

177

JAN 29 2001

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

other names/site number Turkey Creek Middle School

2. Location

street & number 5005 Turkey Creek Road, South N/A  not for publication

city or town Plant City  vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Hillsborough code 057 zip code 33567

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jane Snyder Matthews 1/22/2001  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Florida Division of Historical Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
  - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Gordon H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

3/2/01  
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)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	total

Name of related multiple property listings

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

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/Education Related Activities

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE/Masonry Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick
walls Brick
roof Asphalt Shingle
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey, recorded by Historic American Engineering Record.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1927-1951

Significant Dates

1927

1951

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arch: Winn, Frank

Blder: Dudley & Nulter

Primary location of additional data:

- Location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State Agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of Repository

#

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1 7	3 8 4 7 6 0	3 0 9 1 6 5 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2			

3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ludo Van Den Boert, TCHS Alumni & Friends Association/Carl Shiver, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation date January 2001

street & number 500 South Bronough Street telephone (850) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Hillborough County School Board

street & number 901 E. Kennedy Boulevard telephone (813) 272-4000

city or town Tampa state Florida zip code 33602

**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 amend 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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

Historic Turkey Creek High School (now the Community Service Building for Turkey Creek Middle School) is a two-story, red brick building constructed in 1927. The rectangular plan Masonry Vernacular style building has a hipped roof surfaced in asphalt shingle and rests on a brick foundation. The south side of the interior of the first floor of the building, originally used as an assembly hall, was modified in 1934 to create two new classrooms, and in 1951, a two-story extension was constructed on the west (rear) elevation of the school. The original section of the building exhibits some design elements of the Georgian Revival style. These include a rectangular floor plan, hip roof, symmetrical elevations, multi-pane windows, and axial main entrance.

**SETTING**

The Historic Turkey Creek High School is located in rural east Hillsborough County about four miles from southwest of Plant City and seventeen miles east of Tampa. It is found on the ten-acre school campus of Turkey Creek Middle School and is located at the intersection of Connell Road and Turkey Creek Road, approximately one half mile north of SR 60. The campus consists of twelve buildings constructed over a seventy year period to accommodate the increasing population surrounding the school site. There are two historic buildings on the campus, the high school building, constructed in 1927, and the original junior high school, which was constructed in the mid-1930s. That one-story U-shaped building remains largely unaltered on the exterior; however, the interior recently was gutted and reconfigured. Therefore, the two-story structure is the only contributing building.

**DESCRIPTION**

Exterior

A brick foundation wall and brick pier footings support the two-story building. The load-bearing brick walls are thirteen inches thick and are laid in five rows of common, or running bond, with every sixth course laid in Flemish bond.<sup>1</sup> The main (east) facade of the building (Photos 1-2) is symmetrical with a central entrance flanked by single, 4/4-light double-hung wood sash windows with brick sills. Concrete steps with brick buttresses and concrete copings lead to the double leaf metal doors of the front entrance (Photo 3). Originally, the main entrance had wood and glass panel double doors. A wood canopy supported by link chains shelters the entrance. Drawings for the building indicate that two wood consoles, or brackets supported the canopy. A photograph of the building taken c. 1927 (Photo 4) shows that the canopy originally featured wooden scroll brackets, as well as the chain supports. These brackets were still extant as late as 1945 but were removed by 1955 (Photos 5-6). Above the canopy is a rectangular transom window. The second story of the main facade

<sup>1</sup> A row of brick in which the course alternates between headers and stretchers.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

features paired 4/4-light double hung windows centered over the canopy. Flanking the paired windows are single 4/4-light double hung windows. Original doors were wood with two lower wood panels and a six pane divided light above. A doorway and canopy similar to the those located on the main facade were also found at the rear (west) elevation of the building when the school was completed in 1927; however, the deck and steps of the stoop were constructed of wood, and the stoop was flanked by wooden railings. The only fenestration found on the rear elevation was a pair of 4/4-light, double hung wood sash windows location on the second story directly above the rear entranceway.<sup>2</sup> These elements were lost when the rear addition of the school was constructed in 1951 (Photo 7). A new set of double doors and a concrete stoop without a canopy were installed at the rear of the building. A small secondary doorway is found on the south elevation of the 1951 addition, near the juncture of the two sections of the building. This doorway provides access to the first floor and to a stairway leading to the second floor of the building.

The north and south elevations of the original section of the school have paired and single 4/4-light, double hung wood sash windows. The center of both elevations exhibits a skeleton frame metal fire escape, with two doors opening onto the large landing (Photos 8-9). The doorways are occupied by wood panel doors, above each of which is a multi-light pivot window. The side and end elevations of the 1951 rear addition have metal frame awning windows on both stories.

The only notable change to the exterior of the original building after the construction of the 1951 addition was the removal of two interior wall chimneys that were centrally located along each side of the building. The chimneys were used as flues for wood-burning stoves that were used to heat the classrooms in winter. The use of these stoves was discontinued in 1951 when oil-burning heaters were installed (Photo 6). The chimneys were removed c. 1960 when they declared to be a hazard to safety.

Interior

The interior of the 1927/1934 section of the Turkey Creek High School comprises four classrooms flanking a central hall on both floors. As built in 1927, the first floor of the building contained two classrooms along the north side of the building and an assembly (Attachment A) room along the south.<sup>3</sup> In 1934 the assembly room was modified to create two additional classrooms and a central corridor replaced the original rostrum, or stage, on the north side of the assembly room. The central corridor with four classrooms is repeated on the second floor. The interior of the building (Photos 10-14) features painted wood floors and novelty wood ceilings. The walls are plastered and feature plain wood chair rails and baseboards in lieu of wainscoting. The doors to the classrooms are wood panel with two-light transoms above the simple architraves. A second

<sup>2</sup> "School Building for Special School Tax District no. 19," Elevations, Sheet 3. Frank A. Winn, Architect, April 3, 1926.

<sup>3</sup> "School Building for Special School Tax District no. 19," First & Second Floor Plans, Sheet 2. Frank A. Winn, Architect, April 3, 1926.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 3

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
DESCRIPTION

---

transom light is found immediately next to the one found immediately over the doorways. The original incandescent lighting fixtures were replaced by hanging fluorescent fixtures at an unknown date.

The two-story addition to the rear of the building, constructed in 1951, included the construction of an enclosed stairwell that provided access between the two floors. On the first floor, the stairwell has a small exterior doorway to be used as an emergency exit, as well as metal double doors connecting it to the central corridor. The inclusion of this stairwell prompted the removal of the two original sets of stairs that had been found at either end of the central hallway when the building was completed in 1927 (Attachment A). The spaces immediately west of the stairwell on the first floor of the 1951 addition were devoted to mechanical/electrical services and the faculty restrooms. The northwest section of the first floor was used for boys and girls restrooms.

On the second floor, the 1951 addition has a stair landing segregated from the central corridor by metal double doors (Photo 14). These doors, like those on the first floor, were included in the renovation as a fire prevention measure. There is also another set of double doors found in the central corridor, just east of the stairwell area. These doors, and a similar set found in the corridor of the first floor, were installed to prevent the infiltration of smoke throughout the building in case of fire. Immediately west of the second floor stairwell is a large classroom, and another one is found at the northwest corner of the floor. Both rooms are accessed by doors connecting them with the central corridor.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 1

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

---

**SUMMARY PARAGRAPH**

The Historic Turkey Creek High School is significant at the local level under criteria A and C in the areas of Education and Architecture. The facility was established as one of the “Strawberry Schools” in rural Hillsborough County, which held school vacation during the winter months to coincide with the strawberry harvest so children could help with the gathering of the berries for the commercial market. Education was important to the community, and locating the school in the rural area—rather than sending children to the consolidated county schools in urban areas of nearby Plant City or Tampa—minimized the time that farm children would need to stay home from school to help with the harvest. Although small in size and rather plain in appearance, the school is architecturally significant because it is representative of the effort of the school boards of Florida during the early decades of the twentieth century to provide “efficient” school buildings with large, well ventilated classrooms that could be divided into grades and that featured electric lighting. On January 20, 1998, the Historic Turkey Creek High School was designated as a County Historic Landmark by the government of Hillsborough County.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

According to popular legend, Turkey Creek, the small stream from which the nearby rural community derives its name, was so-called because of the large number of wild turkeys once found in the area.<sup>4</sup> During the first half of the twentieth century, the Turkey Creek area was primarily an agricultural community consisting of small family farms of from ten to twenty acres. The main cash crop was strawberries, which were harvested during the winter months. In order for children to help with the harvest, a unique school year was established for what were labeled as “Strawberry Schools.” These schools allowed the vacation period normally held in the summer months to be held during the winter months to coincide with the strawberry harvest.<sup>5</sup> Education was important to the community and this system minimized the time that farm children would need to stay home from school to help with the harvest.

The history of education in the community of Turkey Creek dates back to 1873 with the establishment of a one-room log cabin school in the area, numbered 16.<sup>6</sup> Two years later the Hillsborough County Board of Public Instruction approved two additional schools, one on the east side of Turkey Creek, numbered 25, and one on its west side, numbered 24.<sup>7</sup> All of this activity took place prior to the establishment of a post office in Turkey Creek in February 1892.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Ernest L. Robinson, *History of Hillsborough County*, (St. Augustine, Florida: The Record Company, 1928), p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> “Rural Schools Start Monday,” *Plant City Enterprise*, June 8, 1928.

<sup>6</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 1, p. 14; “El Pavo,” Yearbook of Turkey Creek High School, 1972.

<sup>7</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 1, p. 30.

<sup>8</sup> Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board, “The Cultural Resources of the Unincorporated Portions of Hillsborough County,” (Tampa, Fl: Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County Preservation Board, 1980), p. 29.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 2

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

---

In 1888 the School Board purchased approximately a half acre of land along what is now Edwards Road in the northeast corner of the northwest quarter of the southeast quarter of section fourteen in township twenty-nine south of range twenty-one east for school #19 in Turkey Creek.<sup>9</sup> By 1903, the number of school houses in the vicinity of Turkey Creek had increased to three. That year the Board of Public Instruction consolidated the schools leaving two in Special Tax District 19. In 1904, the School Board directed the trustees to select a new location for one of the two existing sites. The site chosen was located along Edwards Road.<sup>10</sup> The building materials, which were provided by E.T. Roux & Son of Plant City, were paid for by the School Board, and the trustees provided the labor.<sup>11</sup>

Around 1908 the school was relocated once again, this time to a two-story wood frame building at the school's current location on Turkey Creek and Connell roads. Deed records show that the School Board purchased five acres from the Tampa Bay Land and Lumber Company.<sup>12</sup> That same year Turkey Creek graduated its first senior class. A year later, the board endorsed the action of the superintendent in closing the high school at Turkey Creek and began offering Junior High course work.<sup>13</sup>

The 1911 edition of the Florida State Gazetteer and Business Directory lists the population of the community of Turkey Creek as 100 and having a Baptist and a Methodist church, a public school and a sawmill.<sup>14</sup> In the 1918 edition, Turkey Creek was listed as a "town" with a population of 100, having a Baptist church, public school and general store.<sup>15</sup> By 1925, the population had grown to 200; however, the Gazetteer listed the area as a "village" with a Baptist church, public school and several general stores. Also listed was the Turkey Creek Growers Association.<sup>16</sup>

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

### Historical Significance

By November 1925 the need for a new high school at Turkey Creek prompted the issuance of \$20,000 in bonds for the purchase of an additional five acres contiguous with the existing school property to be used to erect a larger and more commodious school building.<sup>17</sup> Frank Goff, a former student who started attending

<sup>9</sup> Hillsborough County Clerk of the Circuit Court, Warranty Deed dated August 7, 1888 and filed June 26, 1889.

<sup>10</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 2, pp. 118, 119, 120, 123, 124, 151, 154, 155.

<sup>11</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 2, p. 208-209.

<sup>12</sup> Hillsborough County Clerk of the Circuit Court (1908), Deed Book 222: p. 23.

<sup>13</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 3, p. 111.

<sup>14</sup> Florida State Gazetteer and Business Directory, (Jacksonville, Florida: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1911).

<sup>15</sup> Florida State Gazetteer and Business Directory, (Jacksonville, Florida: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1918).

<sup>16</sup> Florida State Gazetteer and Business Directory, (Jacksonville, Florida: R.L. Polk & Co., Publishers, 1925).

<sup>17</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 8, pp. 245-248.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 3

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

Turkey Creek School in 1925 when he entered the fourth grade, described the location of the new building, "On the far side of the old (wood frame) building it was all woods, where the Junior High is now. It was cleared for a softball field and to build the (new) two-story brick building on the north side."<sup>18</sup>

In December of that year, Frank Winn was selected as the architect and by February 1926 Winn's drawings had been accepted and approved by the School Board. In September 1926 bids were received for construction of the building and a contract was awarded to the contracting firm of Dudley and Nulter with a bid of \$19,800.<sup>19</sup> Winn, a native of Leesburg, Florida, studied architecture at the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University) at Auburn, Alabama, from 1910-1914. Mr. Winn practiced architecture for twenty-four years, during which time he was responsible for the drafting room of Francis J. Kennard, a prominent Tampa architect. Winn himself became an established architect in Tampa and throughout the state, designing churches, residences, civic buildings, and many rural elementary and high schools for Hillsborough County, including the Old Lutz School (NR 1996).<sup>20</sup>

Shortly after construction of the two story brick building, the school term was increased from seven months to eight months, with classes starting at 10:00 a.m. and continuing until 5:00 p.m.<sup>21</sup> Typical of other rural schools in Hillsborough County at the time, Turkey Creek School operated as a "strawberry school." Located at the intersection of the north/south and east/west branches of the Seaboard Air Line Railroad and four miles from Plant City, Turkey Creek prospered as a result of the agricultural success of the strawberry farming industry.

By the 1920s the importance of the strawberry industry to Plant City and Eastern Hillsborough County was evident, with Plant City declaring itself the "Winter Strawberry Capital of the World." In his description of Turkey Creek, Ernest Robinson noted "The soil in and around here is best fitted for general farming and truck growing with the strawberry growing as a real factor in the steady growth of the region."<sup>22</sup> By the 1930s, the "strawberry school" was an institution in Eastern Hillsborough County, allowing children to attend school in the summer so they would be free to harvest during the winter. The WPA Florida Guide Book to Florida described the area as "a great strawberry region, and is noted as well for its school, which is the largest rural consolidated school in Hillsborough County. The institution is one of the 'strawberry schools' which have vacation period during the winter months in order that pupils may assist in harvesting the strawberry crop."<sup>23</sup> These schools were essential to the local economy, providing the necessary labor for the small farms that depended primarily upon family labor and sharecroppers, as noted in the WPA Guide:

<sup>18</sup> Frank Goff interview by Teresa Maio, April 25, 1997, Tape 1, Side A.

<sup>19</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 8, pp. 284-290, 317-319, 361; Book 9, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> D. B. McKay, "Retired Architect Reviews Memories," Tampa Tribune, September 7, 1952, p. 4-C.

<sup>21</sup> Goff, Tape 1, Side A.

<sup>22</sup> Robinson, p. 82.

<sup>23</sup> Federal Writer's Project in Florida, American Guide Series: Florida, Works Project Administration, c. 1933, p. 133, Manuscript available University of South Florida Special Collections.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 4 HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

---

Harvesting strawberries is the work of a large part of the rural population of the eastern section of the county. Men, women and children gather the berries by hand, after which they are selected, graded, washed and packed. Strawberry culture is frequently called a "thirteen months in the year job" for the producer. In the midst of the harvest in January and February, the farmers order nursery plants and set out the seed-beds for the coming season. These nursery plants put out runners that are cut from the parent plants in June to be replanted in the fall setting. The final beds are made in the fall and the plants are set out in rows. Cold weather is the chief menace of the crop, so pine straw or meadow hay is spread between the rows to be raked over the plants for protection on occasional frosty nights.<sup>24</sup>

The schools continued to operate between late March and December well into the 1940s and 1950s. However, the system came under attack in 1946 when J.A. "Jock" Murray, a Tampa Tribune reporter, wrote a series of critical newspaper articles that presented the operation of strawberry schools as an antiquated practice.<sup>25</sup> Despite the furor over rural education that resulted from these articles, there was no immediate change in the established summer school schedule in Eastern Hillsborough County.

The debate over rural education, however, continued, and in 1950, Jock Murray produced another series of articles that challenged the system.<sup>26</sup> In the years following this second attack, the debate became more contentious, resulting in an open panel discussion in December 1954 at the Hillsborough Farm Bureau at Turkey Creek. The county school superintendent and other school board representatives lambasted the summer school system. When the school session began in April 1955, there were only four schools remaining on the summer schedule: those at Dover, Cork, Trapnell, and Turkey Creek.<sup>27</sup> Isabel Preacher, a social studies teacher at Turkey Creek High School for thirty-five years, emphasized the importance of the system to the community, "There was a need for strawberry schools. Turkey Creek School was an important part of the life and economy of this area."<sup>28</sup>

At a special session at the Hillsborough County Courthouse in Tampa on July 26, 1956, the Board of Public Instruction of Hillsborough County, Florida, voted that effective at the close of the school day on July 27, 1956, all schools will be operated on a single calendar.<sup>29</sup> The resolution passed unanimously with Superintendent Farnell stating that he believed the action was the "greatest step the Board had ever taken

<sup>24</sup> Federal Writer's Project in Florida, American Guide Series: Florida, Works Project Administration, c. 1933, pp. 137-138, Manuscript available University of South Florida Special Collections.

<sup>25</sup> J. A. Murray, "Outdated Laws and Customs Hinder Hillsborough Schools," Tampa Morning Tribune, October 1, 1946, and J.A. Murray, "Strawberry Schools Called 'Excuse for Child Labor'," Tampa Morning Tribune, October 6, 1946.

<sup>26</sup> Stephen D. Andrews, "Brasshats and Baby Fingers; The Battle Over Rural Education," Florida Historical Quarterly (Winter 1997), p. 308.

<sup>27</sup> Andrews, p. 319.

<sup>28</sup> Isabel Preacher, Interview by Teresa Maio, April 25, 1997: Tape 1, Side B.

<sup>29</sup> Andrews, p. 319; Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 22, p.70-72.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 5 HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SIGNIFICANCE

---

toward improving the welfare of the children of Hillsborough County.”<sup>30</sup> Following the close of the 1955-1956 term, the two story brick building at Turkey Creek School continued to be used as a high school until 1972 when the entire campus became a junior high school. In 1995 the facility was converted into a middle school.

Architectural Significance

The Historic Turkey Creek High School is a significant visual and architectural landmark in the rural section of east Hillsborough County. Schools constitute a building type of which few historic models remain in many parts of the nation. In Florida most communities initially built primitive log or wood frame schoolhouses, of which few have survived. As the importance of primary and secondary education became more apparent to the citizens of the state, most of these early buildings were abandoned or demolished to make way for more permanent and efficient structures. Historic Turkey Creek High School shares the characteristics of many schools constructed throughout Florida during the 1920s—usually in urban settings. The interior designs of the new schools reflected the latest and most “progressive” views on the proper designs for schools.

The rooms were spacious and designed to admit generous amounts of natural light and fresh air. In most cases central heating was installed, and larger facilities had cafeterias, libraries, and auditoriums to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning and to insure the overall health and welfare of the children. The Colonial Revival and Gothic Revival styles gained favor for the design of educational institutions during the early part of the twentieth century as being emblematic of the classical and scholastic traditions in learning. The Colonial Revival style was also linked with America’s national traditions, derived in part from the architectural character of such early institutions as the Federal style University of Virginia, designed by Thomas Jefferson.

The Historic Turkey Creek High School embodied at least some of the principals of “progressive” school design, which was very unusual for the design of rural schools in Florida during the 1920s. It had separate classrooms for the different grades and had an auditorium when it was completed in 1927. The auditorium space was reconfigured for classrooms upon the completion of a new junior high school building nearby in 1934. The new building had an auditorium used by both schools. Both natural and artificial lighting illuminated the major interior spaces, and large windows provided fresh air and helped cool the interior of the building during the warmer months. Although the rural school did not have central heating, all of the classrooms had school desks and blackboards. The plans for the school, drawn in 1926 (Attachment A), did not indicate spaces for restrooms or school offices. It was not unusual for rural schools in Florida to have outdoor toilets, since there was no reliable source of fresh water to allow the installation of interior plumbing, and the use of septic tanks was not yet common in rural areas.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Book 22, Page 71.

<sup>31</sup> During the 1940s, Historic Sites Specialist Carl Shiver attended a wood frame rural primary school that had outdoor toilets.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 1

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

---

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Andrews, Stephen D. "Brasshats and Baby Fingers: the Battle over Rural Education," Florida Historical Quarterly (Winter 1997), 303-325.

El Pavo. Annual of Turkey Creek High School.

Florida Gazetteer and Business Directory. Jacksonville, FL: R.L. Polk & Co., 1911-1925.

Hillsborough County, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Warranty Deed. Deed dated August 7, 1888 and filed June 6, 1889.

Hillsborough County, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Deed Book 22, Page 23.

Hillsborough County, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Deed Book 370, Page 498.

Historic Tampa Hillsborough County Preservation Board. "The Cultural Resources of the Unincorporated Portions of Hillsborough County," 1979.

Hillsborough County School Board Minutes, Books 1-3, 8, 22.

Isabel Preacher, Interview by Teresa Maio, April 25, 1997.

Plant City Enterprise. "Rural Schools Start Monday," June 8, 1928.

Robinson, Ernest L. History of Hillsborough County. St. Augustine, FL: The Record Company, 1928.

"School Building for Special School Tax District no. 19." Frank A. Winn, Architect, April 3, 1926.

Tampa Morning Tribune. "Outdated Laws and Customs Hinder Hillsborough Schools," October 1, 1946.

Tampa Morning Tribune. "Strawberry Schools Called 'Excuse for Child Labor,'" October 6, 1946.

Tampa Tribune. "Retired Architect Reviews Memories," September 7, 1952.

Federal Writer's Project. American Guide Series: Florida. Works Projects Administration, 1933.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 1

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

---

Verbal Boundary Description

That portion of the NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 in SEC 23, Lot 401 of Export Farms Unit No. 4, Plat Book 27, Page 79 in SEC 23 found at the southwest corner of Turkey Creek Road and Connell Road and bounded on the west by Building #10 (Student Personnel & Custodial Services) and on the south by Building #1 (Media Center, Administration) of Turkey Creek Middle School. It is further bounded on the east by Turkey Creek Road and on the north by vacant property that is part of the campus of Turkey Creek Middle School. As per Deed Book 222, Page 25 of the Records of Hillsborough County, Florida, dated February 14, 1908 and filed April 21, 1916. The boundaries are shown as a dashed line on the map of the Turkey Creek Middle School that accompanies this nomination proposal.

Boundary Justification

The above described boundaries encompass all of the physical resources associated with the Historic Turkey Creek High School. The boundaries are indicated on the accompanying site plan by a dashed line.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
PHOTOGRAPHS

---

1. Historic Turkey Creek High School
2. Turkey Creek Community (Hillsborough County), Florida
3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
4. 1999
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Main (East) Facade and North Elevation, Looking Southwest
7. Photo 1 of 14

**Items 1-2 are the same for all the remaining photographs.**

3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
4. 1999
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Main (East) Facade and South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo 2 of 14

3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
4. 1999
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Detail, Main (East) Facade, Looking Southwest
7. Photo 3 of 14

3. Photographer Unknown
4. c. 1936
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Main (East) Facade and South Elevation, Looking Northwest
7. Photo 4 of 14

3. Photographer Unknown
4. c. 1945
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Detail, Main (East) Facade with "Rhythm Band" Students on Steps, Looking West
7. Photo 5 of 14

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 2 HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
PHOTOGRAPHS

---

3. Photographer Unknown
  4. Mid-1950s
  5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
  6. Main (East) Facade and North Elevation, Looking Southwest
  7. Photo 6 of 14
- 
3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
  4. 1999
  5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
  6. Rear (West) Elevation and South Elevation, Looking Northeast
  7. Photo 7 of 14
- 
3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
  4. 1999
  5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
  6. South Elevation, View From Metal Fire Escape, Looking West
  7. Photo 8 of 14
- 
3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
  4. 1999
  5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
  6. North Elevation, View From Metal Fire Escape, Looking East
  7. Photo 9 of 14
- 
3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
  4. 1999
  5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
  6. Interior, First Floor, Looking East Along Hallway Toward Front Entrance
  7. Photo 10 of 14
- 
3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
  4. 1999
  5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
  6. Interior, First Floor, Southeast Classroom, Looking Northwest
  7. Photo 11 of 14



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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 3

HISTORIC TURKEY CREEK HIGH SCHOOL  
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FLORIDA  
PHOTOGRAPHS

---

3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
4. 1999
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Interior, Second Floor, Northeast Classroom, Looking Southeast
7. Photo 12 of 14

3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
4. 1999
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Interior, First Floor, Southwest Classroom, Looking Southeast
7. Photo 13 of 14

3. Photographer Ludo Van Den Bogaert
4. 1999
5. Ludo Van Den Bogaert, Plant City, Florida
6. Interior, Second Floor, Corridor, Looking West
7. Photo 14 of 14