

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Cheyenne High School

other names/site number: Central High School; Laramie County School District No. 1 Administration Building/48LA1012

2. Location

street & number: 2810 House Avenue

not for publication: N/A

city or town: Cheyenne

vicinity: N/A

state: Wyoming

code: 56

county: Laramie

code: 021

zip code: 82001

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.)

Claudia Kissely
Signature of certifying official

5/1/05
Date

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 commenting or other official

Date

[Signature]

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Linda McMillan _____ 8/22/05
 Signature of Keeper 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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	objects
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Public Schools in Cheyenne, Wyoming, from 1911 to 1954

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: school

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education Sub: education-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Sub: Late Gothic Revival (Collegiate Gothic)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: concrete

roof : concrete, built up tar and gravel

walls: reinforced concrete with face brick

other: terra cotta detailing

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)

- 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 a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat. Education
Cat. Architecture

Period of Significance: 1921-1954

Significant Dates: 1921 (building date)

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

Architect/Builder: William Dubois, architect/John W. Howard, contractor

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: City of Cheyenne Planning Office, Cheyenne, WY.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property: ca. 2.8 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>13</u>	<u>515175</u>	<u>4554635</u>

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

All of Block 15, Original City of Cheyenne

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

The boundary is the lots which the property occupies in Block 15 and includes structures, parking areas, playing fields/playgrounds, and landscaping.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Robert G. Rosenberg, Historian
organization: Rosenberg Historical Consultants
street & number: 739 Crow Creek Road
city or town: Cheyenne state: WY

date: 8/31/2004, revised 12/31/2004
telephone: (307)-632-1144
zip code: 82009

Property Owner

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

name: Laramie County School District No. 1
street & number: 2801 House Avenue
city or town: Cheyenne
state: WY zip code: 82001
telephone: (307)771-2100

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CHEYENNE HIGH SCHOOL
LARAMIE COUNTY, WYOMING

7. Description

Cheyenne High School is located at 2810 House Avenue in a residential neighborhood in the northern portion of the original City of Cheyenne, Wyoming. The facade or east side of the building fronts on a landscaped area between the school and Storey Gymnasium where House Avenue was formerly located. The building is bordered by West 29th street on the north and Warren Avenue on the west. The south side is bordered by parking, and the Gibson Clark Building is also located adjacent to the building in this direction. Cheyenne High School was constructed in 1921 and currently serves as the Administration Building for Laramie School District No. 1.

This brick school building represents the Collegiate Gothic style. The building is 250 feet north-south by 220 feet east-west. It consists of three stories and a partial basement; the walls are reinforced concrete with face brick. The building is distinguished by its terra cotta details, such as string courses, coping, window surrounds, and entrance portals. Two identical entrances are centered on the east side (facade). The entrances feature terra cotta beveled Tudor arches and recessed double wood doors, each with two square lights above a simple rectangular recessed panel. Above each door on the facade is a multi-light transom window shaped to the Tudor arch. The entrances are flanked by terra cotta pilasters and surmounted by terra cotta ornamental detailing. Similar entrances (minus some of the details, such as the multi-light transom) are located on the north, south, and west sides. Windows are generally paired or triple three-light units with terra cotta sills. A double terra cotta string course is located above the third-story windows and serves as a cornice, and a single terra cotta string course is located above the first-story windows. Shallow brick pilasters separate the window groupings on the first and second stories. Because the interior now has dropped ceilings, the topmost lights are not functional, but they are visible from the outside.

The symmetrical facade features an extension with stepped parapet at each end of the facade and two evenly-spaced shallower extensions containing the main entrances. The extended components at each end feature a large double rectangular panel (second and third stories) outlined in brick with terra cotta detailing at the corners and a terra cotta design near the top, and the first story contains three 3-light windows separated by narrow columns of brick and sharing a common sill.

The components located north and south of the entrances contain four triple 3-light windows on each of the three stories, aligned vertically. Symmetrically placed full-height advanced brick portions contain the main entrances on the first story and paired 3-light windows on the second and third stories. The second-story windows feature terra cotta labels and surrounds and terra cotta ornamental designs on the parapet. The center component located between the two entrances contains five paired 3-light windows on each story. A

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terra cotta sign above the double string course and centered in the facade is inscribed "High School District No. 1."

The north and south sides of the building are simplified versions of the facade. There is an entrance located in a centered extended component with stepped parapet, flanked by six sets of triple 3-light windows on each story. There are no brick pilasters on these sides. The first-story windows on the west end of the south side have been altered; the original windows have been replaced by five large glass-brick windows.

The west side of the building follows a similar design structure. Additions in 1937 at the northwest and southwest corners squared off the original T-shape plan, and another shallow addition was constructed in the 1950s. The additions are sympathetic to the original proportions, design, and materials of the original building.

The two main entrances are centered on the east. The first-story interior of the two main entrances feature terrazzo tile flooring. There were formerly interior wooden doors that have been removed, but the multi-light transoms remains. The terrazzo tile floors continue throughout the first floor. Hallways are located around a central auditorium, and classrooms are located on both sides of the hallway. The walls in the hallways are plaster with charcoal-colored granite/marble baseboard moldings. There are two sets of original wood trophy display cases with ornate detailing near the entrances. The original ceilings are now covered with dropped acoustic ceilings. These more recent ceilings cover the upper portions of the window bays. The central auditorium appears nearly original with two-story tiered seating on the east side, individual folding wooden seats, a raised stage with a hardwood floor on the west side, original plaster ceiling with painted beams, brackets, and twelve globe lights. Stairwells to the upper stories have concrete and steel steps, steel square newel posts and balustrades. Some of the stairways have wooden railings. The second floor has linoleum tile-covered floors, dropped acoustic tile ceilings, numerous original five-panel, one-light wooden doors with hardware, and several of the doors retain the transoms (no glass). There are four entrances to the back of the auditorium. The third floor retains some exposed original hardwood floors (northwest hall), but most of the floor is covered with linoleum tile. However, the original wood base molding is still in place. The original high ceilings and lights remain on this floor, but some of the classrooms have dropped acoustic tile ceilings. Most of the doors are original wood panel doors with transoms. The building currently serves as office space for the Laramie County School District No. 1 Administration.

The physical integrity of this building is excellent; additions were made to the northwest and southwest corners of the original building in the 1930s and are therefore well over fifty years old. The 1955 addition is a smaller component at the rear of the building and is approaching fifty years old.

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8. Significance

National Register criteria

Cheyenne High School (also known as Central High School and Laramie County School District No. 1 Administration Building) is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. It is eligible under Criterion A, because it is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The building reflects the primary importance the Cheyenne community attached to the education of its youth from its inception as a railroad town in 1867. Schools represented the widespread belief in the value of universal education. Education was one of the first critical issues dealt with by Cheyenne's first citizens and by the first Wyoming territorial legislature. The formation of school districts and the building of schools reflected how Cheyenne's citizens felt about the permanency of their community and their faith in its future. In short, "A community with a school was a community with a future" (Gulliford 1984:160). Cheyenne High School is a substantial brick masonry structure built with community pride and permanency in mind, and which incorporates the standard designs advocated by the early twentieth century educational reformers. This school was also used for public assemblies and civic celebrations, a place for the community to come together.

The building is also eligible under Criterion C, because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. The Cheyenne High School is a well-preserved example of the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture. It is one of only three remaining educational structures in Cheyenne to represent this style (the other two being the former McCormick Junior High School, now the Emerson Office Building, and Johnson Junior High School), all of which Dubois designed alone or in partnership with Frederick Hutchinson Porter, another prominent Cheyenne architect.

Historic background

Public education was a primary concern of Cheyenne's citizens from its beginnings in 1867-68 as a "track town" along the first transcontinental railroad, the Union Pacific. The Territory of Wyoming was created in 1868, and Cheyenne was designated the temporary territorial capital. Cheyenne had the largest population of any city in the territory, and once designated as the seat of government, this position was vehemently defended by its residents. From about 1875 to 1887, Cheyenne enjoyed a boom period based largely on cattle ranching. Spectacular profits were made during the 1880s, and by 1884, the population of Cheyenne had soared to 7,000. It had evolved from a rough-hewn railroad town to a modern city. Cheyenne became the state capital when Wyoming won statehood in 1890.

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As early as October 1867, the local paper encouraged the development of a school for the 120 to 125 school-age children residing in Cheyenne. The City Council appointed a committee to arrange for a school building, and the first public school in Wyoming was constructed in late 1867. School District No. 1 was organized in November 1868, and covered an area of 270 square miles and included six rural schools. By 1874, the Cheyenne school had an enrollment of 131. Teachers were paid about \$50 per month, and school terms lasted four to five months a year. A law was passed by the Wyoming Legislature in 1869 making school attendance compulsory, although it was difficult to enforce.

In 1886 Cheyenne adopted a two-track high school program that allowed pupils to choose between a college prep course or a "business" course of study. Report cards were first issued in 1901. By 1905-06, the Cheyenne schools had a student population of 1,446 and employed 36 teachers. Cheyenne High School had an enrollment of 171 students and graduated 23 in 1906. In 1913-14 agriculture was added to the curriculum, and the city schools included Manual Training for boys and Domestic Science for girls. Cheyenne's oldest remaining school building was constructed during this general time period (Churchill School, 1911).

The post-World War I years saw the construction of some of Cheyenne's finest remaining schools. Architect William Dubois designed several schools at this time, including the new Cheyenne High School and Gibson Clark School in about 1921, located at 2810 and 2710 House Avenue.

Cheyenne High School is located on a portion (approximately 2.8 acres) of a 6.58-acre parcel purchased by the school district for \$7000 in December 1920, on which to build the "new" Cheyenne High School, the Gibson Clark School, and eventually Storey Gymnasium. Construction began on September 30, 1921, and the new three-story brick building was ready for occupancy on October 6, 1922. The building was designed by notable Cheyenne architect William Dubois, who at that time was also serving as the Treasurer of the Board of Education. It was constructed by contractor John W. Howard at a final cost of \$425,000. The new facility was designed to house 700 students, and the center of the building was occupied by an auditorium on the first floor and an auditorium balcony on the second floor. These components were surrounded by classrooms. The third floor was composed of a cafeteria, laboratories, and classrooms. The boys' and girls' gymnasium, locker rooms, and furnace rooms, were located in the basement.

This new facility replaced the original Cheyenne High School, built in 1890, at the southeast corner of West 22nd Street and Central Avenue. At the time of its construction, many citizens opposed the location of the new high school, because they believed that it was too far removed from the center of the city. However, as the town rapidly expanded to the north, it was surrounded by residential neighborhoods, including Lakeview and Capitol North within the Original City plat, the Hellman Heights Addition (1918), and north of Pershing

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Boulevard, the Pershing Heights Addition (1918, 1923), Moore Haven Heights Addition (1923), and the Airport Addition (1929).

The 1922-23 school year began in the old facilities, but the new school was ready for the students by October. The importance of Cheyenne's only public high school to the community is reflected in an open house held for the public by the school board. The third period classes were held in the evening so that the citizens of Cheyenne could observe the different classes in session. A dance followed, and refreshments were served in the cafeteria. B.H. McIntosh was the first principal of the new high school, and he administered a staff of thirty-one teachers in fourteen departments. In addition to the core subjects such as English, science, social science, and math, the school offered courses in art, music, physical education, mechanical arts, a military department, a commercial department, and normal training. The first class of seventy-one seniors graduated from the new high school on June 7, 1923. The graduating students and their families filled the new auditorium and listened to the main address given by Dr. A.G. Crane, then president of the University of Wyoming. The relatively isolated location of the new school was evident from the fact that students could watch planes landing and taking off from the nearby Cheyenne Airfield, with a view as yet unobstructed by houses.

The Architect

William R. Dubois studied at the Chicago School of Architecture in the late 1800s and received his architectural training at a firm in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In about 1900, his firm sent him to Cheyenne as the supervising architect for the construction of the Carnegie Library. Dubois soon established his own practice in Cheyenne.

During a career in Cheyenne that spanned forty years, Dubois designed a wide range of residential, commercial, industrial, and public buildings in Cheyenne and across Wyoming. His buildings exhibited varied architectural styles and influences, such as Beaux Arts Classicism and Romanesque Revival. He proved his ability to master evolving styles through the decades; by the early 1940s, his buildings reflected the very latest in styles, such as Streamline (Art) Moderne. It is impossible to understate the impact of this architect on Cheyenne and Wyoming. His massive commercial buildings in the Cheyenne downtown historic district lent the young town its character of permanence and reliability, and as the decades passed, his ability to adapt to changes in architectural styles gave Cheyenne the appearance of modernity.

Almost every Cheyenne student in the early and middle years of the twentieth century passed through one of the many Dubois-designed public schools. His schools, as well as his other public and commercial buildings, reflect the evolving range of Dubois' architectural styles. The oldest remaining public school in

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Cheyenne is the Churchill School, designed by Dubois in 1911. He also designed the Gibson Clark School in 1922, using a simple and clean version of Collegiate Gothic. He used a similar style in 1923 for Johnson Junior High School on the South Side. The premier example of the Collegiate Gothic style in Cheyenne is Lulu McCormick Junior High School (now the Emerson State Office Building), on which he collaborated with Frederick H. Porter. In 1940, Dubois designed his last public school, Corlett Elementary. By then, he was using elements of the Streamline (Art) Moderne architectural style, which he also applied to the Eagles' Building and the Greyhound Bus Depot (1940), both in Cheyenne.

Cheyenne High School, 1930s to the present

Cheyenne, like the rest of America, sank into the Great Depression in the late 1920s. A series of droughts in the 1930s affected the livestock industry and resulted in crop failures. The oil and coal industries also suffered, and the Union Pacific laid off workers. Many of Cheyenne's banks also failed. Despite the Depression, a two-story brick addition was constructed onto the west side of Cheyenne High School in 1937-38. The student population had swelled to 900 students in a building designed for 750. On July 31, the Board of School Trustees voted to call a bond election for the \$170,000 addition. In September the voters approved the bond issue by a four-to-one margin. When bids were let and opened, the lowest bid exceeded the bonds by nearly \$32,000, so that a second vote was held for additional funding. William Dubois also designed the addition, and the F.J. Kirchof Construction Company was awarded the building contract. The work was accepted by the Board of Trustees on December 13, 1937. The addition, with the exception of the swimming pool, was ready for use by January 3, 1938. The final cost of the addition totaled \$219,683. It consisted of forty-two rooms, twenty-two of which were classrooms, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, an armory, wood and metal shops, and a swimming pool in the basement. An open house was held for the new facility on three different nights on January 17, 19 and 20, 1938. The overwhelming approval of the original and additional bond issues and the three-day open house indicate high level of interest in and support of the school by the Cheyenne community.

World War II and the resulting war buildup rescued America and the Cheyenne economy from the Great Depression. Fort D.A. Russell (renamed Fort Francis E. Warren) was chosen as the location of a Quartermaster Replacement Center, which had a tremendous positive impact on Cheyenne's economy. Although school construction was suspended during the war years, building resumed in the mid-1940s as Cheyenne's population continued to grow for a variety of reasons, including the proximity of F.E. Warren Air Force Base, the growth of the Cheyenne Airport which was still on the transcontinental air route, and the establishment and expansion of the Frontier Oil Refinery on the South Side of Cheyenne.

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In 1950, the Storey Gymnasium was built adjacent to Cheyenne High School, completing the construction of buildings within the 28th Street complex. By then, the city had gradually grown up around what was once considered an isolated location, and there was little room for expansion or additional parking.

By the 1955-56 school year, the student population of Cheyenne High School increased to over 1300. Therefore, a third story was added to the 1938 addition at a cost of \$68,688 and included three new classrooms and enlarged the existing cafeteria. However, by 1960, the burgeoning population required the construction of a second high school. Meanwhile, students had to attend the high school in shifts. As a result, Cheyenne East High School was constructed and opened on September 5, 1961, halving the number of students attending Cheyenne High School. In 1960, the interior of Cheyenne High School was modernized with remodeled classrooms, new lighting, updated laboratory facilities, and desks. In the fall of 1976, a second high school was completed, the current Central High. Rather than razing the old facilities, the old high school building was preserved to house the Administrative offices for School District No.1, a function which it continues to serve.

Today the Cheyenne High School building remains an imposing Cheyenne landmark. As the city's only public high school from 1922 to 1961, thousands of Cheyenne citizens attended school and graduated from this institution. For four decades, the school involved the families of the students and the community, encouraging their attendance and participation in the many activities of the school year – dramatic presentations, musical concerts, and of course competitive athletic events. The building still functions as an integral part of School District No. 1 and hosts a variety of public and civic events in its ample auditorium. Despite periodic additions and interior renovations (most over fifty years of age) to meet the changing needs of the student body and community, the building retains good integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling, association, setting, and location.

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Section 9. Major Bibliographical References

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- Haley, John Paul Jr. *A History of Laramie County School District No. 1, Cheyenne, Wyoming*. Master's Thesis Prepared for the Department of Education, University of South Dakota, 1956.
- Ittelson, Ellen. *Historic Building Inventory Record*. Westside Survey, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 1986.
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