

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Fairview Junior High School

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 750 East Parkway South

NA not for publication

city, town Memphis

NA vicinity

state Tennessee

code

TN

county Shelby

code

157

zip code 38112

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

1 buildings

1

_____ sites

_____ structures

2

1 objects

1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

NA

Number of contributing resources previously

listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Arthur L. Huger

Date 9/18/90

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Entered in the
National Register

5. 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:)

Shelore Byers

10/25/90

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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)

Art Deco

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof OTHER: tar and gravel

other TERRA COTTA, cast stone, marble

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Fairview Junior High School is a public school located in the city of Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee that is operated by the Board of Education of the Memphis City School system. The school site comprises 8.738 acres of land situated within boundaries defined by street right-of-ways of Central Avenue on the north, Maxwell Street on the east, Seel Binder on the south, and East Parkway South on the west. Herein lies a complex featuring landscaped grounds, driveways, parking lots, walkways, signs, and two permanent school-related structures.

Of the two permanent structures located within the boundaries of the complex, one has been identified as a contributing historic resource. This is the 1930 school building. The other permanent structure on the site is a detached circa 1960 sports facility/gymnasium. It stands to the southeast of the main school. The sports facility/gymnasium is related to the function of the school; however, it does not meet the fifty-year criterion and, therefore, is regarded as a non-contributing building.

Outside the boundaries of the school site, though within walking distance, are three historic resources which are currently listed with the National Register. The Fairgrounds complex, from which the school receives its name, is located directly to the south and east of the school site. It contains the Libertyland Grand Carousel (NR 7/3/80). East Parkway South, a street which functions as the western boundary of the school site, is listed in the National Register as part of the Memphis Parkway System (NR 7/3/89). Located across East Parkway South is the Cooper-Young neighborhood, which was placed in the National Register on 6/22/89.

The construction of the school began in April 1930, and was completed in September of the same year at an approximate total cost of \$335,000. The resulting product is a flat roof structure supported by a cast concrete frame, spanning three stories in height and built on an institutional-type T-plan.

The structure's exterior appearance is characterized by a broad three-story mass incorporating a central two-story portico and a pair of balanced lateral wings. The eastern wing, which forms the stem of the T-plan,

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Fairview Junior High School

Fairview Junior High School

Owner: Memphis Board of Education
2987 Avery Ave.
Memphis, TN 38112

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Fairview Junior High School

functions as an auditorium/gymnasium. Appended to the south wing is a circa 1955 library and classroom addition which is generally compatible with the original section in terms of scale, detail, and use of materials.

Looking westward, the main facade is a symmetrical, rectilinear, three-story elevation dominated by a central, two-story portico. Atop the roof stands a hipped roof lantern which once served as a base for a flagpole. The flagpole has since been removed. Exterior wall surfaces on the main facade is defined by a grid pattern formed by windows separated by vertical pilaster-like members. The primary exterior material is brick, while cast stone, terra cotta, and marble are used for embellishments. Two flights of stairs lead to the school's main entry, which features two pairs of nine-light, two-panel metal doors, separated by a six-light, three-quarter-sidelight. Surmounting the entry is a vast rectangular multi-light transom window filled with glazed triangular panes. In the evening, these emit a warm amber light.

The portico, which also serves as a balcony for the third-story curriculum room, is framed by two vertical pilaster-like members which are relieved by decorative cast stone panels. A bay of metal-frame French doors open onto the upper-story balcony, which is enclosed by a curvilinear balustrade and sheltered by a cantilevered projection. On the exterior of the balustrade is displayed the name of the school in wrought-iron lettering. Beneath the name, and framed by massive brick pier supports, is a large area adorned with terra cotta and marble decoration. In general, the appearance of the portico is characterized by a series of rectilinear masses which are repeated to form setbacks which work to give both shape and depth to the facade, as well as to provide a place for decoration.

Flanking the portico are two balanced one-story, two-bay masses which function as classroom spaces. Visually, these add to the "stepped" appearance of the facade. Decoration is achieved through the display of spandrel panels set within wall surfaces. These typify educational iconography of the period. Scenes of natural growth are incised into spandrels found on exterior walls of the home economics classrooms, while workshop rooms display panels illustrating the functions of industry and transportation.

The general appearance of the north elevation is characterized by an asymmetrical arrangement of cubic masses and a functional non-ornamental wall treatment composed of horizontal triple and banked steel-framed windows. Primary access to the north side is provided by a one-and-one-half-story entry vestibule which is original to the building. Today, it

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serves as an entrance for the curriculum division of the city schools (located on the second floor of the school). The auditorium section, which forms the core of the north elevation, is marked by vertical columns of windows that light the spacious interior.

The east (rear) elevation is designed to accommodate many of the school's service requirements and subsequently is the most functional, and least decorative in appearance. A one-story kitchen wing forms the base of the school's T-plan. Appended to the kitchen is a brick chimney stack. With the construction of the L-plan library wing in 1955 came a reshaping of the south section of the east elevation. Here, a canopy has been built to shelter a walkway leading to the detached circa 1960 gymnasium building. In 1985, a brick-faced fire escape/stairwell was constructed, completing the latest in a series of modifications to the east elevation.

The bulk of the south elevation is formed by the circa 1955 library addition. While the addition changes the basic symmetry of the school's T-plan, the overall visual impact is minimal. Wall composition on the addition mirrors that of the original building, with a symmetrical arrangement of horizontal banked windows, framed by textured yellow brick. Vertical pilaster-like members serve to relieve the horizontal emphasis of the addition, as does a one-and-one-half-story entry vestibule.

Once inside the building, one's attention is immediately focused on a sequence of stepped rectangular masses finished in polished marble. These repeat the general shapes defined by the exterior, though on a smaller scale. The foyer is built one-half-story above grade level so that one entering the school may either proceed directly down a flight of stairs which lead to the first story (ground level); or, one may choose to follow one of the staircases located to the right or left of entry. These lead to the landing on the second floor. Once atop the landing, one may easily access classrooms, offices, and the second story auditorium. Here, the architects have defined a formal entry area which includes Art Deco light fixtures, marble-sheathed walls, and a lighted trophy case.

The school interior contains three stories of enclosed rooms accessed by central hallways. Presently, the school provides space for classrooms, library, offices, conference rooms, curriculum room, auditorium, gymnasium, dressing rooms, cafeteria, kitchen, lounges, wood shop, home economics rooms, restrooms, storage rooms, and boiler room. The auditorium, with a seating capacity of 800 on the lower level and 250 in the mezzanine, features a stage, balcony, and a projection room. Behind the stage and

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separated by a curtain is a gymnasium space which has an early scoreboard fixture. Furnishings in the auditorium and balcony appear to be original, though in need of repair. The projection room, located above the mezzanine, houses a collection of lighting equipment currently in poor condition.

Typical classrooms display wood-framed slate chalkboards; ceilings remain unfinished, displaying concrete framing members. Windows are filled with the original composite awning/stationary sashes. Beneath window sills one finds radiator units still in service. Typically, interior doors are lit by six lights and are crowned by six-light window transoms. A horizontal line of awning-type windows course the upper walls of each classroom. These open onto the central corridors, serving to vent and light each classroom. Floors are covered with linoleum. Examples of original light fixtures can be seen in the lobby, auditorium, the former infirmary, and the present home economics rooms.

As a whole, the interior has witnessed, over the past six decades, very few modifications. Some of the more noticeable alterations include: the installation of dropped ceilings in selected rooms, the introduction of suspended fluorescent lighting, and the replacement of selected door hardware. Apart from a circa 1955 side addition, the exterior of the building has seen few changes over time.

The school's site has been identified as a contributing historic resource as many of the features of the landscape are contemporary with the construction of the school building. Together, these elements interact with the main structure to form a unified, coherent whole. The site is characterized by a formal plan that calls for a vast building setback, a terraced lawn, an oval-shaped driveway, and symmetrically-arranged evergreen trees. The driveway, built of cast concrete, is intersected by a pair of walkways that lead to the main entrance. Within the oval, in close proximity to the entrance is a grassy island which features a poured concrete "F" framed by a concrete border. Further west and built into a terrace is a brick retaining wall displaying decorative relief and a William Blake quotation.

While the front lawn is characterized by its formality, the rear section of the site is more functional in character. The gymnasium building occupies the southeast corner of the site. Between the gym and the school is an area occupied by a small parking lot. Access to the gym and the rear of

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the school is provided by a driveway which opens onto Central Avenue and Seel Binder. The northeast corner of the site functions as a playing field with a baseball diamond and backstop.

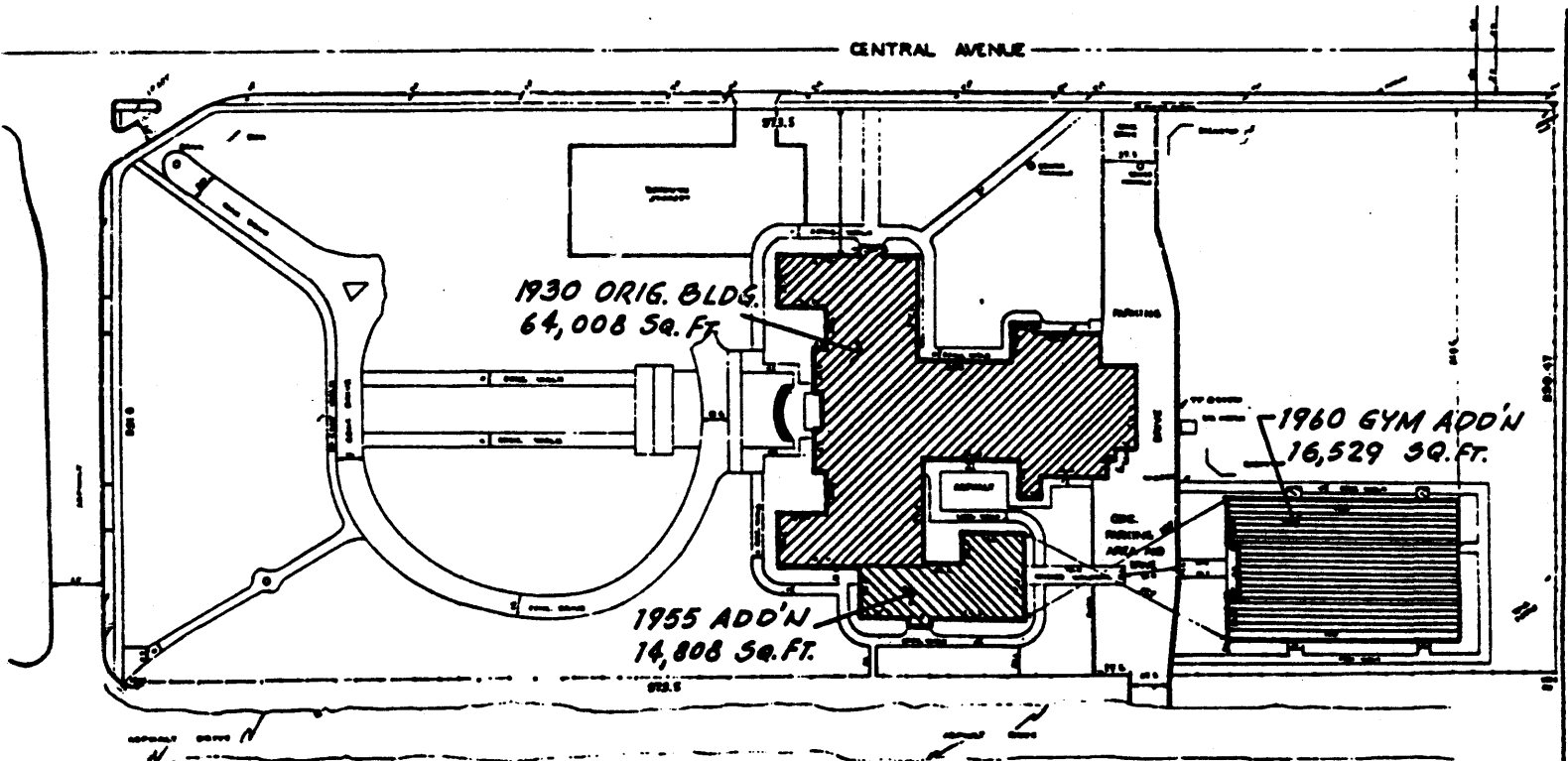
Changes have come to the site over time. The most damaging one is, perhaps, the removal of the northern segment of the oval driveway and the construction of an asphalt-paved parking lot. The remaining segment of the oval driveway is no longer in service as the East Parkway South entrance has been closed. However, the majority of the site features are extant and the site retains integrity.

(During the field survey, a small, mobile/temporary structure was encountered on the northwestern extreme of the site. This building houses the air quality monitoring equipment for the City of Memphis. Because of its temporary nature, it was not inventoried.)

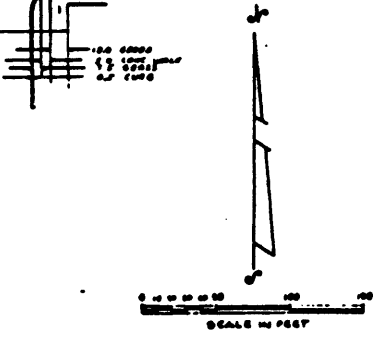
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BLDGS. 95,345 SQ. FT.
SCH. PROP. 8.73 AC.



MEMPHIS BOARD OF EDUCATION 807 BERRY AVENUE MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE		
FAIRVIEW SCHOOL 700 EAST BERRY AVENUE		
SCALE 1" = 20'	L. W. MURPHY, JR., PE. MEMPHIS, TENN.	DATE DRAWN
DATE 6-10-60		INT. NO. 2

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G NA

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1930

Significant Dates
1930

Cultural Affiliation
NA

Significant Person
NA

Architect/Builder
Harrison, Edward L., arc.
S & W Construction, Builders

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Fairview Junior High School derives its significance under criterion C from its association with an architectural style, being an excellent intact example of an institutional building executed in the Art Deco style. Many of the school's exterior and interior features are emblematic of Art Deco architecture. These include stepped masses, vertical projections that rise above the roofline, angular and zigzag motifs, massive urns, foliated decoration, and modernistic relief sculpture. Fairview's polished marble lobby is an excellent period example, as lobbies of this sort are increasingly rare as a result of alterations and modernizations.

The Memphis School Board resolved on November 4, 1929, to build several new schools, one to be in the eastern part of the city. Fairview Junior High School was subsequently built and officially named on August 11, 1930. The school was designed by architect and engineer Edward L. Harrison in collaboration with John Hozier and Nowland Van Powell and constructed in the six months between April and September 1930. The construction of Fairview capped off development what is now known as the midtown section of Memphis, at a time just before the city's eastern boundary was extended beyond East Parkway. Fairview was also located near the Central Avenue and Young Street trolley lines, which made it easily accessible.

Fairview Junior High School was one of two early middle schools built in Memphis. It is predated by Bellevue Junior High School, constructed in 1928, located in the Annesdale Park Historic District (NR 12/22/78). These schools represent a change in educational philosophy which saw a need to separate the middle grades from elementary and high school levels. The majority of middle schools, or junior high-schools, that were built in Memphis were erected late, generally between 1955 and 1967. Fairview has been used continuously since 1930 for grades seven through nine.

Historically, Art Deco developed as a style most prevalent in decorative arts. The style's emergence has been traced to the Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris, in

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS): NA
 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

State historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Specify repository:

City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 8.738 acres

UTM References

A 16 228250 3890780
Zone Easting Northing
C _____

B _____
Zone Easting Northing
D _____

See continuation sheet

SE Memphis & NE Memphis (409SW & 409NW)
Verbal Boundary Description

The school site comprises 8.738 acres of land situated within boundaries defined by the street right-of-ways of Central Avenue on the north, Maxwell Street on the east, Seel Binder on the south, and East Parkway South on the west.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard L. Silverman
organization NA date 2-15-90
street & number 403 Altamont Street telephone NA
city or town Charlottesville state VA zip code 22901

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1925. As it is represented in architecture, Art Deco is a hybrid style, incorporating a diversity of design principles borrowed from several European architectural sources (principally, Art Nouveau, Secession, and International). Once it became established in America, Art Deco architecture developed in its own peculiar way, adopting many of its own forms, symbols, and motifs. Its applications and treatments range from the excessive, luxuriant strains associated with Art Deco commercial buildings to the more sober, subdued architecture of Art Deco public structures.

The architecture of Fairview characterizes the formal, conservative variety of Art Deco represented by long-lasting, institutional-type structures. In the case of Fairview, the architect designed what is a traditional form blended with modernistic-style detailing. Ornamental treatment has been executed on the most visible parts of the building - the entrance, ground floor, and roof line. The main entrance serves as the school's focal point, employing many of the archetypical Deco features: juxtaposed cubic masses, modernistic relief sculpture, and Art Nouveau-inspired floral motifs.

In Memphis, where Art Deco architecture is not widely represented, Fairview emerges as a rare intact example. During the period between the world wars, public school architecture in Memphis was dominated by the historic and eclectic styles: Beaux Arts, Classical and Colonial Revival, Mediterranean, and Jacobean. Two of Fairview's contemporary schools, Vollentine School (1930) and Bethel Grove (1932) were built in the Mediterranean and Jacobean styles, respectively. Into the 1940s, architects continued to design public schools in the conventional historic/eclectic modes. A Jacobean design for Hamilton High School was executed as late as 1942. In Memphis, Fairview serves as the only example of a public school built in the Art Deco style.

Fairview's architect Edward Lee Harrison began working in Memphis in 1909 as an engineer for Shaw and Pfeil. During his career in Memphis, he produced a diversity of residential, commercial, and municipal structures and was a specialist in heavy construction. His most celebrated design was for the Memphis Steam Laundry building, a commercial laundry building sporting a Venetian Gothic facade inspired by the Doge's Palace. Some of Harrison's other works include: the Memphis Police Station, the William R. Moore Building, the Ford Motor Company, the Robert E. Lee Home, and the S. C. Toof Co. Building (NR 8/26/82). Harrison was co-engineer of Crump Stadium and he designed the Goldsmith tunnel and garage.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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- Division of Research Services, Memphis City Schools. The Development of School Facilities in the Memphis City School System 1865 to Present. November 1987.
- Harkins, John E. Metropolis on the American Nile. Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, 1982.
- Herndon, Joseph L. "Architects in Tennessee Until 1930 - A Dictionary." Masters thesis, Columbia University, 1975.
- Memphis Commercial Appeal. 12 September 1930.
16 September 1930.
15 March 1931.
18 November 1961.
- Memphis Press Scimitar. 23 July 1935.
14 January 1938.
7 September 1971.
- Ostby, Lloyd. "Public Schools of Memphis 1902-1915 Thematic Resources" nomination, March 1982.
- Silverman, Richard. On-site survey of Fairview Junior High School, 10 November 1989.
- Trachtenberg, Marvin. Architecture: From Pre-History to Post-Modernism. NYC: Harry N. Abrams, 1986.

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Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property is drawn to include the principal circa 1930 school building with its circa 1955 library addition and the circa 1960 sports facility/gymnasium. Though the gymnasium is not contributing, it is a related function of the school and it is situated near the school building. It does not detract from the overall integrity. The surrounding 8.738 acre site is included as contributing because of the extant landscaped grounds.

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Fairview Junior High School
750 East Parkway South
Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee
Date: November 1989
Photos by: Richard Silverman
Negs: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

Photo of a historic photo, showing west facade
#1 of 23

Facing east, west facade
#2 of 23

William Blake quote
#3 of 23

Entry pavilion/portico
#4 of 23

Facade: decorative relief
#5 of 23

Facade: decorative relief
#6 of 23

Portico detail: terra cotta
#7 of 23

Facade: north of entry pavilion/portico
#8 of 23

Modernistic relief panel
#9 of 23

Facade: incised relief panel
#10 of 23

Facing southeast, north wing
#11 of 23

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Facing west, east (rear) elevation and playing fields
#12 of 23

Facing north, south elevation, showing library addition
#13 of 23

Principal entry from interior, showing lights
#14 of 23

Principal entry, interior stair
#15 of 23

Interior first floor hallway
#16 of 23

Auditorium and balcony/mezzanine
#17 of 23

Second story hallway
#18 of 23

Light fixture
#19 of 23

Classroom example
#20 of 23

Classroom
#21 of 23

Example of interior door and transom lights
#22 of 23

Detached circa 1960 gymnasium, non-contributing
#23 of 23