portico projecting from the center bays of the main block, and giant-order pedimented porticos in the flanking side wings. In addition, limestone is used for corner quoins, beltcourses and cornices, as well as decorative paneling. A wood steeple with a copper cap and finial projects from the apex of the central pavilion (Photo 1).

The five-part plan school building sits high upon a hill, facing west to 13th Street with a football stadium and running track to the southeast extending along Upshur Street, and a parking lot, tennis and basketball courts at the north end of the site. The stadium was constructed in 1936, though it has been renovated since that time.

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Between 1977 and 1980, a large addition was constructed at the rear of the school, allowing for the expansion of classroom, athletic, and other facilities to the gymnasium and auditorium (Photo 2). Additional site and building renovations were undertaken during a modernization project completed in 2016. Most of the modernization involved enhancing classroom technology and improving circulation through the school by rearranging subject matter classroom locations. A major component of the modernization involved roofing over the central courtyard of the main block of the school to create an enclosed atrium; creating a separate public access to the gymnasium pavilion; and building new tennis and basketball courts and parking at the north end of the site.

Narrative Description

Site

Roosevelt High School is located on an approximately 14-acre portion of a larger 16.6-acre site bound by Thirteenth, Upshur, and Allison streets and Iowa, Georgia, and Kansas Avenues, NW. The site is a municipally-owned parcel that also contains MacFarland Junior High School (facing Iowa Avenue) and the Petworth Library. Roosevelt High School occupies the western half of the site facing 13th Street with the stadium filling the southeastern corner adjacent to Petworth Library, giving the National Register boundary its L-shaped footprint.

The school site rises from south to north along 13th Street with the school building located at its crest. To prepare for the school's construction, this crest was leveled to create an artificial terrace, which remains mostly level across the width of the school building. A double set of stepped slopes negotiates the sharp grade difference between the school terrace and 13th Street. The northern end of the site terminates with tennis and basketball courts as the site begins a gentle descent towards Varnum Street NW.

The southern portion of the site was graded to accommodate a football stadium with running track and bleachers. The track and field are below the level of Upshur Street, while the bleachers, opposite the field from the street, rise above the street grade. The athletic field was added to the site in 1936 and has been renovated since then. To the northeast, the site is constrained as the rear of both Roosevelt High School and MacFarland Junior High come together. The narrow area between the schools is paved for parking lots, a driveway and sidewalks.

Central Block

Historically, the three-story central block of the school had an open court at the center of its block. In 2016, the courtyard was covered and converted into an atrium leaving the exterior walls of the building visible from inside the light-filled atrium. The principal elevation of the main block facing 13th Street is divided into three parts: a central slightly projecting five-bay pedimented pavilion and six-bay long wings to either side, making for a seventeen-bay-long central block (Photo 3). The block is set upon a raised basement, is clad in brick laid in a Flemish bond pattern and has an intersecting gable and hipped roof covered in slate tiles. The center, five-bay section features a pedimented gable capping the third story and a giant order

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semi-circular portico covering the center three bays (Photo 4). The outer corners of this central projection are embellished with limestone quoins. Similarly, the cornice, a belt course between the second and third stories, and recessed decorative panels over the first story windows are in limestone. The central portico is the most prominent feature of the building's façade and is composed of six stone columns the capitals of which feature a band of acanthus leaves. Above the columns a complete architrave and a parapet conceals the flat roof of the portico. The frieze of the portico is inscribed with the name of the school: THEODORE ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL

The portico rests on a raised terrace reached by a flight of open stairs. Set beneath the portico are three single-leaf entry doors, all inset within prominent surrounds and architraves. The doors are not original to the building, but the wood surrounds are, with the central one being the most elaborate. It features fluted pilasters with capitals that match those of the portico columns, a frieze with carved rosettes, and a segmentally-arched pediment accented with heavy modillions.

The portico entry is reached from the street and sidewalk level via a series of terraces, which mediate the steep slope between the portico and 13th Street. A broad, semicircular retaining wall, clad in brick, frames the uppermost terrace. It supports elaborately detailed, wrought-iron railings, and is framed by a double set of curved, concrete stairs. These stairs meet on a lower platform, which follows a shorter flight of stairs to a lower terrace, directly level with the 13th Street sidewalk.

Surmounting the open gable that contains the central block's five center bays is a prominent tower and cupola (Photo 5). The cupola is composed of three tiers: a square base, an octagonal central section with louvered vents, and an upper octagonal section, smaller in scale and with glazed openings. This cupola was restored as part of the 2016 renovation, having been partially boarded up and cladded over for decades. A balustrade encircles the octagonal central section atop the square base. The upper octagonal section is capped by a flared, copper-covered roof terminating in a weathervane.

Each outer elevation of the central block shares the same general fenestration, brick coursing, rhythm, and character of architectural detail as the 13th Street elevation, albeit with less elaborate stone and brick detail. The rear (east) wing of the central court was initially built with two stories above ground; a third story was added in conjunction with the 1970s addition (Photo 6). A small greenhouse is located south of the central block and immediately east of the south hyphen that connects the central block with the south pavilion.

The interior of the central block is arranged around the main lobby, which is immediately adjacent to the west portico. The lobby is a gracious space with marble flooring and wainscoting, plaster walls and ceilings with decorative reliefs, cast-iron light fixtures, and the original wood, double-leaf doors with leaded-glass transoms (Photo 7). The original exterior doors have been replaced with new, aluminum ones. At the center of the room, a cast-iron table with a round, marble top is affixed to the floor with a bust of Theodore Roosevelt on it.

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A plaque on the table reads: BUSINESS HIGH SCHOOL 1890/THEODORE ROOSEVELT HIGH SCHOOL/1932

Throughout the central block, double-loaded corridors provide access to the perimeter classrooms. The corridor in the east wing is narrower than the others and has only a single-loaded corridor that opens directly onto the interior courtyard. These corridors are generously proportioned, rectangular volumes punctuated by door and window openings, niches, and lockers (Photo 8). They are finished with plaster walls, terrazzo floors, suspended ceilings with acoustic tiles and fluorescent light fixtures, and glazed tiles. The classrooms have a similar character. Although the ceilings have been lowered and the original fixtures replaced, these spaces retain most of their original finishes, including plaster walls, wall tiles, wood millwork, and flooring (flooring in the classroom appears to have been covered with VCT). Most of the original interior doors have been replaced.

Side Pavilions

The outer side pavilions of the school's five-part composition were completed in 1932, in conjunction with the central block. The north pavilion contains the school's auditorium, while the south contains the gymnasium. The hyphens act as circulation corridors. Originally, they were narrow corridors, lit by windows on either side that opened to brick arcades. During the 1970s expansion, these brick arcades were enclosed, and the former exterior walls of the corridors were demolished to create wider passages. The 2016 modernization re-opened the enclosed arcade with the restoration of the arched windows. Although differentiated in terms of size and function, the gymnasium and auditorium blocks share the same basic plan: interior lobbies accessed via colonnaded porticoes, secondary circulation spaces, large central spaces, and utilitarian support spaces to the rear.

South (Gymnasium) Pavilion

The gymnasium pavilion is composed of a central, two-story block covered with a hipped roof and featuring a projecting pedimented portico on-center (Photo 9). To either side of the two-story block, but part of the pavilion are one-story, one-bay side wings. These wings are covered with flat roofs concealed behind parapet walls. The principal, west elevation of the pavilion is seven bays wide, and defined at the corners by limestone quoins with an additional bay on each side located within the one-story wings. The three central bays of this elevation are defined by the projecting portico with four giant order Doric columns *in antis*, surmounted by a pedimented gable. Entry doors deeply recessed within the inner wall surface are reached through a wide set of stone stairs. The central door features a decorative surround, at the top of which is a carved wooden acorn.

Within the entry portico is a vestibule that leads to a double-loaded corridor. A mix of smaller rooms line the west edge of the building, and boys' and girls' locker rooms are contained within the outer, one-story appendages. At the heart of this block's footprint is the gymnasium itself, a vast two-story volume open to the interior roof structure (Photo 10). Skylights punctuate the roof, and a bank of arched windows lines the east wall. When completed, the gymnasium was outfitted with a removable partition that separated the boys' and girls' gymnasiums. That partition has been removed, but some parts of its fittings remain. As completed, a single

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staircase connected the first floor of the gymnasium block with the second, which contained two large, open classrooms.

The 1970s addition at the east (rear) of the pavilion practically doubled the footprint of the gymnasium wing (Photo 11). The addition contains four stories: a partial basement for storage and mechanical equipment, two stories above the basement that contain the vaulted natatorium and two levels of team and dressing rooms, and a third story containing bathrooms and locker rooms. The natatorium itself is a large, two-story space supported on rigid concrete frames and features a gallery of seats on the second floor. This uppermost floor is level with the first floor of the original gymnasium, although the ceiling height is much lower, which allowed the large, round-arched windows on the east wall of the gymnasium to remain open.

Shortly after its completion, Roosevelt received funding for a number of murals that would embellish the principal spaces of the building. The basement-level cafeteria featured two frescoes funded by the Public Works Art Project (PWAP) and painted by artist Nelson Rosenberg.¹

North (Auditorium) Pavilion

The auditorium block is smaller than its gymnasium counterpart, containing fewer accessory functions. Its architectural features—both inside and outside—are more intricately detailed than the gymnasium. Also unlike the gymnasium, the auditorium block features a wide flight of concrete stairs that connect its upper terrace to the 13th Street sidewalk.

The auditorium block is a two-story structure whose rectangular footprint extends from front to back and is covered with a partially hipped and gabled roof (Photo 12). At the east end of the wing, a flat-roofed brick structure holding the stage's fly tower rises above the ridge line of the half gable-half hip roof of the pavilion. The central ridge of this roof features a central cupola, though it is smaller and less ornate than that of the central block. The west, main elevation of the auditorium wing has a projecting hexastyle Doric portico with a gabled pediment. This elevation has five window bays contained within the portico, and an additional blind bay that extends outward from either side. The elevation is further embellished with limestone quoins and a prominent limestone cornice. Metal grates are affixed to the outer windows on the first story.

Immediately inside the auditorium is a small vestibule, the focus of which is an octagonal, glazed ticket booth. Beyond this, a larger lobby offers access to the auditorium itself. Both the vestibule and lobby feature floors, wainscoting, and door surrounds of polished marble. The original doors have been replaced, but their fanlights, though painted, survive. Stair halls on either side of the lobby provide access to the second-floor music room and the balcony above the auditorium. The auditorium itself is a deep, open space whose floors slope downward along three tiers of laminated-woods seats (Photo 13). The spare, neoclassical details of the theater are nearly Adamesque in character. The lower dado panel is clad in coursed, imitation cast stone tiles, while the upper surface is clad in paneled plaster punctuated by double rows of fluted

¹ Rosenberg was born in Baltimore in 1908 and died in D.C. in 1988. Nothing more on his life or work could be found ("Nelson Rosenberg," *Collections*, Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery, <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artist/?id=7352>).

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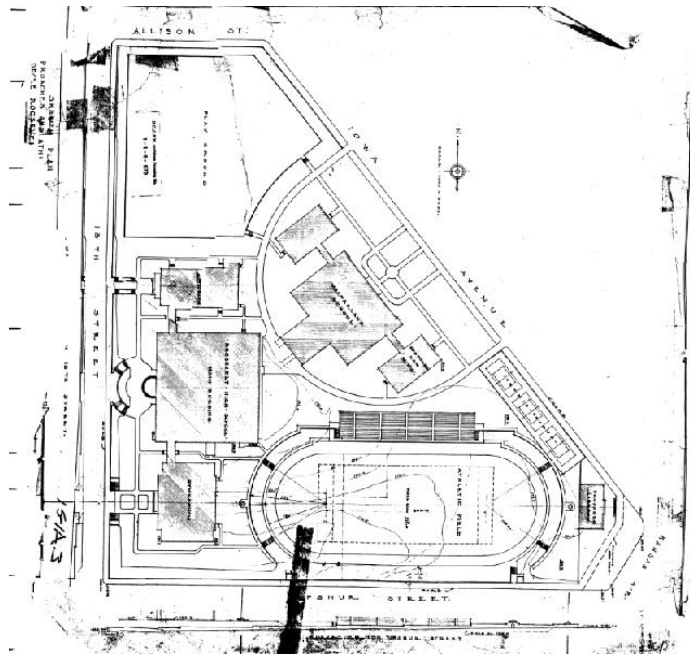
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pilasters. These pilasters rest on a base carved with a Greek wave pattern. Above the pilasters is a deep cornice. The ceiling of the auditorium opens to a broad, elliptical dome. At the outer corners, circular medallions support light fixtures. At the front of the auditorium, diagonal walls frame an open stage. The stage was once fronted by an orchestra pit, which has since been enclosed. The only portion of the auditorium block with a fully excavated basement is the dressing rooms, located beneath the stage at the extreme east end of the building.

The cafeteria, historically located in the basement, included two large PWAP murals painted by artist Nelson Rosenberg and completed in 1935. The murals spanned two walls of the large cafeteria. One, "An American Panorama," was an allegorical painting of American industry and invention. The second, "Adolescent America," was more lighthearted, featuring aspects of entertainment and popular culture, including circus and trapeze performers, caricatures of entertainers, a boxing match, Mickey Mouse, and soda pop. Rosenberg received painting assistance from students, beginning a tradition of student-created public art projects for which Roosevelt would later be noted.² Parts of these murals were restored during the 2016 Modernization project.

Stadium

The stadium, including a football field, track and bleachers, was completed in 1936. The stadium was sited at the south end of the school site, leaving a small parcel at the intersection of Iowa Avenue NW and Upshur Street NW for the proposed library building (completed 1938-39).



Site plan, circa 1936, showing stadium at south end of the parcel

² "Roosevelt High Students Display Murals," *Washington Evening Star*, June 3, 1934, Newsbank.

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The stadium extends approximately 642 feet from end-to-end and consists of the 360-foot long football field with end zones, a surrounding track, and bleachers on the north side of the field. The track and field are set below the grade of the street and sidewalk, having been cut into the hillside which forms the southern edge of the field along Upshur Street. The track curves around the east and west ends of the football field; a retaining wall curved in conformance with the track is located at the east end, separating the track from the library grounds. The bleachers which were originally built to essentially the full length of the field were later added to so that they go beyond the end zones on either end of the field. The original metal bleacher seats are bolted to a concrete stringer foundation with 1' 6 3/4" risers and 2' 8" seats with narrow steps.

Additions

Between 1977 and 1980, Roosevelt underwent construction of a large addition as well as renovation of existing facilities. The addition expanded the school's athletic, performing arts, service, classroom, and dining facilities. The addition was made in four parts: a natatorium attached to the east of the gymnasium block, a classroom addition above the third floor of the central block's east wing, a performing arts and dining expansion that filled the courtyard between the main and auditorium blocks, and a large classroom addition to the north of the auditorium block. The addition was clad in running bond brick and had a flat roof, concealed behind a mansard roof clad in standing-seam metal. The height and massing of the addition varied in response to changes in topography and program. The addition on the north side of the auditorium block as originally built was characterized by an almost complete lack of windows. The 2016 modernization resulted in the installation of ribbon one-light steel windows in the first story and triple two-light metal windows on the second story.

On the exterior, the original portions of the school building were not heavily impacted, particularly on the west side. Portions of exterior walls were demolished, many of the building's original doors were replaced, and ventilation grilles were added to the exterior wall surfaces. The hyphen passages were expanded and their windows were enclosed at this time. (The 2016 modernization plan restored the window openings to their historic appearance). The main entrance to the school was relocated to the east side, directly north of the central block. Similarly, the interior was only moderately impacted by the renovations. New lighting and electrical fixtures were added to the auditorium and gymnasium spaces. Suspended, acoustic ceiling tiles were added to the hallway and cafeteria spaces. The cafeteria was expanded to extend into the new addition to the north. Most of the original doors were replaced, and some interior walls were demolished to enlarge existing classrooms.

2016 Modernization

Modernization of the school in 2016 resulted in renovations to the building that included the replacement of many of the original wood windows with more energy efficient window units, installation of solar panels, enclosure of the central courtyard, restoration of the cupola and hyphens, and opening the formerly enclosed addition to the auditorium wing. Solar panels were installed on the roof of the 1970s addition to the gymnasium wing. A separate entry foyer was constructed on the east side of the addition to provide public access to the gymnasium and pool. The entry foyer is a one-story structure with metal-frame, glass-plated walls set on a brick foundation and capped with a flat metal roof. The east side of the foyer contains three bays. A

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double-leaf, metal-frame glass door on the east side of the center bay is sheltered with a flat roof hood. Double-leaf, metal-frame glass doors are located on the other two bays on both sides of the central bay.

The modernization also included the enclosure of the courtyard of the central block, creating an interior atrium (Photo 15). The atrium's roof consists of glass panels aligned between steel beams supported by steel columns. A staircase provides access from the first story down to the ground floor of the atrium. The stairs and floor of the atrium are laid with terrazzo tile. The cafeteria is accessible from the atrium through three doors that lead into the basement of the north wing. A one-story, glass enclosed projecting bay extends from the south end of the east wing. Other interior changes to the building include the restoration of the historic entrance in the central pavilion along 13th Street and the opening up of the formerly infilled arched openings of the connecting hyphens. The original partition walls within the hyphens have been demolished to create wider corridors.

The 2016 modernization also resulted in landscape changes to the front of the school along Thirteenth Street. Much of the tree covered grass lawn in front of the main entrance was replaced with small shrubs.

Alterations: Windows

Most of the historic austral-type wood windows of Roosevelt High School have been replaced with either 6/6 or 8/8 double-hung, metal sash. The central bay of the central block contains 8/8 double-hung metal windows with limestone sills and jack arches with keystones. The first two stories of the north and south wings and rear or east wing of the central block have paired, 6/6 double-hung metal windows with triple-light transoms. These windows have limestone sills and brick headers. The third story has 8/8 double-hung, sash metal windows. The gymnasium and auditorium pavilions also have 8/8 double-hung metal windows.

A few of the original austral-type wood windows remain intact (Photo 14) mostly on the south elevation of the central block's first story. Introduced in the United States in the 1920s, austral windows were not commonly used, but sometimes appeared in schools, libraries, and other public buildings. When closed, they closely resembled double-hung windows. However, instead of sliding vertically along a fixed track, the sashes of an austral window pivot simultaneously, easing operability and greatly increasing the ventilation afforded. Roosevelt High School's windows have six-over-six sashes, in addition to triple-light transoms. Most have no exterior surrounds, but rather directly abut the brick cladding. Most have limestone sills and brick headers.

INTEGRITY

Roosevelt High School retains a high degree of historic integrity. Despite the extensive 1970s addition, the historic core retains its original form, character, and materials. The building remains in its original location in a setting that has not changed dramatically since the building's completion in 1932 and the addition of the stadium and field in 1936.

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Both on the exterior and the interior, Roosevelt has retained the basic spatial relationships and materials that contribute to its architectural significance. The Colonial Revival elements—including the brick, limestone, wood, cast iron, and marble finishes, the articulated five-part plan, the hipped roofs and porticoes. Although most of the original windows were replaced during the 2016 modernization, the original fenestration pattern has been retained. The 2016 modernization renovations have restored much of the original wood fabric of the cupola, removing the vinyl siding, and restoring the window openings to the hyphens, which were part of the original design but covered during the 1970s renovations. The additions to the auditorium and gymnasium wings also do not compromise important character defining features and were added at the end elevations of the outer pavilions in a manner to differentiate from the historic design. In sum, despite alterations at the rear, the original design, materials, and workmanship of Roosevelt remain intact.

On the interior, Roosevelt similarly has retained the bulk of its original finishes. Although some rooms have been altered and their layouts changed, the school's character-defining interior rooms—the auditorium, the gymnasium, the corridors, the various lobbies, and the classrooms—are largely unaltered, and retain their integrity of materials, design, and workmanship. Otherwise, the other interior spaces retain a high degree of historic integrity.

Roosevelt continues to function as an academic building with facilities for athletics, performing arts, and other extracurricular activities. Therefore, it retains both integrity of feeling and association. These elements are enhanced by the character of its campus, which includes a mix of similar buildings and structures whose uses are complimentary to those of Roosevelt.

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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.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1928-1936

Significant Dates

1932; 1935; 1936

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Albert L. Harris (Architect)

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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.)

Theodore Roosevelt High School was founded in 1890 as Business High School, then the District's only institution devoted to instruction in business. The co-educational and segregated school had an itinerant early history until it moved into its first purpose-built home on the 800 block of Rhode Island Avenue NW in 1906. In 1920, the Board of Education petitioned the District Commissioners to purchase the Upshur tract in Petworth on which to build a new and expanded business school. Although the Board of Education had secured the Upshur Tract, it would be more than ten years before a high school was erected there. In 1923, MacFarland Junior High School was constructed on the parcel, leaving adequate room for a high school and, as it turned out, a public library branch.

In 1926, Congress appropriated the necessary funds for the new Business High School with \$5,000 allotted for the preparation of plans. In 1928, two years later, well before its actual construction, the Board of Education named the proposed high school building Theodore Roosevelt High School after the former president who died in 1919. This change from business to a general high school reflected an effort by the Board of Education to adopt a more well-rounded, college preparatory curriculum.

Roosevelt High School was designed by the Office of the Municipal Architect under the direction of Albert Harris and completed in 1932. It is an impressive example of the Colonial Revival style with a five-part plan consisting of a central pavilion and two side wings connected by single-story arcades. Between 1977 and 1980, Roosevelt High School was expanded and renovated. In 2016, it was again renovated and enlarged as part of a school modernization program. This 2016 work included the enclosure of the central courtyard to create an atrium, and the construction of an entry foyer on the east side of the gymnasium wing. It also included the restoration of the cupola, and the hyphens.

Theodore Roosevelt High School meets National Register Criteria A and C under the National Register Multiple Property Listing *Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960* with Architecture and Education as its Areas of Significance. Roosevelt High School is an example of a school property that falls under Associated Property Subtype IV, buildings designed by the Office of the Municipal Architect under Albert L. Harris, 1921-1934.

Roosevelt High School meets National Register Criterion A because it conveys important information regarding the history and development of the public-school system in the District of Columbia. It also meets National Register Criterion C as an embodiment of its era's attitudes about the character and style of municipal architecture and for its association with the work of municipal architect Albert L. Harris.

The period of significance covers the design and construction of the original high school begun in 1928 to the completion of the athletic field and stadium to the east, built on the site in 1936. The Period of Significance takes in the 1935 PWAP wall murals on the school's interior. It does

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not include the later additions in 1977 and 2016. The additions constructed between 1977 and 1980 and the modernization project completed in 2016 do not contribute to the architectural significance of Roosevelt High School, plus their dates of construction fall outside the period of significance established by the D.C. Public Schools Multiple Property Listing.

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

Education: Theodore Roosevelt High School is significant in the Area of Education because it provides important information on the history and development of the public-school system in D.C. Roosevelt High School was among the last schools to be completed during an intensive school building program that occurred in the District following World War I. This period witnessed great population growth in Washington; however, due to the focus on wartime building activities, legislators were not prepared to adequately fund or equip new school construction. Existing educational buildings were characterized by small, scattered, and overcrowded schools, including part-time, rented, and portable buildings. Business High School, completed in 1906, was a typical example of the inadequacies of the building stock: a confined site did not allow for recreational facilities or further expansion, and the school adopted night classes to relieve crowding. In the mid-1920s, these chronically overcrowded and antiquated facilities prompted Congress to enact the Five-Year School Building Program Act.

The building program was intended to create a model of schoolhouse planning and construction. Roosevelt High School, although not completed until 1932, was a product of this campaign. The first funds for construction were allocated in 1928 but were delayed due to the advent of the Great Depression, which slowed congressional appropriations. The choice of site, a large and municipally owned tract in the newly established Petworth neighborhood, was reflective of the Board's desire to site new schools in burgeoning residential neighborhoods, clustered to provide facilities at the elementary, junior high, and senior high school levels, as well as access to public amenities such as parks, playgrounds, pools, and libraries. Fully developed, the Upshur Tract included Roosevelt, MacFarland Junior High School, the Petworth Public Library, and a large athletic stadium, in addition to the other school and public institutions they faced across Thirteenth Street.

Business High School's physical transition—from a small and obsolete building to a large and commodious facility—allowed for a similarly pivotal educational transition, from business and occupational training to a more well-rounded, college-preparatory curriculum, particularly for senior high schools. The renaming of Business High School to Roosevelt High School in 1928 (four years before the new facility was completed) further reflects this shift. Although Roosevelt High School retained some of its foundation in business education following the completion of the new building, the expanded facilities, which included accommodations for athletics, performing arts, and military drills, reflected the District Board of Education's commitment to providing adequate buildings to support this new educational model. Similarly, other occupation-based schools, which included manual and technical schools, evolved into a more holistic educational approach. Like Roosevelt, McKinley and Armstrong Senior High Schools

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removed “Technical” and “Manual” from their respective titles in 1928. The new buildings provided for them during this time allowed for this transition.

Roosevelt represents the fruition of an extended initiative on the part of the Board of Education to improve the physical condition and educational quality of its schools. Like Eastern High School (completed 1923) and McKinley High School (1928), Roosevelt’s location and physical character evoke these values and reflect D.C.’s response to changing populations and educational goals.

Architecture: Roosevelt High School is significant in the Area of Architecture as it is an excellent representation of the Colonial Revival style of architecture and the work of one of D.C.’s most noted municipal architects, Albert L. Harris. Harris designed Roosevelt High in the Colonial Revival style. Harris considered the Colonial Revival style readily adaptable to municipal buildings in a variety of scales, forms, and settings. Beyond their programmatic flexibility, Colonial Revival styles, Harris felt conveyed a sense of dignity, simplicity, and permanence, all traceable to their roots in Colonial and Federal America. Finally, in contrast to Elizabethan and Gothic Revival architecture—widely applied to an earlier generation of school buildings in D.C.—Harris viewed the Colonial Revival as more compatible with residential neighborhoods in which the new schools were to be sited. Harris’s views on the suitability of Colonial Revival for school buildings was reinforced by the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), which adopted Colonial Revival as its preferred style for District of Columbia School buildings.

Harris’s design for Roosevelt exhibits the hallmarks of the Colonial Revival style: a five-part plan featuring three pavilions linked by hyphens; hipped roofs; porticoes; brick cladding embellished with stone detailing; elaborate door surrounds; symmetrically arranged windows and a crowning cupola atop the central pavilion. The highly articulated plan allowed for clear distinctions to be made between the programmatic functions of the school building, namely its auditorium, gymnasium, and classrooms. Harris bestowed monumentality and grandeur upon his building through the generous use of polished marble on the building’s primary interior spaces; the use of honed limestone on its exterior quoins, porticoes, cornices, and belt courses; and through the addition of a central tower and cupola. Roosevelt was among the last of D.C.’s school buildings whose design afforded such expensive finishes. Although it was predominantly built and funded during the Great Depression, its design and budget were sufficiently developed before that period to allow these features to be retained.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

History and Development of District of Columbia Public Schools

Legislation passed by Congress in 1804 provided the legal basis for the development of the public-school system in the District of Columbia. It established a board of trustees, led by the President of the United States, which looked to create a system of primary and secondary schools. The school system remained small through the mid-nineteenth century, and classes were held in residences and commercial buildings rather than purpose-built schools. Schools for African American children were informally created through the sponsorship of private citizens

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and religious groups, and classes were held in churches and other structures. Congress formally established a separate black school system in 1862.³

Beginning in the 1860s, the District's school system underwent a period of modernization. New schools, such as the Wallach (1864), Franklin (1869), and Seaton (1871) Schools, represented the first substantial investment in the construction of modern, purpose-built school facilities. Legislation providing for a more equitable distribution of school funding also resulted in the construction of new, modern schools for Washington's African American students, epitomized by the Charles Sumner School (1871-72). In 1874, the territorial form of government was abrogated in favor of a permanent system of municipal government administered by a group of three commissioners. In addition, the District's school system, consisting of Washington City, Georgetown, Washington County, and African American schools, was consolidated into a unified system which operated under a single school board, composed of both white and black members. Beginning in 1878, the newly created Office of the Building Inspector oversaw the design of new schools. Schools constructed during the late nineteenth century were of brick construction and generally reflected the Romanesque Revival style. They were also small and geographically distributed to serve individual neighborhoods. Beginning in the 1890s, the District began soliciting design services from private architects, working in coordination with the Office of the Building Inspector.⁴

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 accommodated only playgrounds that were too small. The first significant legislation addressing improvements to school facilities was enacted in June 1906 and 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. In response to these concerns, Congress provided funding for the construction of new schools. Between 1908 and 1920, the Board of Education constructed or renovated more than thirty elementary schools. Suburban expansion played a large role in the location of the new schools, and many were in new suburban neighborhoods, whose growth on the periphery of the cities was fueled by the rise of streetcars and, eventually, the automobile. The Board of Education concurrently abandoned older schools in central city neighborhoods, whose resident population was dramatically shrinking as people relocated to the suburbs.⁵

Even as many new schools were built, school construction did not keep pace with growing student populations fueled by increasing growth of outlying communities like Chevy Chase. Between 1910 and 1920, elementary school enrollment increased from 49,481 to 56,526. The

³ National Register of Historic Places, Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, Multiple Property Documentation Form, Washington, District of Columbia, National Register #64500851, E1-6.

⁴ Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, E6-11.

⁵ Robert Haycock, "Sixty Years of the Public Schools of the District of Columbia," Columbia Historical Society Records, v. 48, 1946-1947: 48-53.

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kindergarten student population alone rose from 2,991 to 4,392.⁶ 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.

During the twentieth century, Washington's public schools increasingly offered a more diverse range of educational and vocational programming, which affected the design of new schools. The practice of commissioning private architects continued, resulting in greater stylistic variety. The Organic Law of 1906 formally outlined the responsibilities of the U.S. Congress, District Commissioners, and the Board of Education, and bestowed executive authority to the Superintendent of Schools. The Act also created a commission, known as the Schoolhouse Commission, to make recommendations for the improvement of Washington's school facilities.⁷

In 1924, the Board of Education proposed a Five-Year Building Program of school construction to alleviate the crowded school conditions being experienced in the developing areas of the District. Anticipated under the program were the construction of new high schools and junior high schools, additions to existing school buildings, and new playgrounds. It was within this context that Alfred L. Harris designed many architecturally-significant new schools during the late 1920s.

Neighborhood Context

The expansion of streetcar lines during the late nineteenth century led to the development of neighborhoods such as Petworth, Brookland, Park View, Mount Pleasant, and Woodley Park as the city spread to the north. A group of speculative investors that included Brainard H. Warder, E. A. Paul, and B. H. Warner acquired the Marshall Brown property and part of the historic Tayloe family estate between 1886 and 1888. In 1889, they subdivided these lands to create the Petworth neighborhood. The subdivision was one of the largest created in Washington during this period, and extended from Hamilton Street, N.W. south to Rock Creek Church Road, and from Georgia Avenue east to Third Street, N.W. Laid out just prior to the passage of the Highway Act in 1893, Petworth's street grid largely adhered to the pattern of Washington's existing streets and avenues, reinforced by the prominent diagonals of New Hampshire and Kansas Avenues.⁸

The construction of MacFarland Junior High School and later Roosevelt Senior High School reflected the high rate of residential development and population growth occurring in the Petworth area during the interwar years. The 1920s witnessed vigorous speculative row house construction in Petworth by Morris Cafritz and other local developers. Reporting on the rapid pace of development in Petworth, *The Washington Post*, in 1926, stated that:

⁶ Haycock, 67.

⁷ Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, E11-13.

⁸ Frederick Gutheim, *Worthy of the Nation: The History of Planning for the National Capital* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1977), 104, 107; Matthew B. Gilmore and Michael R. Harrison, "A Catalog of Suburban Subdivisions of the District of Columbia," *Washington History* 14, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2002/2003): 49-50.

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The advantages of this section are many, and the growth has certainly been remarkable. It was but a few years ago when a large part of Petworth was unimproved land consisting of golf courses and numerous farms and wooded tracts; but today the vast development and change is apparent to anyone who visits that section.⁹

Petworth was also attractive due to its proximity to public transportation, with numerous streetcar and bus lines providing connections to downtown Washington. Real estate developers and local newspapers also cited the area's high elevation and many parks as desirable amenities. Petworth's residential architecture is characterized by attached brick rowhouses, which like MacFarland Elementary School, are mostly executed in the Colonial Revival style. Residential development in the neighborhood primarily occurred between 1900 and 1930.

Crowded and unsanitary school conditions in Petworth had been a recurring issue for the growing community for some time leading up to the construction of the Macfarland Junior High School in 1923. The Petworth Elementary School at Eighth and Shepherd Streets, N.W., designed by architect Appleton P. Clark, Junior, was completed in 1902, and was later expanded with additions during the 1920s.¹⁰ As early as 1905, however, the Petworth Citizens' Association was communicating with members of Congress in an effort to obtain more money for school improvements and development.¹¹ In 1907, the District Health Department had found that conditions had deteriorated at the Petworth, Emery, and Barret Schools, such that the School Board had recommended their closure within thirty days unless needed repairs and upgrades were made.¹²

Ten years later, school officials and residents were voicing concern over increasingly crowded school conditions in the Langdon, Woodbridge, Petworth, Park View, Takoma Park, Chevy Chase, and Columbia Heights neighborhoods, given the population increases that occurred in the District during World War I.¹³ District elementary and high schools experienced a record enrollment of over 50,000 students in November of 1919, prompting the *Washington Post* to observe that "Washington has not returned to anything like its prewar population."¹⁴

Municipal Architecture and the Work of Albert L. Harris

Albert Harris was the second Municipal Architect of the District of Columbia. Congress created the position of Municipal Architect in 1909 during a reorganization of the Engineer Commissioner's building department and charged this position with the duties to design and construct all new municipal buildings. In 1910, congressional legislation created the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), which was authorized to review the designs for new municipal buildings in the District, including public schools. The first Municipal Architect, Snowden

⁹ Morris Cafritz, "Petworth Called Most Flourishing Section of Capital," *The Washington Post*, February 28, 1926, R2.

¹⁰ Antoinette J. Lee, *D.C. Public School Building Survey*, prepared for D.C. Public Schools and the D.C. Historic Preservation Office, 1987.

¹¹ "Petworth is Ambitious," *Washington Post*, October 11, 1905, 5.

¹² "May Close Schools," *Washington Post*, November 3, 1907, 20.

¹³ "Lack of Room," *Washington Post*, September 19, 1917, 2.

¹⁴ "50,000 Enter Schools," *Washington Post*, September 23, 1919, 7.

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Ashford (1910-1921) preferred the Gothic and Tudor Revival styles for school buildings. The CFA, however, endorsed the City Beautiful aesthetic promulgated by the McMillan Commission and the adoption of a uniform stylistic scheme for school design. Specifically, the CFA recommended adherence to the classical tradition which had shaped the early monumental architecture of the capital.¹⁵

Albert L. Harris was appointed Municipal Architect in 1921 and oversaw an extensive post-World War I program of new school construction. Harris, who favored the Colonial Revival style, enjoyed a good working relationship with the CFA, and worked closely with the Commission on the design of new schools. The Colonial Revival—and its subtype, Georgian Revival—were uniquely suited to the design of new school facilities in 1920s Washington, as they drew on Palladian classicism while remaining visually subordinate to the Early Classical, Beaux-Arts, and Neoclassical designs of the capital's monumental edifices.¹⁶

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 1933.¹⁷ During his tenure, Harris developed a recognizable prototype for academic buildings, favoring Colonial, Georgian, 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 in 1933, 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 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.¹⁸

¹⁵ Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, E13-14.

¹⁶ Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, E14-15.

¹⁷ *Washington Evening Star*, 24 February 1933, Newsbank.

¹⁸ Commission of Fine Arts, *Twelfth Report of the Commission of Fine Arts, 1929-1934* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1936), 79-80.

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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 together visited schools as far away as Rochester, New York. Harris also traveled overseas to study municipal designs in Italy and France.¹⁹

Whatever the influence of his travels, Harris's designs addressed needs particular to the District. In meeting the challenge afforded by the Five-Year Building Program, Harris developed a prototypical, extensible, Colonial Revival school building that could be replicated and tailored to specific sites and needs. A new concept in the District's schools, extensible buildings were designed to be constructed in stages as needed, obviating later incompatible additions. Rich in eighteenth-century architectural detail such as Flemish-bond brick and stone quoining, Harris' school building designs contextualized with the surrounding urban landscape, as advocated by the CFA.²⁰

Roosevelt Senior High School

Roosevelt Senior High School was founded in 1890 under the name Business High School, the District's only institution devoted exclusively to business instruction. The school served as a counterpart to the District's "technical" or "manual" schools, which offered training in manual and industrial labor. The school was coeducational and segregated, serving white students only. The Business High School experienced an itinerant early history before moving into its first extended home on Rhode Island Avenue between Eighth and Ninth Streets, N.W. Completed in 1906, the three-story, Beaux Arts-style building was clad in red brick and limestone. McKinley Manual Training School, completed in 1903, was located nearby at Seventh Street and Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.²¹ Like the manual training schools, of which there were several, the business school program proved a successful model, and it soon became crowded. Despite the addition of a rear wing and the adoption of evening classes, the building became chronically overcrowded, and by the 1920s calls were being made for its replacement. The existing building's wooden structural system, lack of adequate fireproofing, and confined site made further expansion unfeasible.²² In 1920, the Board of Education began petitioning the District Commissioners for money to purchase a site, on which could be built an expanded Business High School. Suitable space was available at the municipally owned Upshur Tract in Petworth.²³

The Upshur Tract was originally the home of a Tuberculosis Hospital, which was constructed in 1908 on a thirty-five-acre parcel on the western edge of Petworth. The building, described as

¹⁹ Kent C. Boese, Blanche Kelso Bruce School, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2013. <https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Bruce%20School%20application%20form.pdf> (accessed November 13, 2017).

²⁰ Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, E11-13; "Building of 23 New Schools Proposed in 5-Year Program," *Washington Post*, December 18, 1924, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

²¹ The name of this school was changed to Shaw Junior High School in 1928, and again to Asbury Dwellings in 1982.

²² "1,260 Pupils Crowd Business High School Built to Accommodate 900," *Washington Post*, October 1, 1921, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

²³ "Backs Upshur Site as School for Ill," *Washington Post*, June 24, 1922, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

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“magnificent” and “one of the finest in the country” was ideally situated to serve its patients: its open site and high elevation providing fresh air and fine views of the city.²⁴ When plans to expand the hospital failed to garner support, the Board of Education successfully convinced the District Commissioners to grant them the land. The portion east of Thirteenth Street was used by the Tuberculosis Hospital, until its demolition to make room for the construction of Roosevelt Senior High School.

The first school to be built on the property was MacFarland Junior High School, located on the eastern portion of the parcel fronting Iowa Avenue. Opened to students in December 1923, the school was named for the recently deceased Henry B.F. MacFarland, a lawyer and civic leader who had served as the District Commissioner between 1900 and 1910. The center block of MacFarland was the first to be completed; a gymnasium wing to the north was constructed in 1925, and a classroom wing to the south was added in 1931.²⁵

Design and Construction

The first funds appropriated by Congress for the development of the new Business High School were provided in July 1926. The small appropriation of \$5,000 allowed for the preparation of architectural studies for the new school building. A new name for the relocated Business High School was recommended by the Board of Education in May 1928. It was to be Theodore Roosevelt High School, named for the former president who had died in 1919. In the same recommendation, the signifier “Technical” was removed from the names of William McKinley and Samuel H. Armstrong high schools, reflecting a conscious shift on the part of the board toward more well-rounded and college-preparatory curricula.²⁶

The cost for the new Roosevelt High School was anticipated to be \$1,500,000. In 1928, Congress appropriated an initial fund of \$300,000 to begin construction. Early in 1929, the Office of the Municipal Architect began drafting preliminary plans, which were sufficiently developed by the following spring to allow for agency and board review.²⁷ Throughout the spring of 1930, the Commission of Fine Arts (CFA) and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission (NCPPC) reviewed the school designs. Both agencies were favorably disposed toward the character and style of the building, and most criticism focused on its specific siting. It was resolved that the building be sited at the southwest corner of the site, to take advantage of its prominent frontage on Thirteenth Street, as well as to allow the future development of an athletic stadium to the north, though the stadium ultimately was not built in this location.²⁸ The building again underwent CFA review in their May 1930 hearing. At this time, the Commission

²⁴ “New Hospital Is Ready,” *Washington Post*, February 16, 1908, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

²⁵ “MacFarland Junior High School,” *Public School Building Survey*, District of Columbia, D.C. Public Schools and Historic Preservation Office, 1987.

²⁶ D.C. Board of Education, *Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia*, Volume 18 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928), 18.

²⁷ “Plans on Building of Business High Rushed by Harris,” *Washington Post*, March 11, 1929, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

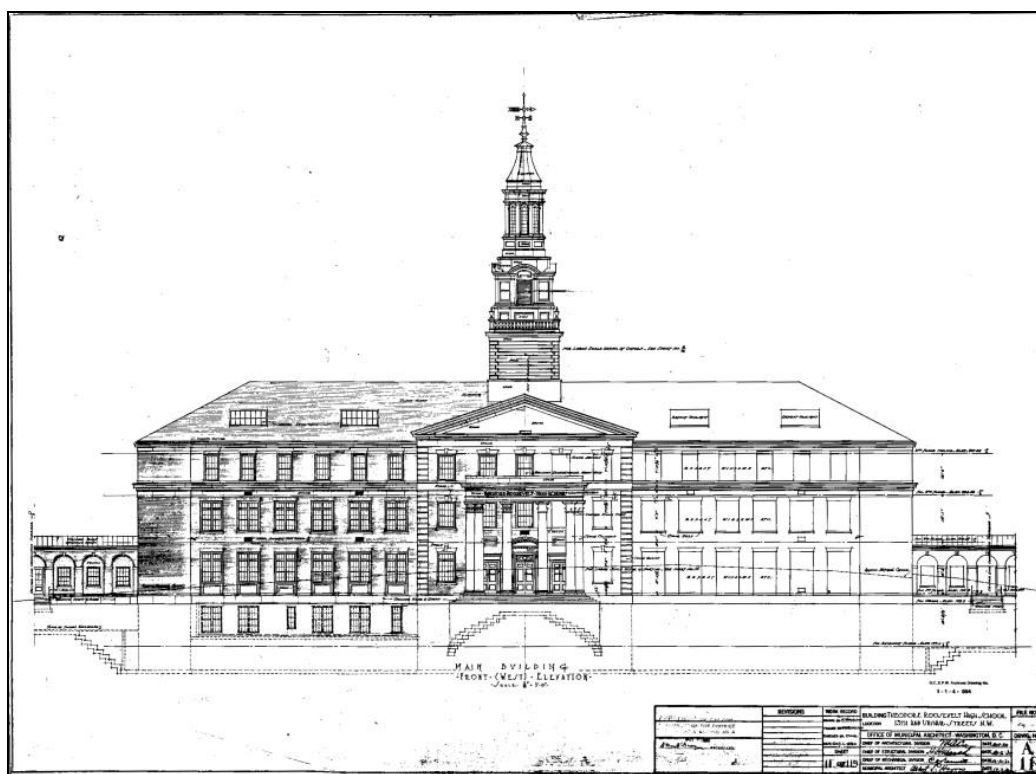
²⁸ Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, March 20, 1930. Record Group 66, Commission of Fine Arts Project Files 1910-1952, Entry 17, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

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targeted individual architectural details, such as the building's central portico, tower, cupola, for further refinement.²⁹

Harris and the Office of the Municipal Architect began production of their final sketches in May 1930, and they were submitted to and approved by the Board of Education in June. In that same month, the D.C. Public Library asked consent from the Board of Education to allocate a triangular tract at the southeastern corner of the site to a branch library. The Board of Education approved the measure, although the library would not be completed for nearly another decade, opening in 1939.³⁰ The Office of the Municipal Architect completed the construction drawings and specifications for Roosevelt High School in October 1930. Plans were put out for bid, and the construction contract was awarded in November.³¹



West Elevation, Central Block, 1930
Public Building Drawings, D.C. Department of General Services

²⁹ Commission of Fine Arts, Meeting Minutes, May 15-16, 1930. Record Group 66, Commission of Fine Arts Project Files 1910-1952, Entry 17, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

³⁰ D.C. Board of Education, *Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia*, Volume 20 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), 2.

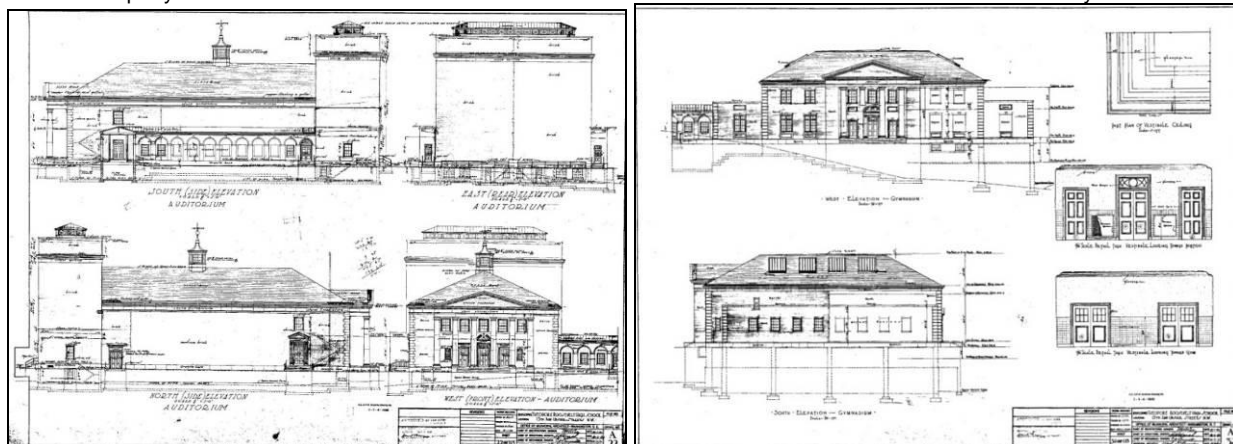
³¹ Charles B. Degges, "New School To Be Occupied after 12 Years of Struggle," *Evening Star*, January 9, 1931, Vertical Files, Washingtoniana Collection, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, Washington, D.C.

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Elevations, Auditorium (Left) and Gymnasium (Right), 1930
Public Building Drawings, D.C. Department of General Services

The construction schedule for Roosevelt High School was reliant on Congressional appropriations, which were approved at intervals that dictated the pace of construction, and which supplies could be purchased to outfit the school. With an initial appropriation of \$300,000, construction began in 1931. Subsequent appropriations of \$600,000 in 1931, \$400,000 in 1932, and \$117,000 in 1933 brought the total funding to about \$1,400,000 for construction and contents.³² During construction, several changes to the site layout were made, including the decision to implement a double set of earthen terraces along the western side of the building, necessary to negotiate the steep slope created by the building's elevated building site. A single, steep slope had been employed for other school sites, and was found too difficult to maintain.³³ Delays in Congressional appropriations created some awkwardness as the building neared completion; the school was completed in time for the 1932 school year, but much of the equipment had not been ordered in time, and the school, therefore, had no desks or chairs to offer its students.³⁴ Through a rush furniture order and a hasty assemblage of used furniture from other facilities, school administrators met their deadline, and Roosevelt High School opened to students in September 1932.

Early History and Curriculum

With sixty-four rooms designed to house 1,550 students, Roosevelt surpassed its capacity in its first year, with 1,600 students.³⁵ The completed building boasted expansive facilities that were a substantial improvement over its formerly cramped quarters: a large and well-lit gymnasium, an auditorium, a cafeteria, and an armory that hosted military training as well as daily dances during

³² "Building History," Roosevelt High School Vertical File, Charles Sumner School Museum & Archives, Washington, D.C.

³³ D.C. Board of Education, *Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia*, Volume 22 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932), 37.

³⁴ "Desks for Roosevelt School Are Delayed," *Washington Post*, September 3, 1932, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

³⁵ Sara Bireda, "School History: Theodore Roosevelt High School," *DC North*, September 2003, 49.

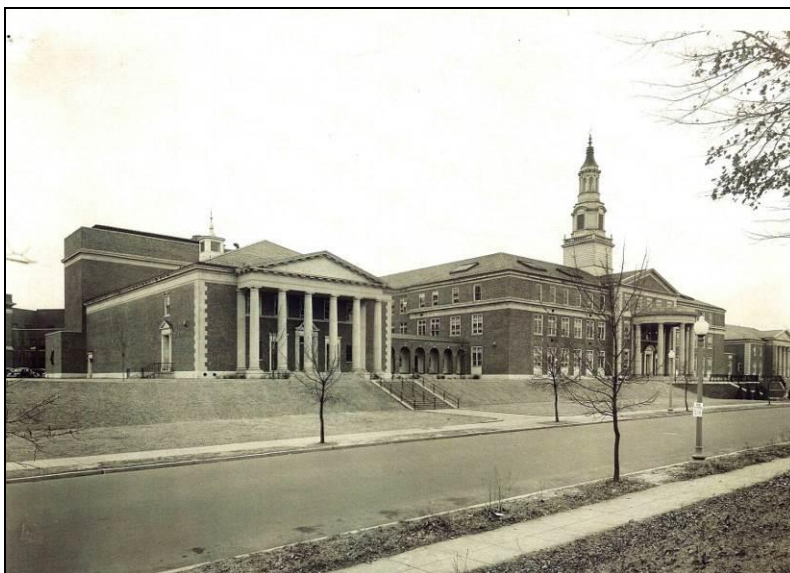
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the lunch periods.³⁶ The early occupants of the building took pride in the beauty and appointment of their school, from its graceful limestone colonnade to its well-equipped gymnasium.³⁷ One student described it thus: “As you enter the friendly doors and are greeted by graceful archways and gleaming marble succeeded by spacious halls, in which rooms are so situated as to make it easy to locate them.”³⁸ Albert Harris’s plans for the stadium—which had been approved by the Board of Education in May 1930—were revived in 1933. Located on the southern flank of the school site, centered on the gymnasium pavilion, the stadium cost \$225,000 and included a sunken athletic field, cinder track, and small grandstand.³⁹



Undated Photograph of West Façade from Northwest
National Archives Record Group 66, Records of the Commission of Fine Arts

The first graduating class received their diplomas in June 1933, and Roosevelt was formally dedicated on November 10, 1933. The president of the Board of Education presided over the ceremony, and the United States Commissioner of Education, George F. Zook, delivered the address. Additional speakers representing municipal and civic agencies also spoke, and many praised the work of municipal architect Albert Harris—who had died suddenly several months before—in his design of the building.⁴⁰ Following the completion of the school’s new stadium,

³⁶ Anna Yagdi, “Roosevelt High School,” *Washington Post*, December 11, 1932, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

³⁷ Lewis F. Atchison, “Roosevelt High Boasting Last Word in Gymnasiums,” *Washington Post*, December 6, 1932, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

³⁸ Anna Yagdi, “Roosevelt High School,” *Washington Post*, December 11, 1932, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

³⁹ “Athletic Field Set for Roosevelt High,” *Washington Post*, June 21, 1933, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

⁴⁰ “Roosevelt High Rites Celebrate Its Completion,” *Washington Post*, November 11, 1933, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

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the first open-air graduation was held in 1936, by which time the number of graduates had risen to 350.⁴¹

Despite the school's status as a "business" school, it offered a complete educational curriculum, including science and math, art, English, drafting, music, and physical education. In addition to rooms set aside for typewriting, bookkeeping, operation of "office appliances," and a student-run bank, there were a range of general education classrooms, science labs, and a small library. To accommodate the cadet corps, the school also featured a large armory, indoor shooting range, and gun storage room.

PWAP Murals

Shortly after its completion, Roosevelt received funding for a number of murals that would embellish the principal spaces of the building. The basement-level cafeteria featured two frescoes funded by the Public Works Art Project (PWAP) and painted by artist Nelson Rosenberg.⁴² PWAP was a Depression-era artist employment initiative, administered by the Civil Works Administration under the Treasury Department. The murals spanned two walls of the large cafeteria. The first, "An American Panorama," was an allegorical painting of American industry and invention. The second, "Adolescent America," was more lighthearted, featuring aspects of entertainment and popular culture, including circus and trapeze performers, caricatures of entertainers, a boxing match, Mickey Mouse, and soda pop. The murals were completed in the fall of 1935.⁴³ Rosenberg received painting assistance from students, beginning a tradition of student-created public art projects for which Roosevelt would later be noted.⁴⁴ The school also featured murals in the auditorium and English room by painters Sewell Johnson and Charles Darby.

⁴¹ "Roosevelt High Graduates 350 at the Stadium," *Washington Post*, June 17, 1936, Proquest Historical Newspapers.

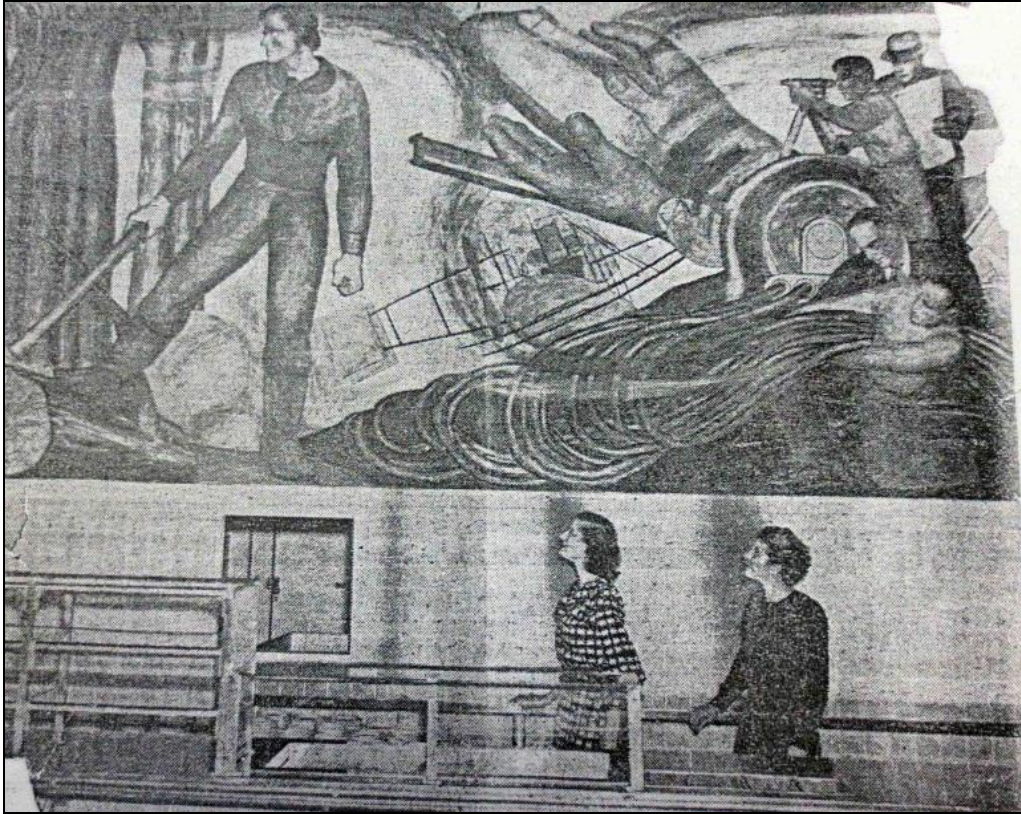
⁴² Rosenberg was born in Baltimore in 1908 and died in D.C. in 1988. Nothing more on his life or work could be found ("Nelson Rosenberg," *Collections*, Smithsonian American Art Museum and the Renwick Gallery, <http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artist?id=7352>).

⁴³ "Movies, Comics, Refreshments Are Theme of Rosenberg Fresco at Roosevelt High," *Washington Post*, November 10, 1935, Vertical Files, Washingtoniana Collection, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, Washington, D.C.

⁴⁴ "Roosevelt High Students Display Murals," *Washington Evening Star*, June 3, 1934, Newsbank.

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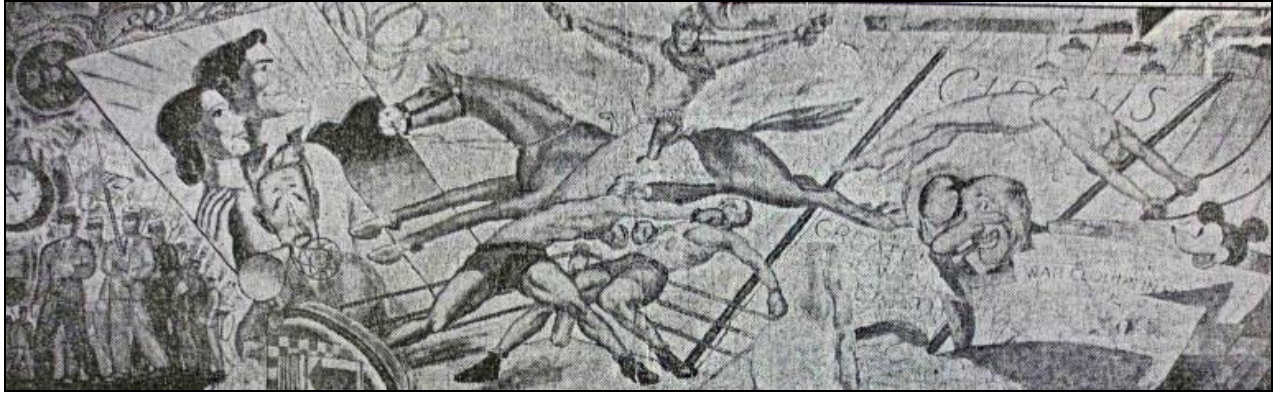
“Adolescent America” Mural, 1935
Washington Post



Restored Mural 2017

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“An American Panorama” Mural, Undated
Washington Times



Restored Mural 2017

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1970s Additions and Alterations

In 1977, ground was broken for a large-scale renovation project for Roosevelt High School. Construction lasted from 1977 to 1980, and the project was estimated to cost almost twelve million dollars. Included in the scope were a natatorium and athletic facility expansion added to the rear (eastern) side of the existing gymnasium; a creative arts addition to the east and south of the auditorium (including music, art, and back-of-house facilities); and a large classroom and office wing addition on the building's northern side. Other alterations included a new kitchen and cafeteria; additional stadium seating and lighting; new landscaping; and the modernization of the auditorium, gymnasium, and classrooms. In the latter, some of the interior partitions were demolished to create larger rooms.⁴⁵

2016 Modernization

Modernization of the school was completed in 2016. The modernization mostly included technology upgrades and improved circulation that did not result in physical changes to the existing building. Significant physical changes to the building included the enclosure of the central courtyard to create an atrium and the construction of entry foyer to the east side of the gymnasium wing. Part of modernization renovations included the restoration of the cupola and the hyphens to their historic appearance. The vinyl siding was removed from the cupola, and the original wood cladding was restored. The window openings for the hyphens that were sealed during the 1970s were reopened.

⁴⁵ "Public Invitation: Groundbreaking Ceremony," May 20, 1977, Roosevelt High School Vertical File, Charles Sumner School Museum & Archives, Washington, D.C.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Bireda, Sara. "School History: Theodore Roosevelt High School." DC North. September 2003.

Boese, Kent C. Blanche Kelso Bruce School. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 2013.
<https://planning.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/op/publication/attachments/Bruce%20School%20application%20form.pdf> (accessed November 13, 2017).

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D.C. Board of Education, Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, Volume 18. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1928.

D.C. Board of Education, Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, Volume 20. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930.

D.C. Board of Education, Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, Volume 22. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1932.

D.C. Board of Education, Minutes of the Board of Education of the District of Columbia, Volume 69. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950.

Haycock, Robert. "Sixty Years of the Public Schools of the District of Columbia." Columbia Historical Society Records, v. 48, 1946-1947: 29-92.

National Register of Historic Places, Public School Buildings of Washington, D.C., 1862-1960, Multiple Property Documentation Form, Washington, District of Columbia, National Register #64500851.

Public Building Drawings, D.C. Department of General Services.

Record Group 66, Commission of Fine Arts Project Files 1910-1952, Entry 17, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

Roosevelt High School Vertical File, Charles Sumner School Museum & Archives, Washington, D.C.

Washington Evening Star. Newsbank.

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Washingtoniana Collection, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library, Washington, D.C.

Washington Post. Proquest Historical Newspapers.

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

Acreege of Property 13.9 acres

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: 38.945004 | Longitude: -77.029611 |
| 2. Latitude: 38.945025 | Longitude: -77.028493 |
| 3. Latitude: 38.942749 | Longitude: -77.028230 |

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4. Latitude: 38.941907 Longitude: -77.026443
5. Latitude: 38.941917 Longitude: -77.029614

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: |

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

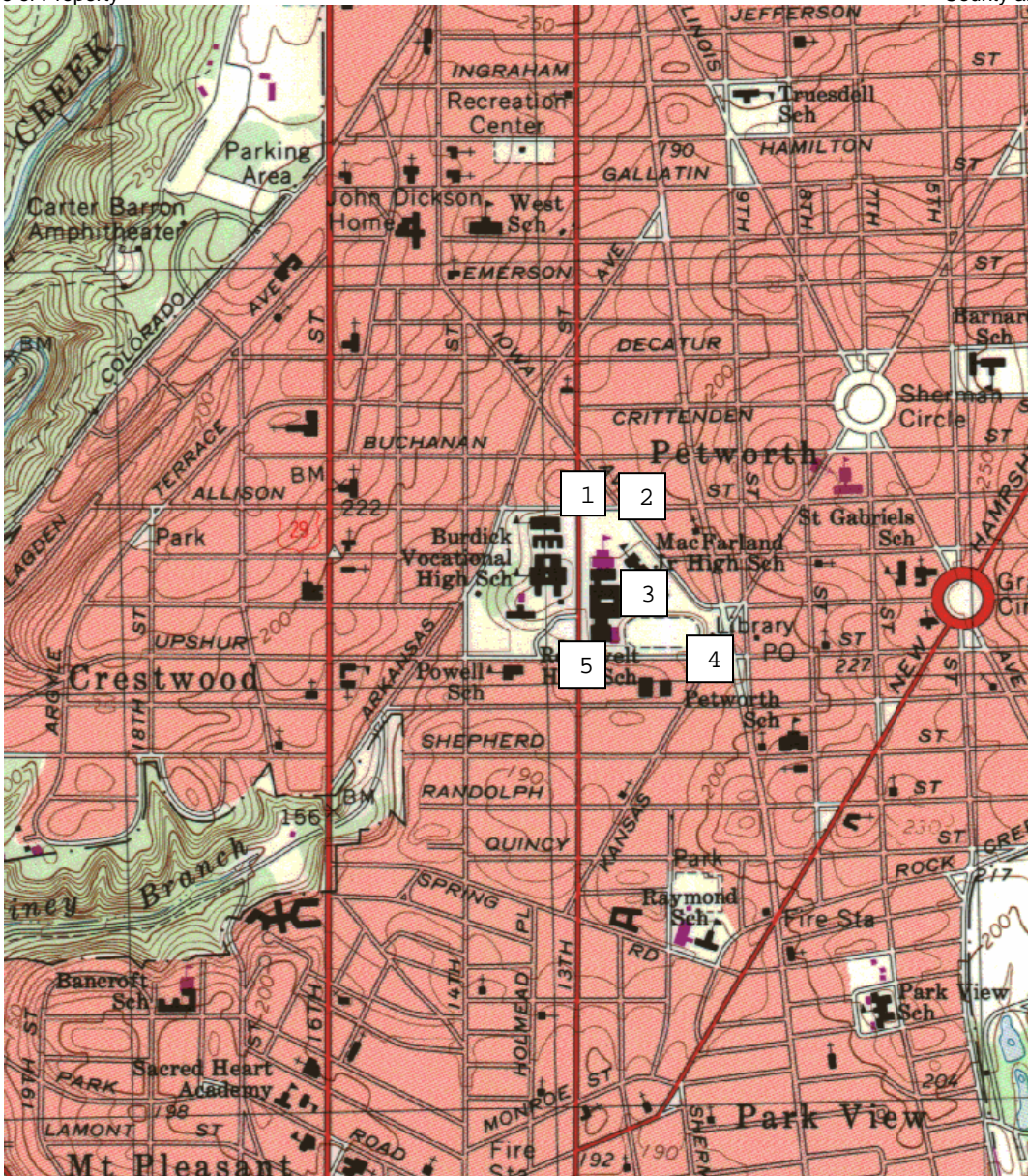
The National Register boundaries for Theodore Roosevelt High School include the eastern and southern portions of Lot 802 in Square 2915 in the District of Columbia. The entire lot is 16.6 acres and is bound by Allison Street, N.W., Iowa Avenue, N.W., Thirteenth Street, N.W., and Upshur Road, NW and comprises Roosevelt High School, MacFarland Junior High School and the Petworth Library. The National Register boundaries for Roosevelt High School comprise approximately 13.9 acres of the 16.6-acre lot, are L-shaped in plan and include the school building, the stadium, and the school grounds including tennis and basketball courts (see map).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

Lot 802 has been associated with the three public buildings on the site since their respective dates of construction in the 1920s and 1930s. The boundaries for Roosevelt High School have been drawn to include the school building, its stadium, associated fields, play courts and surrounding grounds.

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**Roosevelt High School Site Map with Latitude and Longitude Points
USGS Quad Washington West**

Latitude and Longitude Points:

- 1) 38.945004 -77.029611
- 2) 38.945025 -77.028493
- 3) 38.942749 -77.028230
- 4) 38.941907 -77.026443
- 5) 38.941917 -77.029614

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**Map showing National Register Boundaries of Roosevelt High School
(DC Atlas, 2017)**

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kendra Parzen and Eric Griffitts
organization: EHT Traceries, Inc.
street & number: 440 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
city or town: Washington state: DC zip code: 20003
e-mail kparzen@traceries.com and egriffitts@traceries.com
telephone: 202-393-1199
date: November, 17, 2017

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.)

Location Map (*Washington West USGS*)

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.

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

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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: Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School

City or Vicinity: Washington, DC

County: Washington

State: DC

Photographer: Bill Marzella

Date Photographed: June 4, 2013

Photographer: Eric Griffitts

Date Photographed: October 2017

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

Photo 1: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0001.tif)

Looking Southeast (Marzella 2014)

Photo 2: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0002.tif)

Athletic Field, Looking West (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 3: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0003.tif)

Central Block, West Elevation, Looking East (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 4: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0004.tif)

Central Block, Portico, Looking SE (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 5: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0005.tif)

Central Block, Cupola, Looking SE (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 6: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0006.tif)

Central Block, East Elevation, Looking West (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 7: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0007.tif)

Main Lobby, Looking Southeast (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 8: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0008.tif)

Central Block, Interior Corridor Looking East (Griffitts 2017)

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Photo 9: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0009.tif)
Gymnasium Pavilion, West Elevation, Looking Northeast (Marzella 2013)

Photo 10: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0010.tif)
Gymnasium, Looking SE (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 11: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0011.tif)
1970 addition on Gymnasium Pavilion, Looking SW (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 12: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0012.tif)
Auditorium Pavilion and Hyphen, West Elevation, Looking East (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 13: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0013.tif)
Interior of Auditorium (Griffitts 2017)

Photo 14: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0014.tif)
Austral-type Wood Windows (Marzella 2013)

Photo 15: (DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0015.tif)
2016 Atrium addition, Looking East (Griffitts 2017)

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Aerial Illustrating Exterior Photo Locations

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**Photo 1: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0001.tif
Looking Southeast**



**Photo 2: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0002.tif
Athletic Field, Looking East**

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**Photo 3: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0003.tif
Central Block, West Elevation, Looking East**

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**Photo 4: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0004.tif
Central Block, Portico, Looking Southeast**

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**Photo 5: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0005.tif
Central Block, Cupola, Looking Southeast**

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**Photo 6: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0006.tif
Central Block, East Elevation, Looking West**



**Photo 7: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0007.tif
Main Lobby, Looking Southeast**

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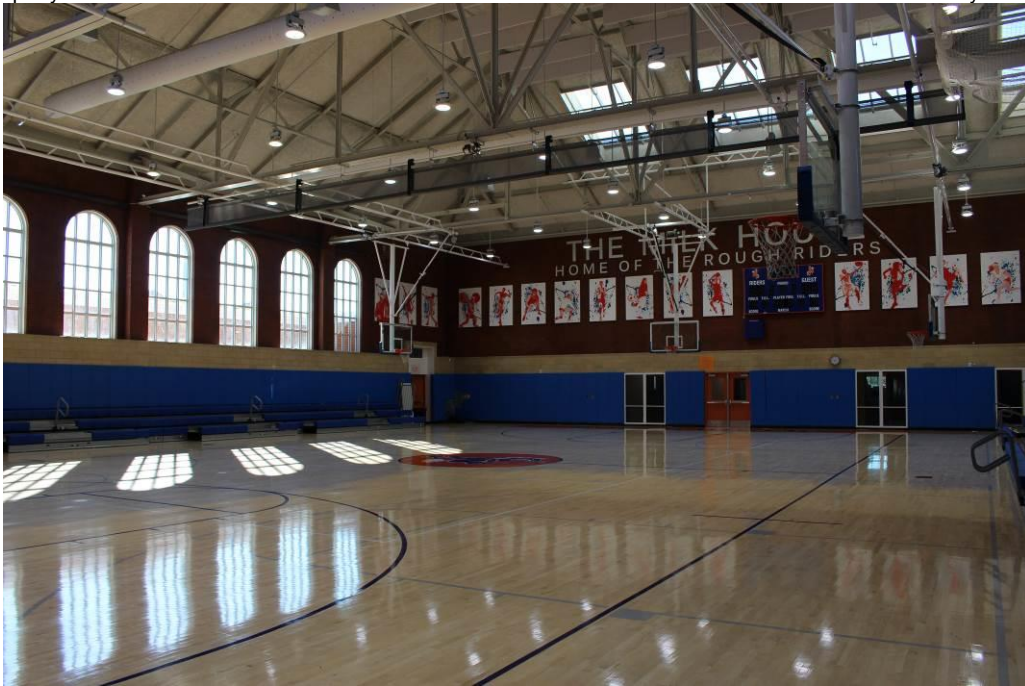
**Photo 8: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0008.tif
Central Block, Interior Corridor Looking East**



**Photo 9: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0009.tif
Gymnasium Pavilion, West Elevation, Looking Northeast**

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**Photo 10: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0010.tif
Gymnasium, Looking Southeast**



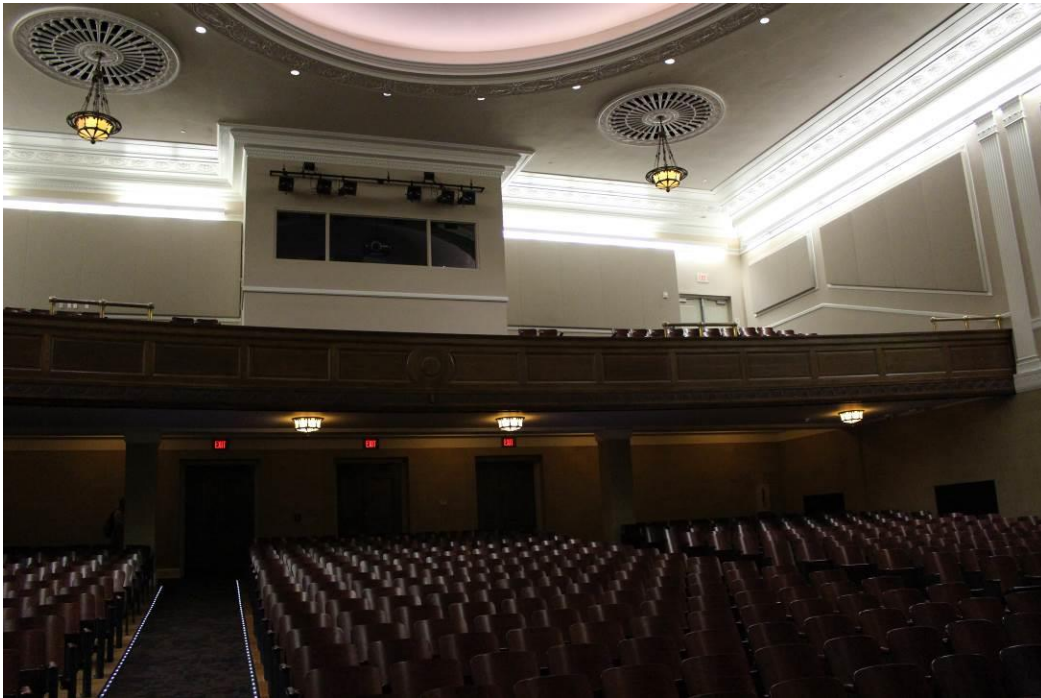
**Photo 11: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0011.tif
1970 addition on Gymnasium Pavilion, Looking Southwest**

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**Photo 12: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0012.tif
Auditorium Pavilion and Hyphen, West Elevation, Looking East**



**Photo 13: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0013.tif
Interior of Auditorium**

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**Photo 14: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0014.tif
Austral-type Wood Windows**

Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School
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Photo 15: DC_Roosevelt Senior High School_0015.tif
2016 Atrium Addition

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.









THEODORE ROOSEVELT







Theodore Roosevelt

"By what you can, with what you have."



*T*heodore Roosevelt was born on October 27, 1858, in New York City. He was a soldier, explorer, naturalist, historian, conservationist, and leader of the Progressive Movement. He served as the 26th President of the United States from 1897 to 1901. Roosevelt was known for his energetic personality and his role in the conservation of natural resources. He established the U.S. Forest Service and the National Conservation Service. He was also a prominent author and a member of the Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War. Roosevelt's leadership and vision helped shape the modern United States.



Theodore Roosevelt

"Do what you can, with what you have."



*T*heodore Roosevelt was born on October 27, 1858, in New York City. He was a soldier, explorer, naturalist, historian, conservationist, and leader of the Progressive Movement. He served as the 26th President of the United States from 1897 to 1901. Roosevelt was known for his energetic personality and his role in the conservation of natural resources. He established the U.S. Forest Service and the National Conservation Service. He was also a prominent author and a member of the Rough Riders during the Spanish-American War. Roosevelt's leadership and vision helped shape the modern United States.

















MES DE LA HERENCIA HISPANA
POWER EN DIVERSIDAD
HERITAGE MONTH
POWER IN DIVERSITY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Roosevelt, Theodore, Senior High School

Multiple Name: Public School Buildings of Washington, DC MPS

State & County: DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, District of Columbia

Date Received: 10/26/2018 Date of Pending List: 11/16/2018 Date of 16th Day: 12/3/2018 Date of 45th Day: 12/10/2018 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100003213

Nominator: State

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 12/3/2018 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Education and Architecture. Responding to significant population growth in the city following World War I, the construction of the Roosevelt High School was an important component of an intensive school building program designed to provide modern and efficient educational facilities to the city's growing outlying neighborhoods. Designed under the direction of Albert L. Harris, the 1932 school complex represents an excellent local example of early twentieth century Colonial Revival-style educational design, embodying the planning and construction goals of the city's multi-year expansion program. The building meets the Registration Requirements of the Public Schools in DC MPS.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 12/3/2018

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

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: October 24, 2018

TO: Paul Lusignan

FROM: Kim Williams *KW*

RE: Transmittal Letter for Roosevelt High School and MacFarland Junior High School
National Register Nominations

Please find enclosed two disks for Roosevelt High School National Register nomination. The enclosed Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination. The enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains photographs as per the NR photo requirements.

Please find enclosed two disks for MacFarland Junior High School National Register nomination. The enclosed Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination. The enclosed Disk 2 (of 2) contains photographs as per the NR photo requirements.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE



MEMO

DATE: November 27, 2018

TO: Paul Lusignan

FROM: Kim Williams *KW*

RE: Re-Submissions for Petworth Library, Roosevelt High School and MacFarland Junior High School National Register Nominations

Attention: Paul

Please find enclosed three disks with revisions to the National Register nominations for Petworth Library, MacFarland Junior High School and Roosevelt High School. These disks provide revised boundary descriptions and boundary maps for each nomination, along with other minor text revisions. Each disk labeled Disk 1 (of 2) contains the true and correct copy of the nomination and should replace the previously submitted disks. Disks 2 (of 2) were previously submitted, so are not included here.