

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 93000982

Date Listed: 9/21/93

Leon High School
Property Name

Leon
County

FL
State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patrick Andrews

Signature of the Keeper

9/21/93

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Verbal Boundary Description:

The Verbal Boundary Description is revised to read: The property is bounded to the west by the Brokaw-McDougall property and the east curbline of N. Meridan Street, to the south by the north curbline of East Tennessee Street, to the east by the rear property lines of the residences on Talaflo Street, to the northwest by Miccosukee Road, and to the north by the rear and side property lines of the residences off of East Georgia Street.

This information was confirmed with Bill Thurston of the Florida SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

982

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AUG 20 1993

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 an 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 Leon High School

other names/site number Leon County High School/8LE316

2. Location

street & number 550 East Tennessee Street n/a not for publication

city or town Tallahassee n/a vicinity

state Florida code FL county Leon code 073 zip code 32308

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.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 8/9/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
State of 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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Patrick Andrews

9/21/93

Name of Property

County and State

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	5	buildings
1	0	sites
0	2	structures
0	0	objects
3	7	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(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: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals:

Italian Renaissance

Mediterranean Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

Concrete

roof Ceramic Tile

other Terra Cotta

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1937-1943

Significant Dates

1937

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Elliott, M. Leo, Architect

Monk, T. A., Builder

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.

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Leon High School
Name of Property

Leon Co., FL
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 29 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	761450	3371310
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2	16	762030	3371330

3	16	762040	3371040
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4	16	761460	3371020

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 Lindsay Brown & Vivian Young/Barbara E. Mattick, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date August 1993

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 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 Leon County School Board

street & number 520 S. Appleyard Drive telephone (904) 487-7100

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32304

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 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.

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Leon High School, Tallahassee,
Leon County, FL

Section number 7 Page 1

SUMMARY

Leon High School, located at 550 East Tennessee Street in Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida, is a three story, E-shaped, Mediterranean Revival/Italian Renaissance building. Built in 1936-1937, it was designed by leading Florida architect M. Leo Elliott, with T. A. Monk of Bradenton, Florida as the contractor. It is masonry, with a concrete foundation and watertable, and a red brick exterior accented with terra cotta friezes and panels. Its low pitched, hipped roof is covered with variegated red barrel tile. Most of the windows are single or grouped 6/6, double hung sash and awning windows in combination; there are also windows with 12/12 and 8/8 configurations over the main entrance on the east elevation.

The contributing resources include the original main building, industrial arts building, and athletic field. Noncontributing resources include buildings and structures constructed after 1937: 1965 Music and Science Building, 1992 Music and Science Building, 1965 Gymnasium, 1983 Graphic Arts Building, c1945 Old Gym, and c1965 covered walkways.

SETTING

Leon High School is located in an area historically known as McDougall's Pasture. This formerly rural area was associated with the adjacent c1856 Brokaw-McDougall House (NR 1972) and was a field where townspeople pastured their dairy cows. In 1927, the Leon County Board of Public Instruction purchased 31.7 acres of McDougall's Pasture. In the summer of 1934, a baseball diamond was built on the land, and two years later, construction commenced on the new school.

The school building was built on a hilltop in the southwestern part of the parcel (Photo 1), overlooking terraced hills that led down to an athletic field in the former pasture to the east (Photo 2). One old live oak tree in front, and several original cypress trees around the building remain. In addition, there are a young live oak tree to the southwest of the building, and several palm trees to the east. Narrow parking lots are located east and south of the building (Photos 3 & 4). The school property is bounded by residential neighborhoods on the north and east, and the Brokaw-McDougall House on the west.

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The athletic field (Photo 5), laid out at the time of construction of Leon High School, has undergone numerous changes. It now includes contemporary bleachers, a track, a series of tennis courts, a softball field, a parking lot, and a number of small concrete block buildings to store equipment and supplies. The setting has changed somewhat because of these modifications and the widening of East Tennessee Street which resulted in an increase in traffic and commercial activity. In spite of these changes, however, Leon High School continues to provide an attractive open green space in Tallahassee's downtown area, and the athletic field is considered a contributing site.

PRESENT PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

MAIN BUILDING

Exterior

Leon High School is a three story, masonry building with a red brick exterior. It is Mediterranean Revival in style with particularly strong Italian Renaissance features. The main block of the building is L-shaped with hip roofed pavilions in the center of the main (east) facade, at the north and west ends, and the southeast corner (Photo 1). Each pavilion features elaborate terra cotta friezes, with cream background and red and blue painted detailing, and broad eaves with rafter tails. The gabled roofs between the pavilions have undecorated rooflines.

Central and north wings provide space for an auditorium and a cafeteria respectively. The auditorium wing terminates in a tower for stage and mechanical equipment. Although the cafeteria and auditorium wings feature decorative architectural details, they are much simpler in design and ornamentation than the south and east elevations. The north wing, originally only one story, was raised to two stories in 1957.

Decorative masonrywork using various brick patterns and terra cotta panels distinguishes the public (south, east, and north) elevations of the building. On these elevations, the first story is dominated by horizontal banded courses of brick. A wide, ashlar belt course, with a soldier course of brick above, separates the first and second stories (Photo 6). Decorative brick work in the form of squares of header bricks, with concrete squares in each corner, separate the second and third stories, and bricks arranged in a basketweave pattern are located under

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some of the third story windows (Photo 7). Original copper gutters and downspouts, some with the inscription "R. O. Cooper Ironworks, Tallahassee, Fla.," remain on the building.

The main entrance (Photo 6), a three-arched arcade, is located in the central pavilion on the east elevation. The original doors have been replaced with contemporary doors, but the historic fanlights remain. A band of soldier course brick around the doors and fanlights offers simple ornamentation. On either side of the arcade are two 6/6 windows, surmounted by terra cotta panels with swags. Five terra cotta panels with winged angel motifs (Photo 8) separate the five central windows of the second and third stories, which have 8/8 and 12/12 windows respectively (Photo 6).

The recessed bays between the central and end pavilions (Photo 3) are dominated by banks of relatively unadorned 6/6 windows. A belt course separates the first and second floor, and a band of decorative squares of header bricks separates the second and third floors. There are no decorative friezes or brackets.

The south elevation (Photo 4), the most visible to the public, faces East Tennessee Street. From the hilltop, the terrain slopes down to the street (Photo 9). There are two end pavilions flanking a recessed bay. The pavilions each feature a projecting one story vestibule with an arched entrance. Each vestibule is topped with a cornice in line with and of the same design as the belt course that encircles the building between the first and second stories. The east pavilion has four 6/6 windows on each floor, with rectangles of basketweave brickwork below the second and third floor windows. A small four-light window and a 6/6 window with three-light transom and terra cotta panel with cartouche are located above the vestibule (Photo 10). The west pavilion is similar, with some slight differences in fenestration. The central bay features four banks of windows on each floor and similar decorative features.

The east end of the north elevation (Photo 7) is the three-story pavilion at the north end of the main block. To the west of the pavilion is a two-story north wing. The first floor of the extension is original and contains the historic cafeteria and kitchen. The original first floor roof cornice now serves as a belt course between the first and second floors. The second story of the extension is a masonry, 1957 classroom addition with

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banks of aluminum awning windows (Photo 11). Above each window grouping is a rectangular concrete panel. The wing is surmounted by a simple concrete cornice. The second story addition is cantilevered over a driveway west of the end of the historic first floor.

The west elevation is the least visible and most irregular side of the E-shaped plan. The northernmost segment is contemporary masonry cantilevered over the driveway (Photo 11). It has an outdoor stairway and a six-light aluminum awning window on the second floor. The south side of the cafeteria wing features the historic first floor with 6/6 windows (Photo 12). The non-historic second story features five banks of aluminum windows, and a smaller aluminum window to the west. The first floor of the inside spine of the "E" has a central double door with a four-light transom and shed roof with bracket supports. All three floors feature two sets of triple 6/6 windows with three-light transoms. There is no ornamentation at the roofline.

The one-story auditorium comprises the middle wing of the "E" (Photo 1). About three feet above grade there is a narrow concrete belt course surmounted by a row of soldier course bricks. The north elevation is dominated by six large, arched windows (Photo 13). Five of the windows have a 6/6/6 configuration, six-light sidelights, and a fanlight. There is a rectangular concrete panel below each window. The sixth window is 6/6 with a fanlight and sidelights, with an entrance door below. A concrete belt course and roof cornice cap the building. The windows have keystones and are separated by pilasters.

At the western end of the auditorium is the historic mechanical tower for the stage (Photo 1). This utilitarian tower has a slender concrete belt course surmounted by a soldier course at the watertable line, and slender concrete belt course and cornice at the roofline as its only ornamentation (Photo 14). The windows are 6/6 with three-light transoms. There is an exterior stair to a second floor entrance. The west end of the tower is lower and has a central bank of three windows and a contemporary door to the north. The second floor has the same configuration of windows. The south side of the lower tower has one entrance door with a six-light transom and a shed roof with brackets on the first floor, and one window on the second floor.

The south side of the auditorium wing probably originally matched the north side. Now, however, it is partially obscured

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by a one story addition which obscures five of the six original arched windows (Photo 15). The one story addition, a media center, is clearly contemporary, but was designed to be compatible with the original parts of the building. It features raised brick bands to complement the first floor of the historic building, and has a central door. Below the roofline is a series of twelve square, single-light windows. Above this addition the historic spine of the "E" is visible. It has no ornamental details, featuring only two sets of triple 6/6 windows with three-light transoms on the second and third floors.

The north side of the south wing has four banks of five windows on the second and third floors (Photo 16). The second and third floors are separated by decorative squares of header brick. The north elevation of the pavilion at the west end has one window on both the second and third floors. In place of other windows there are elongated rectangular patterns in the brickwork. The wall is also divided by a brick ventilation shaft. The west elevation of the pavilion has a central pair of windows flanked by bands of five windows at all stories. The central windows at the third story have been blocked in.

Interior

The main lobby (Photo 17), a square area adjoining the north-south main hallway, is highlighted by decorative brackets at the ceiling, and wrought iron, quarter turned staircases with two landings (Photo 18) at the north and south ends of the west wall. A cast concrete lion, the mascot of the school, is located in the middle of the lobby.

Other significant interior features include water fountains surrounded by colorful ceramic tiles (Photo 19), black tile baseboards, black-and-white tile washroom floors (Photo 20), arched telephone niches, and wooden closets in many of the classrooms (Photo 21).

The historic 75 x 110 foot auditorium retains its open, rectangular configuration (Photo 22). Curved stairs and doors with bracketed cornices are located on either side of the stage. The original seating has been replaced, and the current capacity is 1099. Original plaster ceiling brackets were removed and put in storage after one fell during an assembly. The five original windows on the north wall remain intact, while four of the five windows on the south wall have been partially blocked.

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The historic cafeteria (Photo 23), located on the first floor of the north wing, also retains its open, rectangular configuration and airy fenestration. Dropped ceilings and a new tile floor were installed in 1983.

The former Lilla Lewis Library on the third floor of the main block of the building has exposed beams across the sixteen foot ceilings, and original plaster ceiling brackets. According to tradition, the flooring originally had cork underneath to buffer the sound. The library was divided into classrooms and offices after the new media center opened in 1965.

When air conditioning was installed in 1983, ten-foot dropped ceilings were added throughout the building and florescent lighting was installed; the original ceilings remain intact above. In compliance with fire code requirements, the historic doors have been replaced throughout the building, but they, as well as the decorative plasterwork from the auditorium, are in storage on the campus.

1936-1937 INDUSTRIAL ARTS BUILDING

Constructed at the same time as the main Leon High School building, the one story, rectangular, brick Industrial Arts Building is located north of the main building (See Site Plan and Photo 1). It has 6/6 windows and a cornice that replicates the first story ashlar belt course on the main building (Photo 24). The main facade faces south. From east to west, it features an entrance with an eight-light transom, a set of three 6/6 windows with security grills, a small shed roof brick addition and a pair of 6/6 windows with grills. The interior features an instruction room, drafting room (Photo 25), large workshop, and several small offices. The open, industrial architectural integrity of the interior remains intact, and is complemented by the old machinery in the large workshop (Photo 26).

The building was altered slightly with the construction of a small, shed roofed addition which covered three historic windows, and the installation of a contemporary door in place of a historic window at the west end of the south elevation (Photos 1 & 24).

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NON-HISTORIC ADDITIONS TO THE MAIN BUILDING

To accommodate additional students, and to add more specialized facilities to the main building, several alterations have been made to Leon High School. Without exception, these alterations have been made to the less visible north and west sides of the building, leaving the most public south and east elevations unchanged.

1957 Classroom Addition

In 1957, a second floor designed by Prentiss Huddleston and Associates was added to the area above the cafeteria and kitchen on the north elevation of the building (Photo 11). The historic first floor remains unchanged, while the new second story features banks of aluminum windows which in configuration match the solids and voids of the historic first floor. This brick addition continues further west of the historic first floor, and is cantilevered over a driveway.

1965 Media Center Addition

The Media Center (Photo 15), constructed in 1965 and designed by the architectural firm of Barret Daffin and Colony, was constructed by Albritton-Williams, Inc. It is a one story addition located on the west elevation between the auditorium and the south classrooms. Of brick, it features banded courses which complement those of the historic first floor of Leon High. It has a central entrance door, and a series of twelve square, one-light windows at the roofline.

Covered Walkways

Two non-historic covered walkways (Photos 4 & 7) are attached to the building. The first is attached to the west vestibule of the south elevation, and connects the school to the Music and Science Building to the west. The second walkway, attached to the eastern vestibule of the north elevation, connects to the 1965 Gymnasium Building. These walkways with flat roofs supported by brick piers were probably constructed at the same time as the numerous improvements that were made to the campus in 1965.

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NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

1965 Music and Science Building

Located to the west of the main building, the 1965 Music and Science Building (Photo 27) is connected to the main building via a covered walkway. The architectural firm of Barret Daffin and Colony designed the one story, brick building, which was constructed by Albritton-Williams, Inc.

1992 Music and Science Building

Situated to the west of the 1965 Music and Science building is a facility constructed in 1992 to serve that same purpose (Photo 28). This new building was designed by Clemons Rutherford and Associates and constructed by Culpepper Construction. This one story, masonry building is dominated by a massive hipped roof, covered with imitation barrel tile. The eaves are ornamented with small brackets. The building is capped with a cupola. Two colors of brick are used in the building - red brick which forms the body of the building, and a darker brownish brick which is laid in a pattern to suggest a watertable and pilasters.

1965 Gymnasium - "The Lion's Den"

Designed by Barret Daffin and Colony and constructed by Albritton-Williams, Inc., the 1965 brick and concrete gymnasium is located immediately north of the main building. It is dominated by a large box cornice at the roofline (Photo 29).

1983 Graphic Arts Building

In 1983, the new Graphic Arts Building (Photo 30) was constructed by Culpepper Construction Company, and designed by Mays LeRoy Gray. The one story brick, gable-roofed building faces south, and backs onto Miccosukee Road. The south elevation features three sets of three banded windows surrounded by concrete panels. The building is dominated by its projecting box cornice of anodized aluminum.

Old Gym

The Old Gym, constructed c1945-1950, is a gable-roofed, corrugated metal building (Photo 31).

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SUMMARY

Leon High School, located on East Tennessee Street in Tallahassee, Florida, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Education, and under Criterion C for its Mediterranean Revival/Italian Renaissance style and its association with M. Leo Elliott, one of Florida's most prominent architects in the first half of the twentieth century. Constructed in 1936-1937 with a federal grant and loan from the Public Works Administration, and local funds raised through a bond issuance, Leon High School was the only high school for white students in the city until the construction of Rickards High School in 1963. Leon High School is a landmark building in downtown Tallahassee, and has played a prominent role in educating many of the leaders of this community and state. It is also the oldest school in Leon County that still serves its original purpose.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Tallahassee and Leon County

Established in 1824 as the capital of the Territory of Florida, in 1845 Tallahassee became the capital of the State. Since its beginning, it has also served as the seat of Leon County. In its early years, the economy of Tallahassee and Leon County were based on agriculture, with cotton being "king." It was not until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that state government and higher education came to play an increasingly important role. Two institutions for higher learning were established in Tallahassee in the nineteenth century: in 1857 the West Florida Seminary (later to become Florida State University) was established for white students, and the Florida State Normal and Industrial School for Negro Youth (later to become Florida A & M University) was created in 1887. Both of these institutions, in conjunction with state government which underwent tremendous growth beginning in the 1920s, eventually dominated Leon County, replacing agriculture as the community's economic base.

The Public School System of Leon County

During much of the antebellum period, there were only private schools in Leon County. Established in 1827, the Leon

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Academy provided elementary education for white boys. Several other private schools for whites were established over the years; many of them were in the rural areas and were maintained and operated by planters in the region. No schools for black students were opened until the adoption of the School Law of 1869, which required Florida counties to provide public schools for blacks. On April 16, 1869, the Leon County Board of Public Instruction was instituted to accomplish this goal. Leon County's first public high school for blacks, Lincoln Academy (later Lincoln High School), was constructed that year.

The next major step forward in education came in 1885, when Leon County established special school tax districts with the authority to levy three mills for public education. District Number One was created in Tallahassee, and the county constructed its first public high school for whites, named Leon Academy after the early private school. This \$7,000, two-story, brick building with four large rooms, two class rooms, six cloak closets, was located on Tennessee Street between Duval and Bronough Streets. By 1890, because of a shortage of space, Leon Academy was doubled in size. In 1905, the Academy, which previously had also served primary grades, became Leon County High School.

In 1910, construction began on a new building for Leon High School. Located on Park Avenue between Duval and Bronough Streets, this three story brick building cost \$40,000 and was dedicated on May 16, 1911. In 1911 there were seventy-six schools in Leon County, most of them small, one-room school houses. There were two other high schools in rural Leon County, one in the community of Chaires and the other in Woodville, but the second Leon High School continued as the city's only high school for whites.

During the early twentieth century, consolidation of white schools became an accepted concept in Leon County. Consolidated schools would have a variety of specially trained teachers to teach single grades, and specialized topics such as art, music and vocational courses. The move toward consolidation accompanied a major growth in the local population. During the 1920s Leon County's population grew by 30%, from 18,059 to 23,476, while Tallahassee's grew 90%, from 5,638 to 10,700. A series of bond issues was passed to build new white consolidated schools, including Caroline Brevard Elementary in 1925, Ft. Braden Elementary in 1926, Sealey Memorial Elementary in 1929, Chaires Elementary in 1930, Leon High School in 1936-1937, and

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Miccosukee Elementary and Woodville Elementary in 1941. Schools for black students did not receive the same attention. The only masonry black school constructed during that period was the fourth Lincoln High School, built on Brevard Street in 1929.

New Deal Programs

In response to the national economic crisis of the Depression, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt developed a series of economic recovery programs dubbed the "New Deal." In 1933, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) began to oversee the new public building program. Nationally, over \$700 million was spent on 1300 new buildings. The Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, or Public Works Administration, was charged by Congress with two principal objectives: to create employment by government expenditures for labor, and to create this employment "by the building throughout the country of sound public works of recognized and lasting value."

In Florida, by June 1940, the WPA had built 245 new schools and improved 208, and had constructed 6,206 miles of roadway, 146 parks and undertaken numerous other public projects. Leon County took advantage of the Public Works Administration's grant and loan program to build Leon High School. Other projects in Leon County included the Federal Courthouse (1936, NR 1979) on Park Avenue, the old Armory (1935) on Monroe Street, the Old Jail (1936) on Gaines Street, and numerous buildings on the two college campuses.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

On March 8, 1927, the Board of Public Instruction of Leon County purchased 31.7 acres of the McDougal Pasture for \$22,000. In 1928 the community approved the issuance of bonds to build a new high school, but the vote was invalidated by a subsequent constitutional amendment that revised the process for the approval of bonds, and only a baseball diamond was constructed on the property in 1934.

Mode L. Stone is credited with being a driving force behind the ultimate funding of the new Leon High School. As supervising principal of Tallahassee's public schools, and the principal directly in charge of Leon High School, he began a systematic campaign to unite the community in a drive for the new building. In 1934 he pointed out the inefficiency of the second Leon High,

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noting that the lighting was poor, plumbing was condemned, and the building was infested with vermin. In addition, the school was too small to meet contemporary needs. He contacted the Public Works Administration supervisor for Florida, and convinced him to support the construction of a new Leon High School if the city passed a bond issue. Stone then spoke to groups of parents about the need for a new school.

In November of 1935 after months of preparation, the Board of Public Instruction called for a December 5th 1935 voter referendum on the construction of the new Leon County High School. The construction and equipping of the school would be funded by the sale of negotiable interest bearing coupon bonds. With the passage of the referendum, the Board met to authorize issuance of the bonds. LeRoy Collins, a graduate of Leon High School and later Governor of Florida, prepared the Board's application for the grant and loan to the Emergency Administration of Public Works. In 1936, the construction of Leon High School became PWA project Florida 1024-R and the PWA provided a loan of \$250,000, and a grant of \$191,314.

M. Leo Elliott had been chosen by the Board to be the architect of Leon High School, and T. A. Monk Inc. was chosen as the contractor with a bid of \$392,725. Construction began on April 1, 1936. In October, the School Board made application to the PWA for an additional grant of \$14,673. Originally, construction was to be completed December 15, 1936, but due to the unanticipated need to construct 13,000 feet of piling as foundation, the completion date was extended to February 1, 1937. The final cost of the building was \$481,202.50.

Leon High School was Bradenton builder T. A. Monk's thirty-sixth school building, and was "the largest and one of the most modern of the lot." When first built, the school contained about 50 classrooms, a cafeteria, kitchen, library, band room, and 75 x 110 foot auditorium. A 1936 description of the building revealed: "All stairways will bear tile tread. Floors will be asphalt and tile throughout the building. The tile roof will be of variegated shades. The walls are red brick." The building had steam heat and a modern intercom in each room. All of the building materials, with the exception of the steel and light hardware, were from Florida.

The new Leon High School was dedicated on May 28, 1937, with Mode L. Stone's words: "We do not dedicate here today, mere

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brick, mortar and steel. We dedicate this to the service and improvement of human beings and mankind, where we will learn to serve the Lord." Two services were held, one in the morning for the students, and one in the evening for family and friends. It included short talks on the building, "said to be one of the most modern and complete in the South." A special ceremony was also held to dedicate the Lilla Lewis Library, located on the third floor. The following Sunday, the new high school hosted its first commencement exercises for 67 graduating Leon High School seniors. The new school opened for classes in the fall.

According to former Principal Mike Conley, the new Leon High School initially received much negative criticism. Some thought it was far too large, and would never be more than half full. Many were critical of the close to half a million dollar price tag for the project. In the subsequent fifty-five years, however, the student population has grown to fill Leon and several other high schools in the community, and has necessitated several expansions to the school plant. Numerous changes occurred in 1965 as a result of a bond issue for improvements to the school. The Leon County school system was integrated in 1967. Lincoln High School, the traditionally black high school, was closed that year, and its building was later turned into a community center. A new Lincoln High School was constructed on another site in 1973. Two other Leon County public high schools also serve this community, Rickards High School, which opened in 1963, and the Amos P. Godby High School, which opened in 1967.

For many years the auditorium and Ruby Diamond Auditorium at Florida State University were the only large facilities in town, and the high school auditorium was used for many community events.

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ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Architect M. Leo Elliott

M. Leo Elliott was born on April 4, 1886 in Woodstock, New York. He began his work in Tampa, Florida, when he moved there in 1907 to work on designs for the Centro Asturiano Club and the YMCA building. The partnership of Bonfoey and Elliott, Architects was officially formed on September 2, 1907. The next major project for the firm was the design of the Tampa City Hall. The partnership lasted for several years until it was dissolved at the onset of World War I. After the war, Elliott formed a new company, M. Leo Elliott, Inc.

Throughout his career, Elliott designed many public buildings of architectural merit. Many of his works were schools, including three in 1926 in the Sarasota area, which are now listed in the National Register of Historic Places: South Side School (NR 1984); Bay Haven School (NR 1984); and Sarasota High School (NR 1984). Elliott also designed the Old Jail (1936) in Tallahassee, located on East Gaines Street. This project, another Leon County PWA project, was constructed by T. A. Monk of Bradenton. Elliott designed in a variety of styles, including Mediterranean Revival, Italian Renaissance, Collegiate Gothic and Moderne.

Mediterranean Revival Style

Leon High School exhibits many Mediterranean Revival style features with a strong emphasis on the Italian Renaissance style, one of the Mediterranean-influenced architectural styles that were particularly popular in Florida during the 1920s and 1930s. Italian Renaissance architecture was used as a domestic style in the 1880s and 1890s, but gained its widest use after masonry veneering techniques were perfected after the First World War. It was popular from c1890-1935. Characteristics of the style include symmetrical form; recessed entry porches, often with arches; low-pitched, hipped roofs with broadly overhanging, boxed eaves; and projecting wings or pavilions. Decorative brackets at the eaves help distinguish Italian Renaissance buildings from some other Mediterranean styles which were not boxed and had rafter tails, rather than brackets. Other common details include: quoins, roof-line balustrades, pedimented windows, classical door surrounds, molded cornices, and belt courses.

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Walls are stucco over frame, stucco, or masonry; wood is never used. Mediterranean Revival buildings are also characterized by their decorative tiles on walls and floors and use of wrought iron.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Leon High School is a fine example of the use of the Mediterranean Revival/Italian Renaissance style. The Italian Renaissance influence can be seen most clearly in the symmetry of the east and south elevations which also feature elaborately decorated pavilions, an arcaded main entry, and a low pitched, hipped/ridge roof covered with barrel tiles. Decorative rafter tails under wide eaves are also suggestive of the Italian Renaissance style (Photo 10). Typical Mediterranean Revival style interior decorative elements include wrought iron bannisters and decorative tiles around the water fountains.

While the Mediterranean Revival style enjoyed great popularity in South Florida, with entire subdivisions and suburbs being executed in the style, it did not enjoy that popularity in North Florida. Leon High School derives additional significance as one of the few Tallahassee buildings which exhibits influences of the Mediterranean Revival style. Caroline Brevard Grammar School (1925, NR 1987), The Woman's Club of Tallahassee (1927, NR 1987), the Los Robles Gate (1926, NR 1989), the Federal Correctional Institute (1938) and several homes comprise most of the remainder of Tallahassee's Mediterranean Revival style construction.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Leon High School property consists of 29 of the 31.7 acres purchased by the Board of Public Instruction of Leon County in 1927 (some land has been lost due to the widening of Tennessee Street). The property is bounded to the west by the Brokaw-McDougall property, to the south by East Tennessee Street, to the east by residences of Talaflo Street, and to the northwest by Miccosukee Road.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary encloses the remaining land that has been associated with Leon High School since its construction in 1936-1937.

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Photographs

1

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- 1 1) Leon High School, 550 E. Jefferson Street
 2) Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida
 3) 17th Annual Report of the City of Tallahassee
 4) c1937
 5) Florida Photographic Archives, Tallahassee, FL
 6) Aerial view of Leon High School under construction,
 camera facing NW
 7) 1 of 31

- 2 1) Leon High School, 550 E. Jefferson Street
 2) Tallahassee, Leon County, Florida
 3) Vivian Young or Kevin McGorty
 4) February 1993
 5) Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board
 6) E elevation, camera facing W from the athletic fields
 7) 2 of 31

Items 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

- 3 6) E elevation, camera facing NW
 7) 3 of 31

- 4 6) S elevation, camera facing NE
 7) 4 of 31

- 5 6) Athletic Field, camera facing NE
 7) 5 of 31

- 6 6) Main entrance in central pavilion on E elevation, camera
 facing W
 7) 6 of 31

- 7 6) E & N elevations, camera facing SW
 7) 7 of 31

- 8 6) Detail of winged angel terra cotta panel, camera
 facing W
 7) 8 of 31

- 9 6) S elevation, camera facing N
 7) 9 of 31

- 10 6) Detail of terra cotta cartouche, decorative rafter
 tails, and frieze on S elevation, camera facing N
 7) 10 of 31

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- 11 6) N elevation, showing 1957 second story addition,
camera facing SE
7) 11 of 31
- 12 6) N end of E elevation, camera facing E
7) 12 of 31
- 13 6) Auditorium window, camera facing S
7) 13 of 31
- 14 6) Central wing of W elevation, camera facing SE
7) 14 of 31
- 15 6) S section of E elevation, showing 1965 Media Center,
camera facing E
7) 15 of 31
- 16 6) S section of E elevation, showing c1965 walkway,
camera facing SE
7) 16 of 31
- 17 6) Lobby, camera facing NW
7) 17 of 31
- 18 6) Staircase with wrought iron balustrade, camera
facing S
7) 18 of 31
- 19 6) Ceramic tile trim around water fountain and
baseboard tile
7) 19 of 31
- 20 6) Boys' restroom, showing tile floor and baseboard,
camera facing NE
7) 20 of 31
- 21 6) Typical classroom, showing corner closet, camera
facing SE
7) 21 of 31
- 22 6) Auditorium, camera facing W
7) 22 of 31

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Photographs

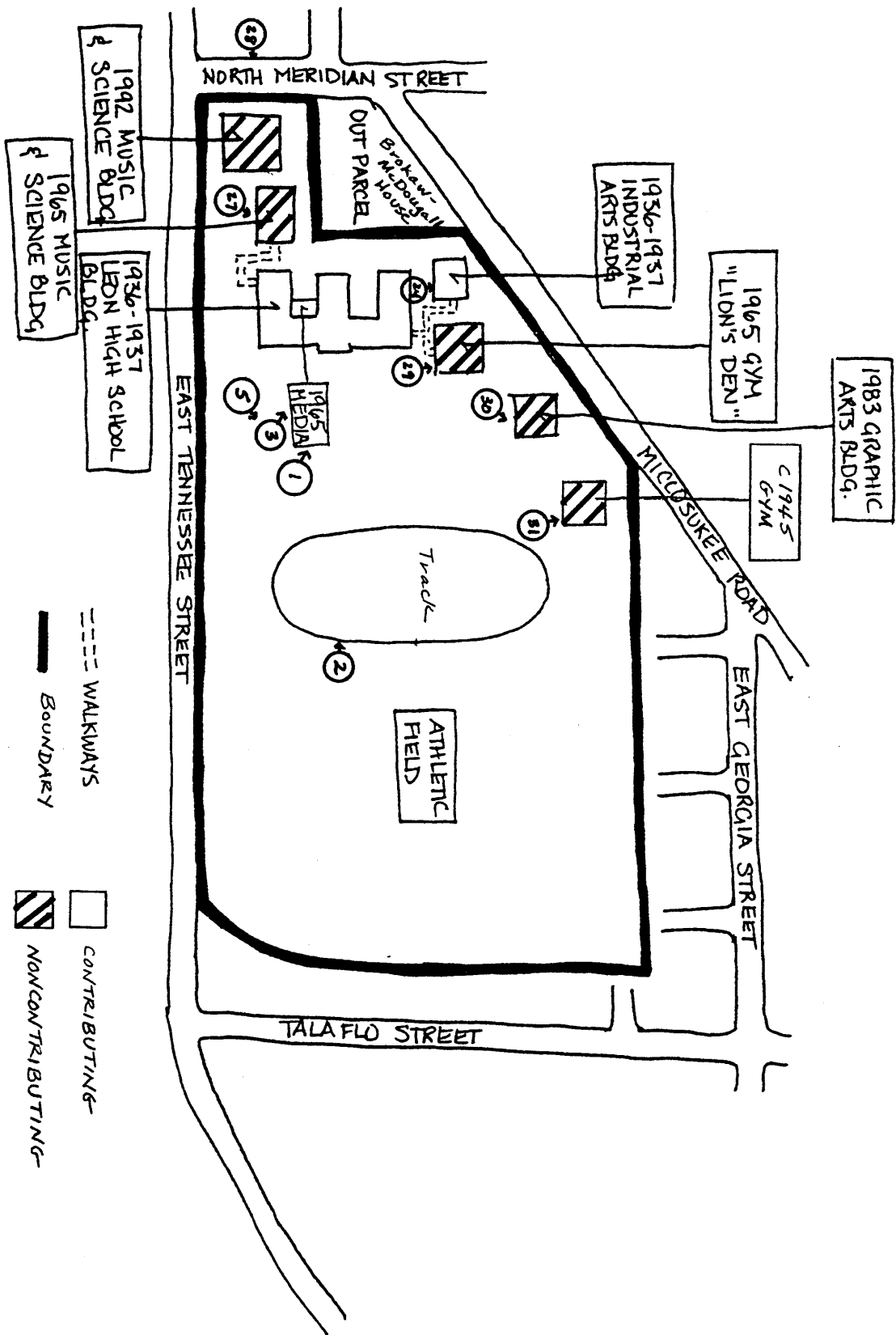
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Section number _____ Page _____

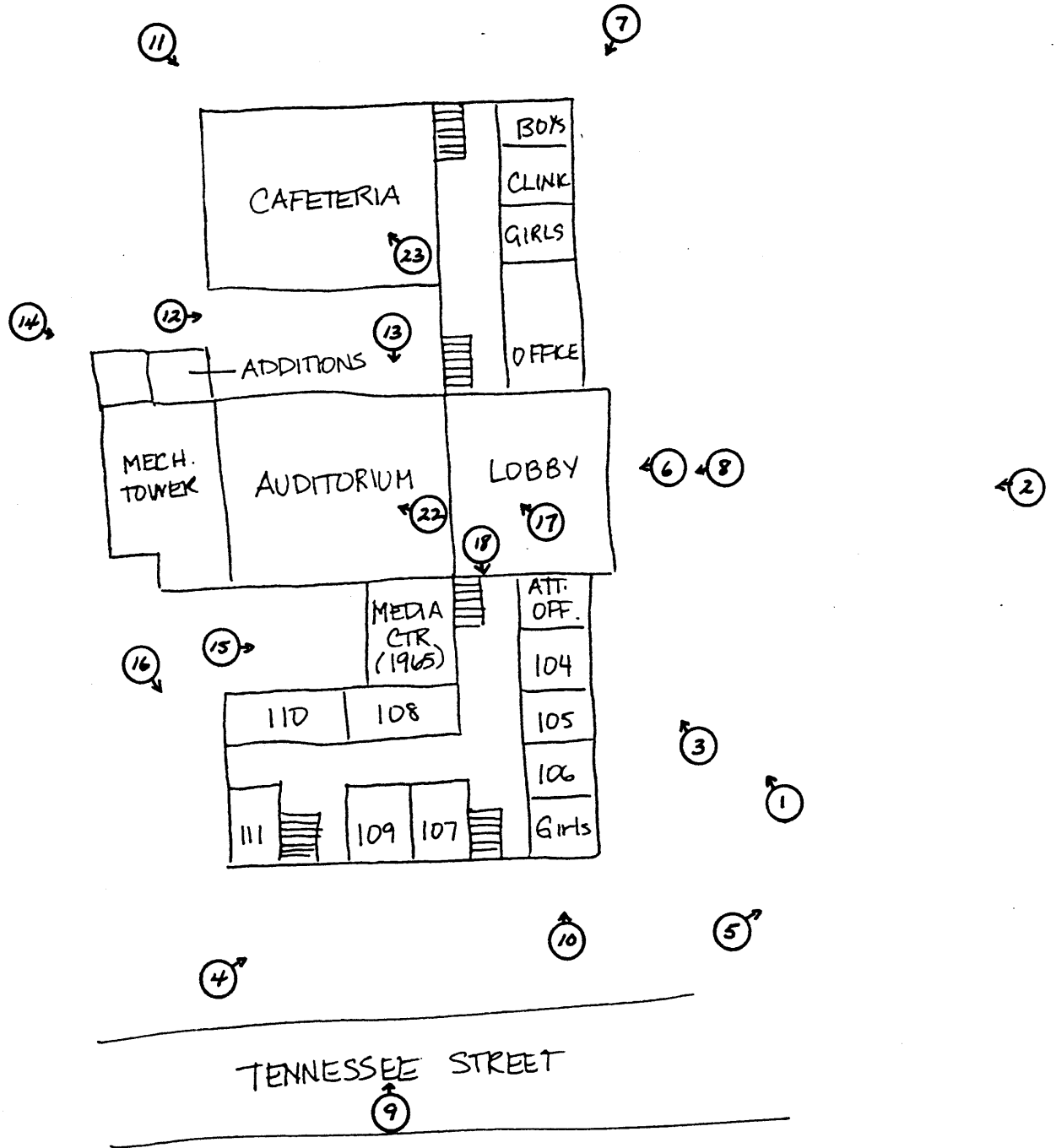
- 23 6) Cafeteria, camera facing NE
7) 23 of 31
- 24 6) Industrial Arts Building, S elevation, camera facing
NW
7) 24 of 31
- 25 6) Drafting Room in the Industrial Arts Building,
camera facing SW
7) 25 of 31
- 26 6) Workshop in the Industrial Arts building, camera
facing NW
7) 26 of 31
- 27 6) 1965 Music and Science Building, S elevation, camera
facing NW
7) 27 of 31
- 28 6) 1992 Music and Science Building, W elevation, camera
facing E
7) 28 of 31
- 29 6) 1965 Gymnasium, S elevation, camera facing N
7) 29 of 31
- 30 6) 1983 Graphic Arts Building, S elevation, camera
facing NE
7) 30 of 31
- 31 6) Old c1945 Gymnasium, S elevation, camera facing N
7) 31 of 31

LEON HIGH SCHOOL
 SITE PLAN
 NOT TO SCALE



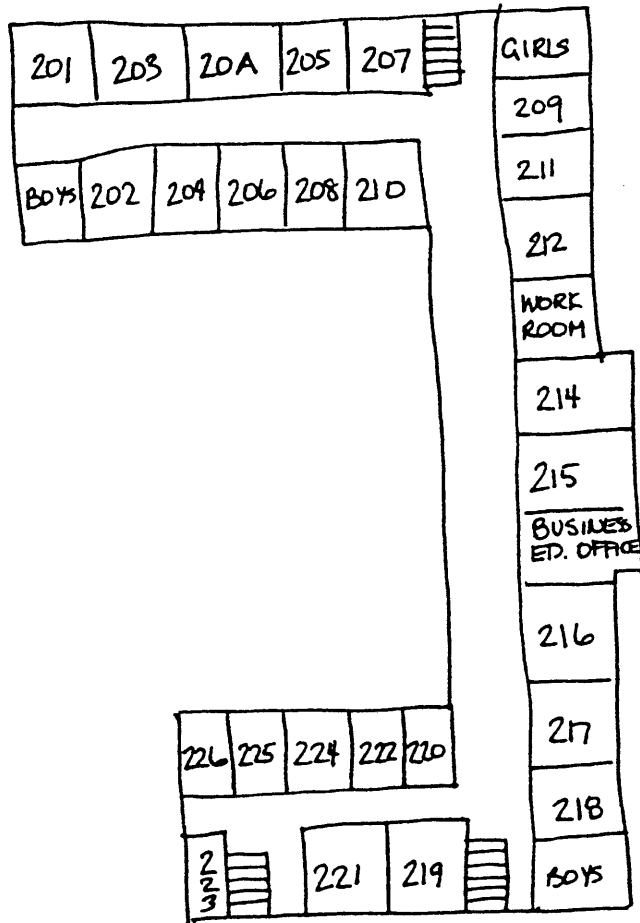
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LEON HIGH SCHOOL
FIRST FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE



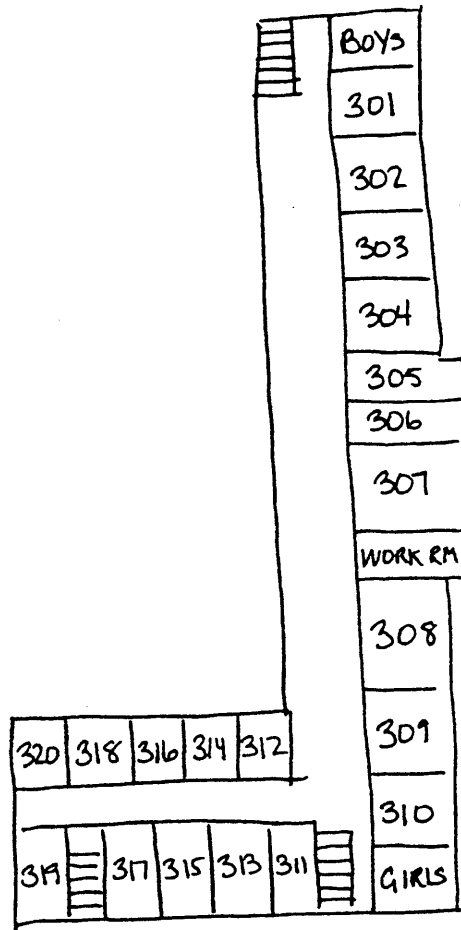
LEON HIGH SCHOOL
SECOND FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

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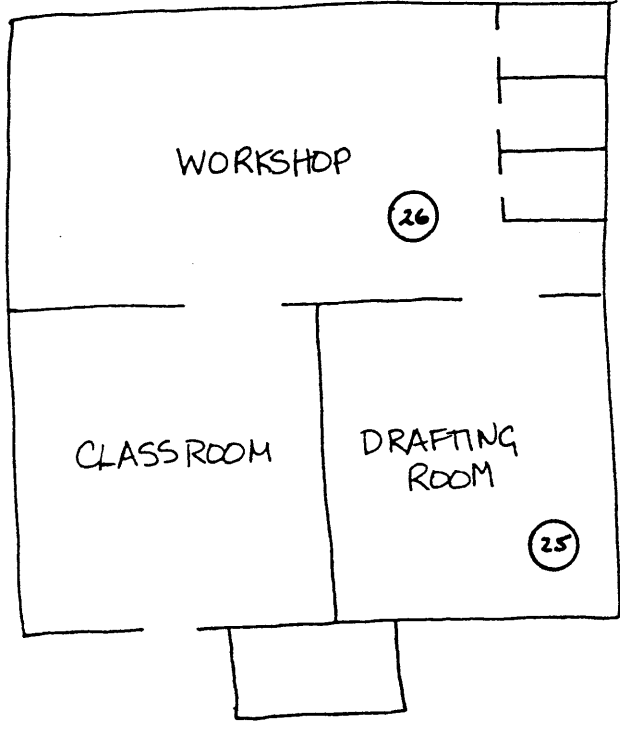
TENNESSEE STREET

LEON HIGH SCHOOL
THIRD FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

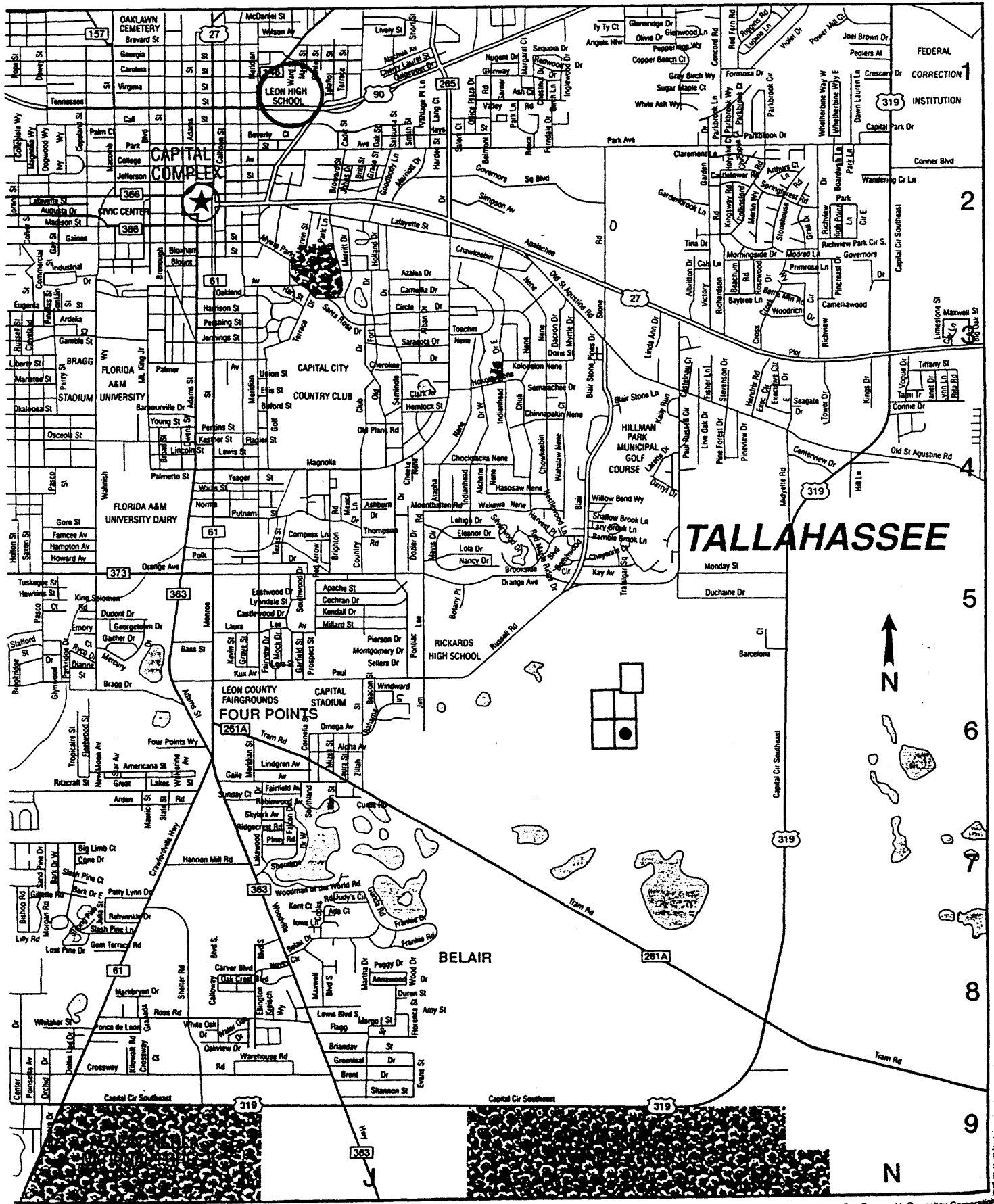


TENNESSEE STREET

LEON HIGH SCHOOL
INDUSTRIAL ARTS BUILDING
NOT TO SCALE



TALLAHASSEE



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