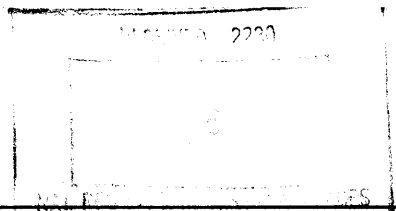


1180



# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

**historic name**      Ocilla Public School  
**other names/site number**      Irwin County Elementary School

## 2. Location

**street & number**    4<sup>th</sup> and Alder streets  
**city, town**      Ocilla ( ) **vicinity of**  
**county**      Irwin      **code** 155  
**state**      Georgia      **code** GA      **zip code**      31774

( ) **not for publication**

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- ( ) private
- (X) public-local
- ( ) public-state
- ( ) public-federal

### Category of Property:

- (X) building(s)
- ( ) district
- ( ) site
- ( ) structure
- ( ) object

### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

<b>buildings</b>	2	0
<b>sites</b>	0	0
<b>structures</b>	0	0
<b>objects</b>	0	0
<b>total</b>	2	0

**Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:** N/A

**Name of previous listing:** N/A

**Name of related multiple property listing:** N/A

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard C. Clowes  
Signature of certifying official

8-31-04  
Date

W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

In my opinion, the property ( ) meets ( ) does not meet the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency or bureau

**5. 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:

see continuation sheet

Daniel J. Vivian 10/27/04

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

for

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

---

## 6. Function or Use

---

### Historic Functions:

Education: school

### Current Functions:

Vacant/Not in use

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Colonial Revival

Modern movement: International Style

### Materials:

**foundation** Concrete

**walls** Stucco

**roof** Metal

**other** Brick

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The main building at the Ocilla Public School is a one-story, U-shaped Colonial Revival-style school located two blocks west of downtown Ocilla in Irwin County in south Georgia. It is bounded on the north by Fifth Street, on the east side by Alder Street, on the south by Fourth Street, and on the west side by Ash Street. The school was begun in 1934 and completed in 1936. Its three-part façade is dominated by the auditorium, which is covered by metal-clad side-gable roof. Ornate arched entrances and windows line the symmetrical façade and brick quoins frame the school's stucco walls. Smaller side-gable entrance pavilions provide access to the two classroom wings. The classroom wings, which are lined with banks of sash windows, form a three-sided courtyard open to the north.

The interior plan, which is organized around the 700-seat auditorium, remains intact. The auditorium features its original wood-and-cast-iron seating, lighting, stage, arched windows, stage doors, and proscenium. The classroom wings include seven- to nine classrooms along a double-loaded corridor. The west wing included nine classrooms, each with a coatroom, two restrooms, a typing room, a music room, and two small storage rooms. The east wing features seven classrooms and coatrooms (eight rooms until a wall was removed that divided the library and classroom), two restrooms, a teacher lounge, two offices, and a library.

Most of the interior finishes remain intact, including the transom windows above every classroom door, crown molding, chair rails, wainscoting, and window moldings. The auditorium has heart-pine floors and the classroom wings have both heart-pine floors and ceilings. The doors throughout are made of heart pine with brass door knobs and the plaster walls include beaded wainscoting.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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In c.1960, a one-story brick cafeteria and classroom building was added to the north side of the school, closing the open end of the courtyard. The International Style building features asymmetrical massing in the form of interlocking rectangles. The cafeteria is located at the east of the building. The western two-thirds of the building are devoted to classrooms. The building steps down in the three stages following the westward sloping terrain. Elements of the International Style include asymmetrical massing, simple geometric forms, flat roofs, cantilevered reinforced-concrete breezeways, and emphasis on modern materials, such as concrete, steel, and glass. Like all modern buildings, the cafeteria and classroom building lacks traditional architectural ornament or references to past architectural styles.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A       B       C       D       E       F       G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

Architecture  
Education

**Period of Significance:**

1934-c.1960.

**Significant Dates:**

1934-1936 – Main school building constructed.

c.1960 – Cafeteria and classroom building completed

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

Parrott, Lauren (architect)

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Ocilla Public School is significant in the area architecture as an excellent example of a Colonial Revival-style school in rural Georgia and it represents an advancement over the city's previous school because of its spacious, well-lit and well-ventilated classrooms and auditorium that could accommodate the entire student body. The school is one-story U-shaped building. Typical of the Colonial Revival style, its three-part façade is symmetrical with arched openings and brick quoins. The brick details contrast with the white stucco exterior, a design treatment that is characteristic of south Georgia. The side-gabled main block houses the auditorium. Classroom wings to the rear form a three-sided courtyard open to the north.

In c.1960, the north end of the courtyard was closed with the completion of the cafeteria and classroom building. The new building is an excellent example of the International Style, which was often first introduced into rural communities through federal, state, and locally funded building programs, including the construction of rural health centers, post offices, and electric membership cooperatives. School construction in Georgia increased with the c.1949 statewide sales tax dedicated to new schools and federal funds for schools, which increased in the 1960s. These new schools, with their stripped-down aesthetic, promoted less expensive steel and glass, which enabled Georgia to build enough schools to accommodate the baby boomers that had reached school age. These were built as new schools or as modern additions to older school buildings. The cafeteria and classroom building at the Ocilla Public School includes many of the attributes of the International Style: its overall form is a series a interlocking rectangles; its construction emphasizes modern materials, such as steel, glass, and reinforced concrete; and its lack of references to past architectural styles. Among the many modern schools designed in Georgia during this period are the 1955 addition to the Colbert School in Madison County, Main High School in Rome, and College Heights and Westchester elementary schools, both in Decatur.

The Ocilla Public School is significant in the area of education because it represents the efforts of Irwin County to provide a modern school for its community during a period of statewide consolidation in which numerous one-and-two-room schoolhouses were replaced by larger and more healthful schools. Consolidation, which resulted in better schools and uniform education policies, meant that students in rural areas had to travel by bus to a single school, often located in the county seat. Irwin County's efforts reflect state and national trends to toward greater involvement by state boards of education in local school systems. During this period, African-American students remained in small, substandard community schools. These schools, with few exceptions, were seldom equal to white schools.

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**Section 8--Statement of Significance**

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**National Register Criteria**

A – The Ocilla Public School is significant in the area of education because it represents the efforts of Irwin County to provide a modern school for its community during a period of statewide consolidation.

C – The Ocilla Public School is significant in the area architecture as excellent examples of Colonial Revival-style and International Style school buildings in rural Georgia.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

The period of significance for the Ocilla Public School extends to c.1960. The school meets Criterion Consideration G because it continues to achieve significance into a period less than fifty years before the nomination. The construction of the cafeteria and classroom building in c.1960 represents the efforts of public schools to accommodate increasing numbers of school-age baby boomers. This pattern growth began after World War II and continued into the mid-1960s.

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance begins with the construction of the main building at the Ocilla Public School in 1934-1936 and ends in c.1960 to include the addition of a cafeteria and classroom building that was built to accommodate increasing numbers of students following World War II.

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The nomination includes two contributing buildings: the main school building (1934-1936) and the cafeteria and classroom building (c.1960). The nomination does not include any noncontributing resources.

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

The original building at the Ocilla Public School built was constructed at 4<sup>th</sup> and Adler streets in 1904. The whites-only campus included a two-story brick classroom building and an adjacent two-story brick teacher's home, which served as a dormitory for teachers who did not live in the county seat of Ocilla. The teachers resided at the campus during the school week and returned home on the weekends. As students who lived in distant parts of the county required accommodations during the school week, the school board of education built two dormitories on campus where students stayed during the week and then returned home on weekends. None of these buildings survive.

The school taught grades one through eleven. As enrollment increased, the teacher's home was converted to a grammar school. The school building served as a high school with grades eight

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8—Statement of Significance

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through eleven held on the first floor and classes for sixth and seventh graders located on the second floor.

By the early 1930s, the Ocilla Public School could not provide classroom space for the increasing numbers of students. The county, with funds from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and later the Works Progress Administration, planned a larger school on the 4<sup>th</sup> Street site. The construction was initially begun by the FERA, which provided federal grants from 1933 to 1935. In 1935, the WPA provide assistance. The purpose of the WPA was to put unemployed Americans to work in jobs that would serve the public interest and conserve the skills and the self-esteem of the workers. The new school was built by local workers and prisoners drafted from the Irwin County penal system.

In 1933, as the old school was demolished and construction of the new school was underway, classes were held in the county courthouse, city hall, and the Methodist and Baptist churches. In 1934, the grammar school students were moved into the completed east wing and auditorium while the west wing was under construction. The high school students remained in makeshift classrooms until the school was completed in 1936.

The new school is a one-story Colonial Revival-style building with a U-shaped plan. The school includes 17 classrooms, four restrooms, a library, two main offices, and an auditorium that seats 700 students. The school with an approximate cost of \$40,000, was dedicated on November 4, 1936. WPA officials at the ceremony expressed their feeling that the new and modern school was "one of the best in the state." For two decades the Ocilla Public School served as both an elementary school and high school. In 1950-52, the Ocilla Public School became known as the Irwin County Elementary School when a larger high school was built three blocks northwest on 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

Several buildings were added to the site, including a wood-frame gymnasium. Built in 1933, the gymnasium was located near the northwest corner of the school. It was demolished before c.1960, when a cafeteria and classroom building was added to the north side of school. The International Style building runs parallel to 5<sup>th</sup> Street and is partially located on the site of the gymnasium. An athletic field was built in the block west of the school on which several modern buildings now stand.

By 1970, the school was racially integrated. The school, which continued to serve as an elementary school, hosted class reunions and civic functions until it closed in 1987.



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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Gerhardt, Andrea. Historic District Information Form. Ocilla Public School. On file at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia, 2002.

### INTERVIEWS

Mixon, Harry. Interview by Andrea Gerhart, 29 May 2002.

Paulk, Melba. Interview by Emily Perry, 24 June 2002.

Rogers, Murphy. Interview by Emily Perry, 25 June 2002.

Sutton, Dot. Interview by Emily Perry, 24 June 2002.

### NEWSPAPERS

"All Ready For Ocilla School Opening Mon.," *Ocilla Star*, 5 September 1935.

"First Class Reunion Held For OHS 1950 Seniors," *Ocilla Star*, 18 July 1985.

"Irwin County Elementary School Building's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," *Ocilla Star*, 30 May 2002.

"'Music Man' Slated Here Friday Night," *Ocilla Star*, 7 March 1985.

"Ocilla High School 1934 Class Holds 50 Year Reunion Here," *Ocilla Star*, 6 December 1984.

"Ocilla's New School Building Dedicated," *Ocilla Star*, 5 November 1936.

"School Building Almost Completed," *Ocilla Star*, 14 May 1936.

"School Building To Be Dedicated November 4<sup>th</sup>," *Ocilla Star*, 29 October 1936.

"School Opens With Large Enrollment," *Ocilla Star*, 12 September 1935.

"Status Of New School Addition," *Ocilla Star*, 21 November 1935.

"The Ocilla Civic Club To Sponsor Fashion Show," *Ocilla Star*, 18 April 1985.

"Work On School Building Begun," *Ocilla Star*, 19 December 1935.

"Work Will Begin On School Friday," *Ocilla Star*, 28 November 1935.

### ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS

"Early New Deal Programs: PWAP and FERA," Article on-line. Available from <http://www.wwecd.org/policy/US/newdeal.html>, accessed 5 July 2002.

"Digital Sanborn Maps," Maps on-line. Available from <http://sanborn.umi.com>, accessed 20 June 2002.

"Irwin County Historical Population Profile," Article on-line. Available from <http://cviog.uga.edu/Projects/gainfo/countypop/irwinpop.htm>, accessed 28 June 2002.

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"The New Deal," Article on-line. Available from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/peopleevents/pandeAMEX09.html>, accessed 5 July 2002.

"The Works Progress Administration," Article on-line. Available from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/peopleevents/pandeAMEX10.html>, accessed 5 July 2002.

"The Works Progress Administration (WPA)," Article on-line. Available from <http://www.wwc.org/policy/US/newdeal.html>, accessed 5 July 2002.

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**Section 9—Major Bibliographic References**

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested**
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued**  
**date issued:**
- 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 #**

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

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

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## **10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property**      3.52 acres

### **UTM References**

A)    Zone 17      Easting 286160      Northing 3497510

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The historic district boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map, which is drawn to scale.

### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the property and all of the intact buildings historically associated with the Ocilla Public School.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Steven Moffson, Architectural Historian  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**mailing address** 47 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 414-H  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30334  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** July 25, 2004  
**e-mail** steven\_moffson@dnr.state.ga.us

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Andrea Gerhardt  
**organization** South Georgia Regional Development Center  
**mailing address** 327 W. Savannah Avenue  
**city or town** Valdosta **state** GA **zip code** 31601  
**telephone** (229) 333-5277  
**e-mail** N/A

- ( ) **property owner**
- ( ) **consultant**
- ( ) **regional development center preservation planner**
- ( ) **other:**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Armond Morris, Chairperson  
**organization (if applicable)** Irwin County Commission  
**mailing address** 207 South Irwin Avenue (P.O. Box 287)  
**city or town** Ocilla **state** GA **zip code** 31774-0287  
**e-mail (optional)** N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Ocilla Public School  
**City or Vicinity:** Ocilla  
**County:** Irwin  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** November 2002

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 21

1. Main and west facades, photographer facing northeast.
2. Main façade, photographer facing northwest.
3. East elevation, photographer facing west.
4. Main school building, 1934-1936 (left) and cafeteria and classroom building, c.1960, photographer facing north.
5. Entrance, east wing, photographer facing west.
6. Courtyard with view to auditorium, photographer facing south.
7. West wing, courtyard elevation, photographer facing west.
8. Cafeteria and classroom building, photographer facing west.
9. Cafeteria and classroom building, photographer facing southeast.
10. Cafeteria and classroom building, photographer facing southeast.
11. Cafeteria and classroom building (left) and main school building, photographer facing east.
12. Cafeteria and classroom building, photographer facing northeast.
13. Cafeteria and classroom building (foreground) with view to main school building, west wing, photographer facing southeast.
14. Main school building, west wing (left) and cafeteria and classroom building, photographer facing northeast.

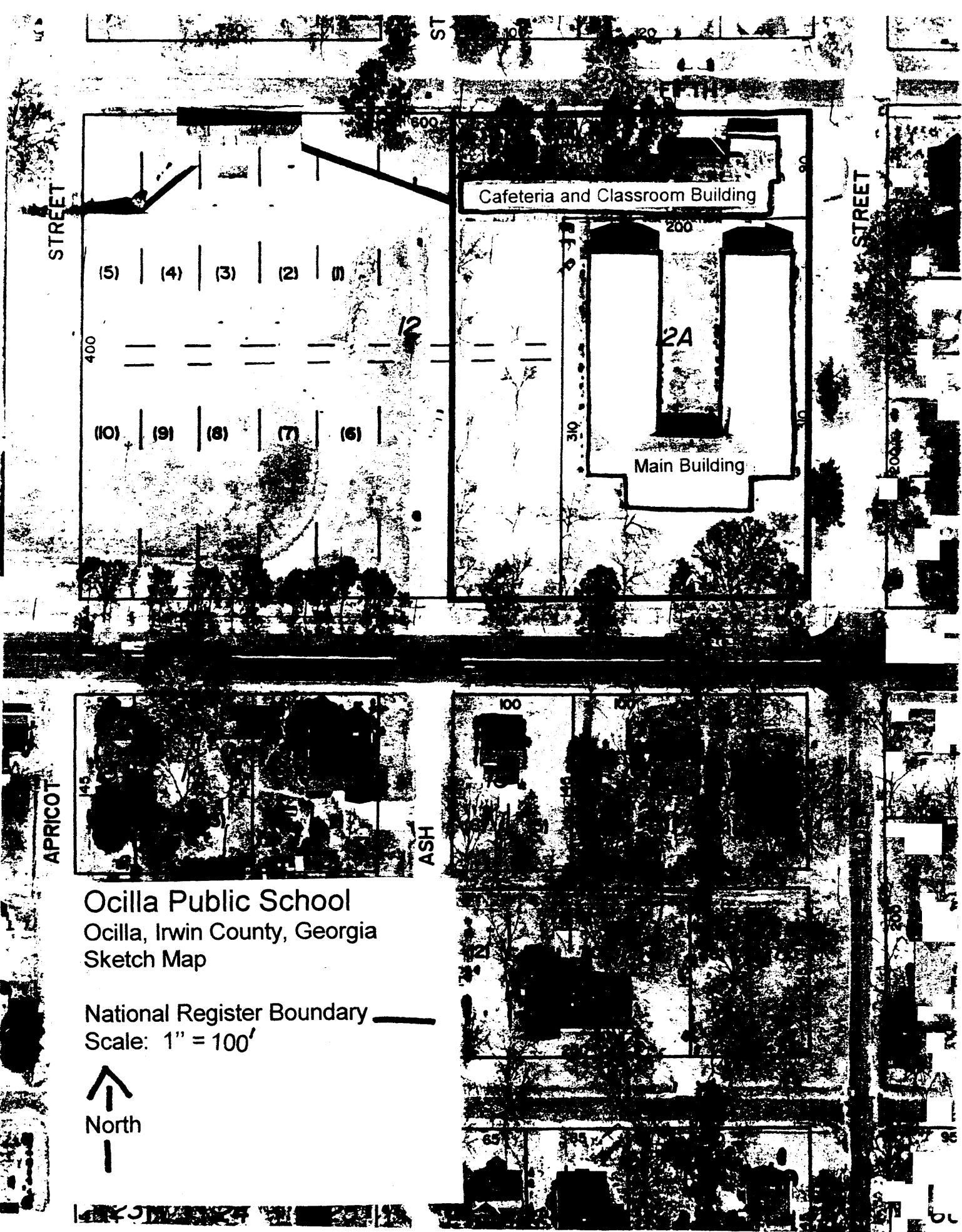
**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**Photographs**

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15. Cafeteria and classroom building (left) and main school building, east wing, photographer facing east.
16. Main school building, interior, east entrance, photographer facing south.
17. Main school building, interior, east wing, photographer facing north.
18. Main school building, interior, west wing, photographer facing north.
19. Main school building, interior, east wing, library, photographer facing south.
20. Main school building, interior, east wing, classroom, photographer facing southeast.
21. Main school building, interior, auditorium, photographer facing west.

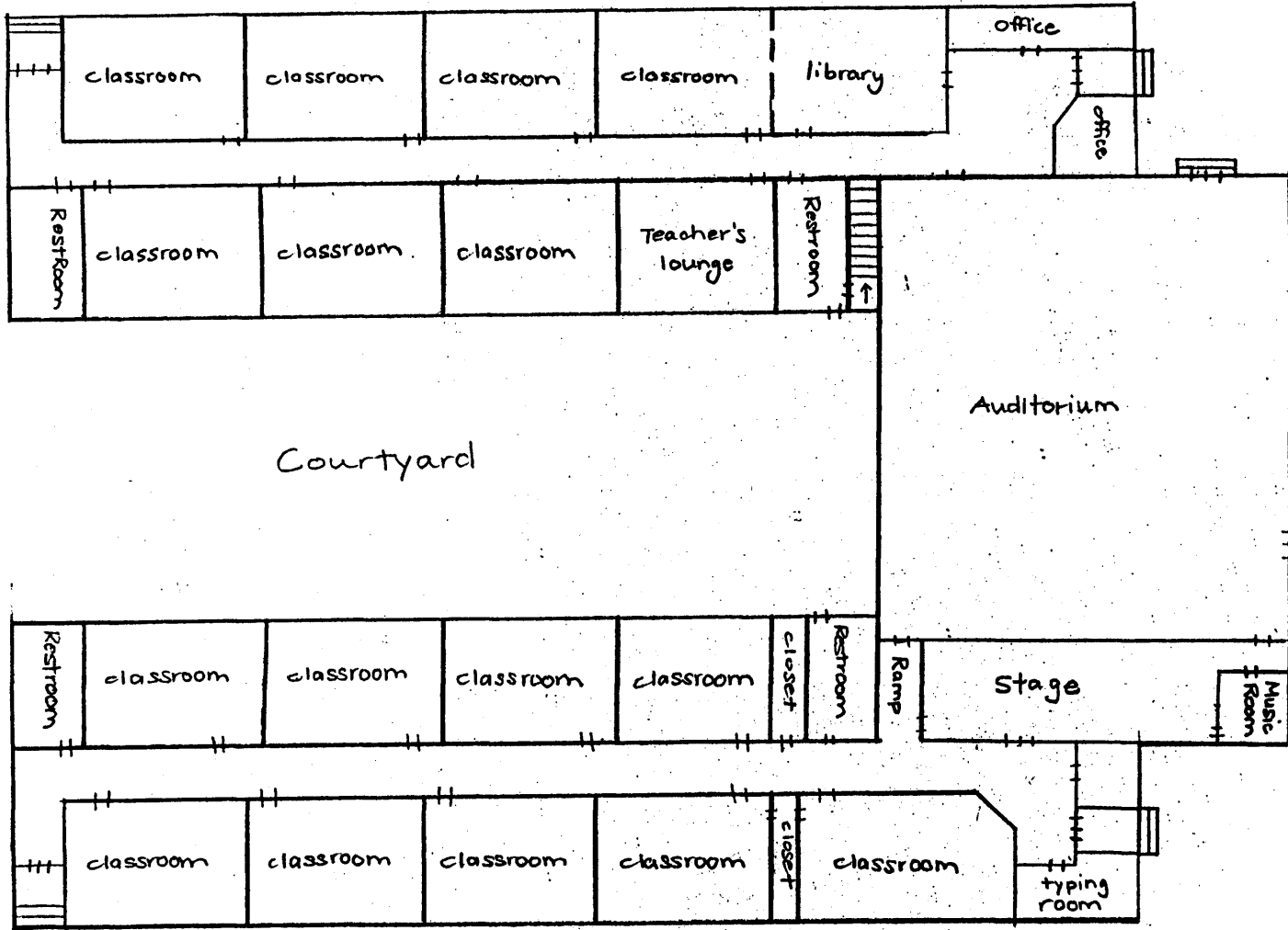
(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)



Ocilla Public School  
Ocilla, Irwin County, Georgia  
Sketch Map

National Register Boundary ———  
Scale: 1" = 100'





Ocilla Public School  
 Ocilla, Irwin County, Georgia  
 Floor Plan

No scale

