

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

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

## SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100003408

Date Listed: 2/4/2019

Property Name: Northside High School (Florida's Historic Black Public Schools MPS)

County: Gadsden

State: FL

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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.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

2.4. 2019

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

### Section 8: Significant Dates

2003 is hereby deleted as a significant date. Significant dates cannot be outside of the period of significance. 1970 is the logical and justified end of the period of significance for the property.

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Florida State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

### **DISTRIBUTION:**

**National Register property file**

**Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



MP 3408

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Northside High School

other names/site number Havana High School; Havana Middle School; Havana Northside High School/GD1571

2. Location

street & number 264 Carver Avenue N/A  not for publication

city or town Havana N/A  vicinity

state Florida code FL county Gadsden code 039 zip code 32333

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.)

Alissa Lotane, Deputy SHPO 12/13/18  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Bureau of Historic Preservation, Div. of Historical Resources, Florida Dept. of State  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet

determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

2-4-2019

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**

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

Florida's Black Public Schools MPS

**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)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: International Style

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

CONCRETE

roof ASPHALT

other METAL

**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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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

**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):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Education \_\_\_\_\_
- Ethnic Heritage: Black \_\_\_\_\_
- Architecture \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1962-1970  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1962  
1970  
2003  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Williams Construction Company, builder  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of Repository  
\_\_\_\_\_  
# \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 8.36 acres

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

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

3														
	Zone		Easting					Northing						
4														

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Wilbert Butler, Jr; Andrew Waber, Historic Preservationist.

organization Havana Community Development Corporation, Inc. date September 2018

street & number 264 Carver Avenue telephone 850-544-9898

city or town Havana state FL zip code 32333

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 Havana Community Development Corporation, Inc.

street & number 264 Carver Avenue telephone 850-544-9898

city or town Havana state FL zip code 32333

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Havana, Gadsden County, Florida

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**Summary**

The Northside High School is a large brick historic school complex located to the north of Havana, Florida. The school consists of two primary contributing buildings: a large complex U-shaped building that forms the core of the school and a detached former agricultural building. The main school complex, although one single enclosed space, has four distinct areas: the gymnasium/bandroom/home economics section, the cafeteria/auditorium section, the administration section, and the main classroom/library section. The gymnasium and cafeteria/auditorium form the south portion of the school, facing east to west and adjoining each other, while the library and main classrooms form the north portion. The administration wing extends north-south and forms a hyphen connecting the two larger portions. The roofs vary from curved to shed to flat to gabled. The building height also varies from one story to two stories. The major interior spaces of the school include the gym, the combination cafeteria/auditorium, the library, and north and south wing hallways. Interior fabrics consists primarily of concrete block and poured concrete flooring, with decorative brick patterning in the classrooms.

There have been some changes that have taken place to the school, primarily to the gym, which was expanded onto the south and had its original wood flooring replaced. The gymnasium also has some condition issues, with holes in the roof and portions of the walls removed to tear out copper wiring and piping. Despite this, the original extent of the gym is clearly distinguishable and the space retains its character-defining features. In the classrooms on the north wing, there were doorways cut into the concrete block walls separating the classrooms. Overall, the school retains its integrity of location, setting, association, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling. The contributing Agricultural Building is a simple one-story brick building with a flat roof, paired 6-light louvered windows, and pour concrete flooring. The building still retains its character-defining bay doors and open garage space historically used to store farm equipment. The historic agricultural classroom spaces have been repurposed into office space and a community room. Like the main building complex, the primary interior fabric of the Agriculture Building is concrete block with decorative brick patterning along the floor.

**Setting**

Havana, Florida, is an incorporated community located on the east side of Gadsden County, Florida. The town of Havana has had a long relationship with the nearby cities of Tallahassee and Quincy, and many residents of Havana commute to work to the larger cities. The immediate vicinity, especially to the north of Havana, is rural in nature. The Northside High School complex is located within the city limits of Havana, Florida. The surroundings are residential in nature, set within a predominantly African American neighborhood with which the school has had close connections.

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**Physical Description**

**School Building Exterior**

The main school building is a rather complex, U-shaped brick building with two large wings on the north and south side of the building that are connected on the west side (Photo 1). The roofs vary from flat, to barrel-shaped, to shed, to gabled. Most of the building, with the exception of the gymnasium and band room, is one story in height (Photos 2-7). The foundations of the building are poured concrete. Fenestration also varies but consists of primarily paired or ribbon metal windows. In some portions of the building, the windows have been boarded over, but otherwise, the openings are still visible. Although the entire building complex is technically connected, many of the primary access points between the wings of the building are through exterior walkways, which have all been retained (Photo 8). On the north side of the cafeteria and gymnasium there are decorative pilasters flanking the windows. On the south elevation of the building is a distinctive concrete ramp which provides access to the second floor band room adjacent to the gym (Photo 9).

**School Building Interior**

**South Wing/Bandroom**

On the south side of the building is the south wing classrooms, the gymnasium, the bandroom, and the cafeteria/auditorium. The south wing classrooms were historically used as biology and home economics laboratories (Photo 10). Despite condition issues, the rooms on the south wing all have integrity of design, materials, and workmanship (Photos 11-12). The interior spaces are still very much evident and the original openings are still present. On the east end of the hallway is a staircase which leads up to the bandroom on the second floor above the girls and boys locker rooms (Photo 13). The band room consists of two primary spaces, one used for the band and the other used for the chorus (Photos 14-15). There is also instrument storage spaces and office spaces on this floor. There are condition issues on the interior, with most of the original drop ceiling either gone or in ruinous condition.

**Gymnasium**

On the south end of the school is the gymnasium, which was from its construction one of the most important public gathering places for the school (Photos 16-17). The gymnasium retains its character-defining barrel shaped metal roof. The primary space is a large central area which holds a basketball court and bleachers. The basketball court was originally wood but due to condition issues, was removed between 1978-1979 and replaced with its current flooring material, terrazzo. Immediately adjoining the gym to the east are the girls and boys locker rooms and showers (Photos 18-24). The gym was expanded onto the south in the late 1970s to accommodate for additional public bathrooms, concession stand space, and offices (Photos 25-27). The interior

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expansion does not significantly expand the overall interior space of the building, the original extent is easily visible, and the character-defining features of the gym are still present.

The gymnasium has some condition issues due to a combination of lack of usage and upkeep, intentional demolition of portions of concrete block walls, and a lack of ventilation caused by the electricity being shut off. In some portions, especially in the locker rooms, portions of the ceilings and walls have been removed (Photos 28-29). Despite this, the original spaces are retained and many of the fixtures, including bathroom fixtures and stalls, are still present. The roof of the gym has holes in it, which has resulted in rain water accumulating on the basketball floor (Photo 30). Despite this damage, the roof is still present and the flooring is still its 1970s era flooring.

Cafeteria/Auditorium

On the west end of the south side of the building adjoining the gymnasium is the combination cafeteria/auditorium portion (Photo 31). This end of the building is currently undergoing renovations, with the cafeteria space mostly completed. The primary space is a single large open room with the same concrete block found throughout the building (Photo 32). The stage is an elevated wood platform accessed via wood steps from both the front and backstage (Photo 33). On the south end of this space is the kitchen area, which includes a single open space used for food preparation, a food storage area, a hall with windows for handling trays, and a restroom for kitchen staff (Photos 34-36).

Administration Offices

The administration offices, teacher's lounge, and guidance counselor offices for the school were located in the section of the building connecting the north and south wings (Photo 37). The administrative offices include the main office, the assistant principal's office and the principal's office as well as the guidance counselor's office. The interior walls are concrete block with decorative brick along the floor line similar in design to that found through many other parts of the building. The windows are metal and one-light fixed, usually in sets of three. There is a sliding metal window used by the receptionist/secretary. The teachers' lounge was also connected in the south building with a restroom.

Library

The north wing of the building features the primary classroom space and the school library. The library space possesses a high degree of integrity of design, workmanship, and materials, with the original wood shelving and librarian's desk still present and the character-defining single large open space retained (Photo 38). On the south end of the library is the librarian's office space (Photo 39). The flooring is poured concrete similar to that found throughout the building but covered over in carpeting.



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North Wing Classrooms

The main entrance to the north wing classrooms is located on the south end of the north hallway immediately to the east of the library (Photo 40). The main entrance is glazed double doors topped with a large fixed one-light square transom. The boys' and girls' restrooms in this wing still retain historic fixtures such as sinks, urinals, stalls, and toilets (Photo 41). The hallway features the same concrete block and brick interior fabrics and poured concrete flooring seen throughout the interior of the building. The metal 1/1 louvered windows added for ventilation for the classrooms gives the hallway a distinctive appearance.

The north wing contains a total of 14 original classroom spaces. With the exception of Room 1, which has been divided with partition walls that can be removed, all of the classrooms possess integrity of design, workmanship, and materials (Photos 42-44). The distinctive concrete block interior fabric and decorative brickwork along the floor line are visible. The only change to these spaces is the removal of some of the wall between the rooms to create a single doorway for safety reasons. The remnants of these walls are still present, however. The interior configuration of the individual classrooms remains largely unaltered. There are original fixtures remaining in some of these rooms, including the wood storage spaces (Photo 45). Fenestration consists of 20/20 ribbon windows and 1/1 metal louvered windows.

**Agriculture Building**

The Agriculture Building is a simple brick building with a flat roof, poured concrete foundations and flooring, and two bay doors (Photo 46). Fenestration consists primarily of single and paired 6-light metal louvered windows. The interior space of the building features the concrete block and decorative brick construction found throughout the school complex (Photo 47). The interior includes a single open garage space historically used for agricultural equipment storage. There is a small hallway that leads from the garage space that accesses an office, bathroom, and historic classroom that now serves as a community gathering space (Photo 48). The building was completely renovated, with the flooring in the rooms maintained. A second bathroom was also added, replacing a former closet. Despite this, the character-defining features of the building were retained.

**Non-Contributing Resources**

On the west elevation of the school complex are two substantial signs with brick bases. These signs postdate the period of significance and are considered non-contributing to the nomination (Photo 49).

**Alterations**

The school complex building has undergone a number of changes since its construction. In the 1978-1979 school year, the original wood gym floor was replaced by its current flooring. During the 1975-1976 school

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year, new student lockers were added. In the 1976-1977 school year, a portable classroom was added for science classes, which has since been removed. In the 1977-1978 school year, the gym was expanded and enlarged, along with the dressing rooms. The music room was renovated and modernized with soundproofing and individual rooms added. A new parking lot was also added south of the gymnasium. In the 1978-1979 school year, the fieldhouse and football field and track facilities were constructed. Sometime after the period of significance, one of the rooms in the north wing was divided. There were also doors added between classrooms in the north wing that were added for safety reasons.

The school complex building has some condition issues caused in large part by the disrepair it has fallen into following the end of its usage as a school. The condition issues are most prevalent on the south end of the complex. The gymnasium's roof has holes in it, which caused rainwater to accumulate on the floor. Portions of the concrete block walls, particularly along the east wall of the gym and in the girls' and boys' locker rooms and showers, were partially removed to extract the copper wiring and piping. Some of the drop ceiling was also removed in these rooms. Despite the condition and the expansion, the gymnasium still retains many of its character-defining features, including the large single open space with metal barrel roof and exposed rafters. The original extent of the gymnasium is still present. The seating areas are also still present. Although there has been some removal of concrete block, the removal was not done in a manner that either removed the presence of a wall or space and enough concrete blocks are still there to clearly delineate a space. The drop ceiling in the second floor band room is also mostly gone and in disrepair. Despite this, the space retains enough of its integrity of design.

The Agriculture Building has also gone through some changes, with a bay door replaced due to damage caused by a tractor accident and a bathroom added into what was once a closet. The garage space retains its integrity of design, workmanship, and materials, as the added bathroom was placed in a closet without the removal of walls or the creation of a new space, and the spatial arrangement of the offices and classrooms were retained as were the concrete block interior and brick exterior.

**Integrity**

The Northside High School complex is still in its original location and is still set within a largely rural residential black community north of the town of Havana, Florida. Hence, it retains its integrity of location, setting, and association. The north wing of the school complex retains a high degree of integrity of materials, design, feeling, and workmanship. Although one of the classrooms has been divided and doors were emplaced between classrooms, the original interior walls were retained and remnants of the walls can still be discerned in the doors between the classrooms. The hallways on the north and south wings retain a high degree of integrity as does the library and cafeteria/auditorium. The gymnasium was expanded in the 1970s and has condition issues but still retains its character-defining features. The building complex as a whole still retains its brick exterior and mostly concrete block interior and with the exception of the expansion of the gymnasium, the

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configuration has remained relatively unchanged since its construction in 1962. Hence, the building complex retains sufficient integrity of design, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

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**Summary**

Northside High School (NHS) is being listed at the local level under Criteria A for Ethnic Heritage: Black and Education and Criterion C for Architecture. The period of significance extends from its opening in 1962 until 1970, when the public school system of Gadsden County integrated and Northside was converted into a junior high school. When it opened in 1962, NHS marked a significant milestone in the education of the black community of eastern Gadsden County, particularly the town of Havana. Prior to its construction, students were forced to either go to Quincy or Tallahassee to pursue their high school education. The lack of easily available educational opportunities was a real hindrance to those in the community. Northside is a classic example of a so-called Equalization School. In an effort to stave off federally mandated integration requirements resulting from the US Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, white politicians began putting money into black schools, providing them with facilities on par and in some cases better than neighboring white schools. Northside High School in effect not only represents a major milestone in the history of education in the black community but it is also perhaps the best physical reminder of the efforts taken by the white community of Gadsden County to fight integration.

The school complex is also a locally significant example of International Style architecture adapted to an educational facility. Its long corridors, single story construction, usage of ribbon windows, horizontal massing, and general lack of architectural adornment are all character-defining features of the style. It is the best surviving example of this building type left in the town of Havana, Florida.

*The Northside High School contributes to the Florida's Black Public Schools MPS under E.IV Great Depression through the Era of Integration, 1929-1971 and Associated Property Types F.1 Florida's Black Public Schools.*

**Historical Context**

History of Havana, Florida

The town of Havana, Florida, owes its origins to the shade tobacco industry and the arrival of the Georgia, Florida & Alabama (GF&A) Railroad through the area. Tobacco had long been a major cash crop for Gadsden County, whose economy evolved around it. The area was especially suited for wrapper leaf tobacco, which was used for cigar wrappers. Growers created a tobacco leaf with a distinctive spotted appearance that was highly sought after by tobacco factories in the north. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, cigars emerged as a dominant form of tobacco consumption, and would remain so through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Sumatra tobacco leaf grown by the Dutch in what is now Indonesia dominated the cigar wrapper market. In an effort to combat this, Gadsden County growers started experimenting with smuggled Sumatra tobacco plants, and by the 1890s perfected a type of tobacco known as the Florida Sumatra leaf. The growers also experimented with

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various growing techniques. Recognizing the thinner more desirable leaves grown under shade in Cuba, farmers began growing tobacco under the shade of cheesecloth which covered entire fields. This method of growing tobacco received widespread attention and acceptance after the US Department of Agriculture conducted experiments in shade tobacco growing in Connecticut in 1900, effectively establishing the practice there.<sup>1</sup> By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the shade tobacco industry dominated the county, and the county seat Quincy was its hub.

Hoping to take advantage of the underserved eastern part of the county as well as south Georgia, the GF&A, which was originally founded as the Georgia Pine Railway by Jesse Parker Williams in 1895, arrived in the area. From its beginnings, the GF&A was built as a lumber road. Williams made his fortune as a naval stores merchant, which he relayed into timber land investments and the railroad was constructed to provide a means for getting his lumber to market. The track originally ran from Arlington, Georgia, to West Bainbridge, Georgia. This provided him with connections to the Atlantic Coast Line and Central of Georgia railroads as well as connections to the steamboats operating on the Flint, Chattahoochee, and Apalachicola rivers. The new line, which was renamed the GF&A Railroad in 1901, thrived and soon expanded to Tallahassee by 1902. Hoping to take advantage of the highly profitable shade tobacco industry and the fuller's earth mining in the area, the GF&A built a spur line from Havana to Quincy. This connection made Havana extremely important to the operations of the railroad. The railroad also became a major cutoff for express freight upon its completion to Richland, Georgia, in 1910, connecting the major east-west Seaboard Airline Railroad lines between Savannah and Montgomery and Jacksonville and Tallahassee (later Pensacola), traffic which would have gone through Havana.<sup>2</sup>

Aided by the arrival of the railroad, construction began in 1904 and by 1906 the population was large enough for the town to formally apply for incorporation. The name of Havana was selected in part as a nod to the importance of cigar tobacco to the area. Among the notable early residents of the town was R.A. Gray, who would later go on to serve as Florida Secretary of State. Shortly after its founding, however, the effects from the Panic of 1907 caused the prices of the tobacco crop to plummet. It would not be until the mid-1910s that the industry recovered. In 1916, the town suffered a major setback when a fire swept through the commercial core, destroying all but three buildings. Despite this, the town continued to grow, aided in large part by its advantageous location along the GF&A.<sup>3</sup> In 1918, a short line track known as the Pelham & Havana Railroad (P&H) was built out to Havana. Despite its name, it was never finished to Pelham but rather connected Cairo,

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<sup>1</sup> Robert T. Pando, "Shrouded in Cheesecloth: The Demise of Shade Tobacco in Florida and Georgia" (master's thesis, Florida State University, 2003), p. 11-12, 19-23.

<sup>2</sup> Russell Tedder, "Seaboard's Bainbridge and Richland Subdivisions: Part I," *Lines South*, vol. 28, No. 2 (2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2011), p. 11-13.

<sup>3</sup> Miles Kenan Womack, Jr., *Gadsden: A Florida County in Word and Picture* (Quincy, FL: Gadsden County Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 250-253, 257, 259, 261-262.

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Georgia, to Havana. The track was short-lived and only lasted until 1924.<sup>4</sup> In 1927, the Seaboard Airline Railroad (SAL) assumed formal control of the GF&A. It remains an active track today.

The tobacco industry in Gadsden County has long been marked by periods of boom and bust. As a result of the Panic of 1907, which ended the initial boom period of shade tobacco growing, several growers consolidated into the American Sumatra Tobacco Corporation, which would dominate the tobacco growing in the county for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By the mid-1910s, shade tobacco rebounded and was booming. By the end of the 1920s, however, the county was hit especially hard by black shank, a crop disease that wiped out much of the tobacco. This was followed by the onset of the Great Depression, which caused the price of tobacco to drop from roughly \$1 per pound in 1918 to \$.30 per pound in 1934. The number of acres devoted to tobacco cultivation also dropped over 50% from 3,399 acres in 1929 to 1,533 acres in 1934. The industry would not recover until the early 1940s, when the disruptions caused by World War II, particularly to tobacco growing regions in Indonesia, caused a sharp spike in tobacco prices.<sup>5</sup>

Like many communities in the south, the town of Havana was heavily segregated. Places of public accommodation such as the railroad depot had separate entrances and separate waiting rooms for white and black people. The economic and political life of the county was heavily controlled by the white population. This control extended into the judicial system and law enforcement. So entrenched was white supremacy in the county that in 1949, a 69-car parade of Klansmen rode through the city of Havana with a burning cross in the lead car without wearing masks or making any attempt to disguise their appearance.<sup>6</sup> The black population, the majority of whom were either laborers, tenant farmers, or sharecroppers who lived in poverty, were especially susceptible to the vagaries of the tobacco industry. It is important to note that the county has long been mostly black. Hence, racial discrimination and second class citizenship and the slavery that preceded it was the experience for the majority of humanity in the county.<sup>7</sup>

African American Education in Gadsden County

Like most of Florida, the history of education of African Americans in Gadsden County dates back to after the end of the Civil War. The Freedman's Bureau, which was a federal government agency established near the end of the Civil War to aid in the transition of enslaved people to citizenship, took the lead early on in educating the African American community. Several nonprofit organizations, including the American Missionary Association (AMA), were also active in the state operating schools for African Americans. The AMA was particularly

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<sup>4</sup> Steve Storey, "Pelham & Havana Railroad," *Georgia's Railroad History and Heritage*, <https://railga.com/pelh.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Tameka Bradley Hobbs, "'Hitler is Here': Lynching in Florida During the Era of World War II," (master's thesis, Florida State University, 2004), p. 33-38.

<sup>6</sup> *Havana Herald*, "Southern Klan Parade Passes Through Havana Late Saturday Night," June 14, 1949.

<sup>7</sup> Hobbs, p. 33-38.

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active in educating black teachers, who gradually replaced the white teachers in the black schools. In 1866, the state legislature of Florida officially created a public school system for African Americans. Despite attempts by Florida Secretary of State Jonathan Gibbs, a former enslaved person, to integrate the school system of Florida, stringent opposition from the white population kept the schoolchildren separated. The system became official in the state with the passage of the 1885 state constitution. The new laws forbade blacks and whites from being educated in the same building and also outlawed white teachers from educating black students and black teachers from educating white students. After 1885, the black colleges and universities, most notably Florida A&M, took the lead in producing black schoolteachers for the state. By 1890, there were enough black schoolteachers in the state that they formed the Florida State Teacher Association.<sup>8</sup>

The economy of Gadsden County had long been reliant upon tobacco growing, going back to the territorial period. After the Civil War, little changed as tobacco remained the major cash crop. By the 1890s, shade tobacco growing dominated the county. The tobacco industry relied heavily on tenant farmers and the majority of the workforce were African American laborers. Most black schoolchildren attended schools on the tobacco farms where their parents worked. The school year evolved around the planting and harvesting seasons of tobacco and education took a back seat to agricultural interests. In Gadsden County, the school year for African American schoolchildren began roughly a full month before that of white students, due in large part to the necessity of having them available to work the tobacco fields during planting season in May.<sup>9</sup> These schools were usually small wood buildings located on parcels of land donated by white landowners. Like many rural black schools throughout the south, these schools suffered from a lack of funding and inadequate facilities. It would not be until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that high school level coursework was even taught for black students in Gadsden County, when the NR-listed Dunbar School was opened in Quincy. For black students in the eastern part of the county, there would be no high school until after World War II.<sup>10</sup>

By 1903, there were 36 negro schools in operation in Gadsden County, with a little over 2,600 students in attendance. Only 50 of these students were in "higher grades," due in part to a lack of availability. There was a discrepancy in teacher pay, with the aggregate of pay for white male and female teachers in the county averaging \$39 and \$28 a month respectively, as opposed to \$20 and \$15 a month respectively for black male and female teachers. By 1920, the number of black students remained relatively flat at 2,700, but only 45% of the school age population were attending schools. Perhaps most telling is only four of these students were in ninth grade, and none of them were in grades 10-12. In addition, the county set aside over \$47,000 for white schools and only \$3,600 for negro schools despite black school age children outnumbering white school age

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<sup>8</sup> Headley J. White, "Effects of Desegregation on Gadsden County, Florida Public Schools 1968-1972" (master's thesis, Florida State University, 2006), 11-13.

<sup>9</sup> *Tallahassee Democrat*, "School Opens for Negroes in Gadsden," August 1, 1963.

<sup>10</sup> White, p. 16.

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children by more than two-to-one.<sup>11</sup> With this level of disparity in funding, the black residents of Gadsden County relied on outside assistance to jumpstart education in their community. This came in the form of the Rosenwald Fund. Although the fund supported a variety of causes, it was most famous for its active support in funding and designing rural African American schools in the south. In Gadsden County, there were seven Rosenwald Schools built.<sup>12</sup> The indifference of the white county school board members was perhaps best illustrated in 1926, when at the invitation of the Gadsden County Superintendent of Schools C.H. Gray, the state Board of Public Instruction conducted a survey of schools in the county. The survey, which was intended in part to evaluate the school facilities and curriculum in order to help improve the quality of education, focused exclusively on white schools in the county despite initial proposals to survey all schools. The only acknowledgement of black schools was on the very last page of the report, which featured just two photographs of black schools in the county with identifying text and no additional information.<sup>13</sup>

Writing about his experiences when he first took the job of State Agent for Negro Schools in Florida, D.E. Williams described the average black school in the state at this time:

Most of the 866 Negro Schools in operation in Florida during the early years of my employment were conducted as one-teacher and two-teacher schools in churches, lodge halls, turpentine or saw-mill camp residences. There were a few county-owned schoolhouses... It is very difficult for people to realize today that school was conducted in such buildings. Drinking water, sanitary toilets, desks, blackboards, sufficient textbooks, library books, a good heater and fuel were lacking in many of these schools. Pews and benches often substituted for desks. Water was brought in bottles and jugs by children or was gotten in a bucket from a so-called spring near the school. School officials were reluctant to provide pumps because people would steal them. Often trees and bushes served for toilets, and surface privies when provided, were usually so filthy that children preferred to use the bushes. Toilet tissue and washing facilities were not provided in most schools. Wide planed boards painted black served as chalk boards.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. William S. Stevens, a local black doctor from Quincy, emerged as a leader in African American education in Gadsden County. In 1914, he was named as supervisor of schools in the city. He took the lead in the efforts to expand the preexisting Dunbar School in Quincy. After much struggling, he was finally able to secure the necessary funding for the construction of a new school building in 1929. Initially named the Quincy Negro School, it would later be renamed Stevens High School. This school would function as the black high school of Quincy until 1955, when it was replaced by Carter-Parramore High School. At this time, local African

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<sup>11</sup> Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida, *Bi-ennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Florida for the Two Years Ending June 30, 1920* (Gainesville, FL: Pepper Printing Company, 1920), p. 51, 88-89.

<sup>12</sup> Miles C.P. Bland and Sidney P. Johnston, "Phase II Survey of the Rosenwald Schools within Twenty-Six Counties of Florida," *Riverside Avondale Preservation* (Jacksonville, FL: Bland & Associates, Inc., 2011), Section 2, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Florida State Department of Education, "An Educational Survey of Gadsden County Florida," *Florida School Bulletin* vol. III, no. 2 (October 1926), p. 9, 104

<sup>14</sup> D.E. Williams, *A Brief Review of the Growth and Improvement of Education for Negroes in Florida 1927-1962* (Atlanta, GA: Southern Education Foundation, Inc., 1963), p. 11.



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Americans in the communities in the school began taking up monetary collections for schools, hoping to gain support from the local school boards and providing the necessary cash match for the Rosenwald program. In addition to Quincy, there were also Rosenwald schools built in Chattahoochee, Gretna, Midway, Oak Grove, Salem, and Shiloh. The residents of Havana were not so fortunate.<sup>15</sup>

Like many areas in the south, the African American schools in Gadsden County saw assistance from the Jeanes Fund. The African American schools in the county were actually managed by Jeanes teachers, who served as de-facto superintendents of black education and truant officers. In addition to supervising the teachers and overseeing instruction, Jeanes teachers also served prominent roles in community outreach, adult education, public health, and acted as liaisons between local school boards and the black community. As a testament to the low priorities given black schools at the time, while explaining the usages of Jeanes teachers, one report from the 1930s explained that school superintendents such as those in Gadsden County “do not have time enough to do all their other duties and supervise their Negro schools also.”<sup>16</sup> The fund was originally created in 1907 by wealthy philanthropist Anna Jeanes to aid in the improvement of rural African American education. Like most Jeanes teachers, the Gadsden County Jeanes teachers answered directly to the county superintendent and their salaries were paid by both the county and the fund. This informal system was largely discontinued following World War II and Jeanes teachers focused more on advisory roles assisting teachers with curriculum development and instructional techniques.<sup>17</sup>

After World War II, there was a change statewide in the funding philosophy of schools. Before the war, especially before the Great Depression, there was a general belief that schools in the state were a local responsibility. The onset of the collapse of the Land Boom and the Great Depression forced local county school boards to turn to the state for support. After the war, the state became a major source of funding for school boards. The threat of integration forced a marked step-up in spending for black schools. During the 1952-1953 school year, for instance, a little under \$527,000 was spent on white schools in the county while a little over \$486,000 was spent on black schools. The following year, the total spent on white schools was a little over \$588,500 while a little over \$528,000 went towards black schools. While a considerable improvement from before World War II, the disparity was nonetheless still there, especially in a county where blacks comprised a majority of the population.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> White, p. 16-17; Bland and Johnston, Section 3, p. 42-46.

<sup>16</sup> Florida State Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Educational Progress in Florida* (Tallahassee, FL, 1938), p. 149.

<sup>17</sup> Florida State Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Educational Progress in Florida*, p. 149; D.E. Williams, *A Brief Review of the Growth and Improvement of Education for Negroes in Florida 1927-1962*, p. 23-26.

<sup>18</sup> Florida Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Biennial Report Superintendent of Public Instruction State of Florida for the Fiscal Years Beginning July 1, 1952 and Ending June 30, 1954* (Tallahassee, FL, 1954), p. 106, 116, 212, 222; Williams, p. 7-9.

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This disparity was exacerbated by the political situation, as restrictions on the black vote all but assured continued white domination of county politics, including the public schools. In 1959, Gadsden County emerged at the center of the national civil rights discussion when the United States Commission on Civil Rights published its report on voting registration abuses primarily in the south. The commission was established in September 1957 to investigate claims of voter suppression and unequal protection under the law due to racial discrimination. Due to delays, however, the commission was unable to assume full operations until eight months later. Gadsden County became the target of the first investigation made by the commission on voting, which began in August 1958. The sworn complaint mentioned that black residents of the county, particularly ministers and educators, lived in a constant state of fear of physical or economic reprisals for voting. In 1958, there were only seven African Americans (out of almost 11,000 African Americans of voting age) registered to vote in the county. Earlier attempts organize voter registration drives in the late 1940s that saw a modest increase in registered voters ended in failure when the leaders of the movement were all terminated from employment and physically threatened. By 1952, the number dropped from around 140 two years prior to 6 black voters. Specific cases of economic reprisals cited by the report included an unnamed minister who publicly supported black voter registration and was denied a bank loan despite a “highly solvent cosigner” and at least one teacher who was outspoken in his support of civil rights whose contract was not renewed. The fear of reprisals was almost universally held by members of the black community, nearly all of whom spoke anonymously with the investigator, who was quick to point out that this fear was a significant hindrance to registration efforts. One of the respondents who was one of the few actually registered to vote in the county, mentioned he did not vote in the last election because he was “too old to be beaten up.”<sup>19</sup>

The investigation was preceded by a survey of black Gadsden County teachers conducted in 1957, in which only one of the 39 respondents listed mentioned they were registered to vote and none of them had voted in the last election. Fear of losing jobs or fear of personal safety weighed heavily on these teachers. Certain members of the black community voted with the approval of the white minority, who wished to upkeep appearances of a biracial election. A 1960 report in the *Havana Herald* offered a similarly bleak political picture in the town itself: “Technically speaking, Havana has two political parties; however... [Democrats] run the entire show in this town. There are only about a half dozen voters registered as Republicans. They rarely vote, and negroes never even register.”<sup>20</sup> With little to no black participation allowed in the election process, there were no black elected officials in the county and the interests of this segment of the community were unmet.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> United States Commission on Civil Rights, *Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights* (Washington: USGPO, 1959), 55-58.

<sup>20</sup> Evelyn Paris, “Report on Havana,” *Havana Herald*, August 25, 1960.

<sup>21</sup> Dr. Emmett W. Bashful, “A Study of Registration and Voting Among Members of the FSTA,” *Bulletin of the Florida State Teachers Association*, vol. 32, no. 3 (March 1957), p. 13-14.

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The implications of the US Commission on Civil Rights investigation, although universally understood to be true, was nonetheless viewed as an embarrassment to the county. Both the county commission and the county banks issued separate statements within the local newspapers denying the reports. The Gadsden County Sheriff's Office and the Quincy Police Department reported no complaints and the school board denied terminating teachers for their political associations.<sup>22</sup>

Pine Park High School

The first school in Havana that offered African American schoolchildren a high school level education was Pine Park High School. Located on the south side of town, Pine Park assumed operations sometime before World War II. The school was under the direction of principal L.A. Hunter. Although the exact number of students enrolled in the school is unknown, the graduating class was small, with just nine graduates in 1948. After the creation of the Minimum Foundation program in 1947, Gadsden County underwent an ambitious building program for its white schools, constructing gymnasiums for its high schools in Havana and Chattahoochee, which were funded in part by bonds issued by the county. However, during the 1949 legislative session, the state reduced its educational funding by roughly 25 percent, leading to an economic shortfall of over \$42,000 for Gadsden County schools for the 1949-1950 school year. As county superintendents across the state decided to run their schools at full schedule until the money ran out, it placed a lot of pressure to cut corners for the sake of running a full school year of classes. In Gadsden County, one of the methods employed to reduce costs was to consolidate schools across the county, particularly black schools. By the start of the 1950-1951 school year, the number of black schools in the county were reduced from 38 to 8. Among the casualties was Pine Park, which was reduced to an elementary school; the high school students were transported to Stevens High School in Quincy. Black high school students in Havana continued to be sent to Quincy until the construction of Northside in 1962.<sup>23</sup> Despite this setback, Pine Park remained a fixture within the black community of Havana for many more years to come, serving as the black elementary school for the town up until integration.

Gadsden County Schools after *Brown v. Board of Education*

Like many areas of the south, the issue of integrating local public schools was met with considerable resistance within the white community of Gadsden County. Although the *Brown* decision dated to 1954, it took well over a decade before integration became a reality. Integration first came to the western part of the county. Chattahoochee High School was the first in county, integrating in 1965. Even this was limited, as the black

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<sup>22</sup> Ellis Finch, "Gadsden Reprisal Threats Denied," *Tallahassee Democrat*, September 10, 1959; Ellis Finch, "On Loans to Negroes: Bankers in Quincy Deny Rights Charge," *Tallahassee Democrat*, September 11, 1959.

<sup>23</sup> *Havana Herald*, "Pine Park High School Graduates 9 Students," April 29, 1948; *Havana Herald*, "County to Lose \$14,181 by State Budget Cuts," June 30, 1949; *Havana Herald*, "Gadsden Schools Able to Stay Open Only 7 Months Next Year Mears Says," July 7, 1949; *Havana Herald*, "Schools to Start in County Aug. 28," August 10, 1950; *Havana Herald*, "Principals Renamed to County Schools for Coming Year," April 6, 1950.

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educators were largely restricted to teaching only physical education and special care was paid to make sure the students did not touch one another. The opposition of the white community was still very strong. With integration becoming unavoidable, many white families opted to move their children into private schools.<sup>24</sup>

At first, the school board opted for a voluntary integration plan, with students needing to formal request and waiver to attend the school of their choice. It was inspired by a 1955 judicial decision written by U.S. Circuit Court Judge John J. Parker in *Briggs v. Elliott*, which held that:

The Constitution... does not require integration. It merely forbids discrimination. It does not forbid such discrimination as occurs as a result of voluntary action. It merely forbids use of governmental power to enforce segregation.<sup>25</sup>

The application of this decision saw widespread use throughout the south as politicians sought to stall full integration. In Florida, this concept was codified by the Pupil Assignment Law of 1956, which while nominally opening the door for token integration, actually provided a method of circumventing *Brown v. the Board of Education*. It granted county school boards the power to assign students to schools. While it created an application process for African American parents wishing to gain admission for their children into white schools, it also expanded the criteria for evaluating the student's qualifications in such a manner that it gave county school boards wide leeway in legally rejecting their applications.<sup>26</sup>

As was demonstrated in Chattahoochee, Gadsden County's plan of integration was incomplete and rife with problems. In 1966, officials from the federal Department of Health, Education, and Welfare paid a visit to Gadsden County and threatened to pull federal funding. Despite this, real progress on the issue of integration did not come until the 1969-1970 school year. Finding the county in violation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the US District Court of Middle Florida ordered the mandatory desegregation of Gadsden County schools.<sup>27</sup>

Statewide, the election of Claude Kirk as governor of Florida in 1966 marked the last serious effort to forestall integration, particularly in public schools. Governor Kirk, who was the first Republican governor of Florida since the end of Reconstruction, rose to power in large part due to the influence of conservative whites who grew disillusioned with the Democratic Party. He was openly against integration, even going so far as to personally assume control of the Manatee County School Board and delaying the beginning of the 1970-1971 school year. All of these efforts inevitably failed and with the election of Rubin Askew as governor in 1970, the

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<sup>24</sup> White, p. 20-21, 25.

<sup>25</sup> White, p. 20-21.

<sup>26</sup> Irvin D.S. Winsboro and Abel A. Bartley, "Race, Education, and Regionalism: The Long and Troubling History of School Desegregation in the Sunshine State," *Florida Historical Quarterly* vol. 92, no. 4 (Spring 2014), p. 738-739.

<sup>27</sup> White, p. 26-28.

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full weight of the governor's office was thrown behind integration, making full statewide desegregation virtually assured.<sup>28</sup>

**Historical Significance – Havana Northside High School 1962-1970**

When Gadsden County decided to expand its school building program in 1959, there were several events that likely influenced their decision making. In addition to the publication of the US Civil Rights Commission report, there was a showdown taking place in Little Rock, Arkansas, between Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus and the federal government over integration of public schools. After President Eisenhower famously federalized the Arkansas National Guard in 1957 to take it out of the control of Governor Faubus and force integration, the governor responded by cancelling the following school year in Little Rock. By the fall of 1959, Arkansas was once again in the national headlines as the integrated schools reopened. It was a significant defeat for segregationists and state and local governments across the south were feeling federal pressure. In Florida, Orchard Villa Elementary School in Miami became the first public school in the state to integrate in 1959.<sup>29</sup> The fight over Orchard Villa pitted moderates such as Governor LeRoy Collins against segregationists who dominated the state senate and house of representatives. State Senate President Dewey M. Johnson, a longtime state legislator who represented Gadsden County, was particularly outspoken in his opposition to Governor Collins. Senator Johnson wielded considerable power in state politics as senate president, with wide ranging appointment powers over senate committees.<sup>30</sup> Looking to fight desegregation, the state superintendent of public instruction Thomas D. Bailey proposed increasing funding for black schools, appealing to counties to allocate money specifically towards the construction of new facilities. His advice was heeded by counties across the state and likely carried a lot of influence in Gadsden County's decision to step up its school construction.<sup>31</sup>

The Gadsden County School Board initially had difficulty securing funding for their school building programs, as they failed to sell bonds in 1959. They instead turned to the state, and using a combination of county and state funding, commenced with a program that included the acquisition of 60 acres of land and the expansion of existing schools. The county bought what is now the Northside High School property in February 1960. The Williams Construction Company of Quincy was awarded the contract to build the school. Construction began in

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<sup>28</sup> White, p. 29-30.

<sup>29</sup> *Tallahassee Democrat*, "School Race Mixing Back in 1955," September 9, 1959.

<sup>30</sup> Chanelle Nyree Rose, *The Struggle for Black Freedom in Miami: Civil Rights and America's Tourist* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2015), p. ; *Tallahassee Democrat*, "Answer Given by NAACP," August 13, 1959; *Fort Pierce News-Tribune*, "Stronger Mixing Barriers Asked," April 7, 1959.

<sup>31</sup> Winsboro and Bartley, "Race, Education, and Regionalism: The Long and Troubling History of School Desegregation in the Sunshine State," p. 735-736.

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August 1961 and was finished by July 13, 1962, less than a month before the start of the school year for black students in Gadsden County.<sup>32</sup>

The local *Havana Herald* newspaper described the building complex upon its completion:

The buildings are of brick and concrete block construction with terrazzo floors with the exception of the spacious gymnasium which has hardwood floors, and the entire plant is as near to being fireproof as possible. There are 14 large and airy, well-lighted classrooms, two science rooms with the latest equipment, a home-making suite for home economics students, a commercial department where typing and business classes will be taught, a vocational agriculture shop with modern equipment and an adjoining classroom, the large gymnasium, bandroom, showers and lockers and a central heating plant.

The kitchen is equipped with the very latest in food preparation and storage devices with natural gas stoves centrally located, plus baking equipment. The dining area is in an adjoining room with space for the entire enrollment and will serve as an auditorium complete with stage.

Except for the building that houses the gym, showers and lockers and bandroom, the project is of one-story construction and connected by covered walkways.<sup>33</sup>

When Northside High School officially opened its doors in August 1962, it marked a significant milestone in the history of black education in the Havana community. For the first time in over a decade, black students had a high school in the eastern part of the county. Students expressed relief after finally having a high school nearby following years of commuting to Carter-Parramore High School in Quincy.<sup>34</sup> The school almost immediately became a fixture within the community and a source of local pride. An open letter from the faculty to community was effusive in its praise:

The principal, faculty and student body of Northside High School, Havana, take this method of expressing appreciation to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Gadsden County School Board, office staff and citizens of the county for the very modern facilities made available for our boys and girls of the Havana area... Certainly, as citizens of this growing county, we are proud of these facilities.<sup>35</sup>

When opened, NHS taught students from 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and total enrollment was a little over 500 students. The longtime practice of opening black schools in the county roughly a month before white schools opened to free up black schoolchildren for tobacco growing in May was still very much in effect when Northside began operations. Although officially opened on August 2, full operation was rather gradual. The

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<sup>32</sup> *Tallahassee Democrat*, "Gadsden Bonds Remain Unsold," August 12, 1959; *Havana Herald* [Havana, FL], "Land Purchased for Site of New Negro High School," February 4, 1960; *Havana Herald*, "County School Board Accepts Northside High School Bldg.," July 19, 1962.

<sup>33</sup> *Havana Herald*, "County School Board Accepts Northside High School Bldg."

<sup>34</sup> Theodore Wester and Fillmore Wester, "Northside," *Tallahassee Democrat*, September 8, 1962.

<sup>35</sup> [Northside High School] Faculty, "Letter to the Editor from Northside School Faculty," in *Havana Herald*, "Northside High News," August 2, 1962.

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lunchroom did not officially open until the end of the month. The first Parent-Teacher Association was not organized until September 1962. There was no football team its first year.<sup>36</sup> The first principal of the school was Willie L. Williams, who was later replaced by John A. Williams. The school chose the Gladiators as their mascot. The following year, the number of children in the school expanded as members of the community of Midway numbering roughly 100 students as well as two teachers, joined NHS. In the 1963-1964 school year, the school received full accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).<sup>37</sup> In 1964, there were 63 graduates of NHS, 18 of whom went on to college. This number remained relatively flat in 1966 and 1967, when there were 63 graduates. In 1970, the last year it was a black high school, there was 74 graduates.<sup>38</sup>

Like other black schools in the county, Northside felt the effects of integration. As the federal government started to be more forceful in its handling of Gadsden County, the “voluntary” integration soon turned to a system of mandated busing and consolidation. There was actually opposition to these measures within the black community itself, many of whom preferred to stay within their own communities. When a statewide straw poll was conducted in the early 1970s to gauge public sentiment on forced busing, black voters in Gadsden County voted against it by a large margin. These integration measures applied to teachers as well. The choice of consolidation not only tended to favor white schools, but black teachers and administrators were often left out of work. This was no different with NHS, which, despite possessing the newer and better equipped facility than the white Havana High School, was downgraded to a junior high school. The integration of the faculty actually began in the 1968-1969 school year, two years before integration of the student body. Black schoolteachers and administrators often found themselves without the benefit of tenure and forced to take new examinations. A number of black educators were permanently out of work and did not return to the field. Hence, the positions retained or gained by white educators were done so at the expense of their black counterparts.<sup>39</sup>

A 1969 report describes Northside’s appearance as it was facing integration:

The plant, built in 1962, consists of two permanent buildings, the main building includes everything except the vocational-agriculture facility which is connected by a covered walk. They contain the following facilities: (a) fourteen regular classrooms; (b) two home economics rooms; (c) one vocational-agriculture classroom; (d) one vocational agriculture shop;

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<sup>36</sup> *Havana Herald*, “Northside High News,” August 1962 [exact date not readable].

<sup>37</sup> Note: this information comes from an unpublished and untitled informal history compiled by alumni of the high school in the early 1990s.

<sup>38</sup> Florida State Department of Education, Division of Research, “Research Report – 38: Florida High School Graduates, 1964” (Tallahassee, FL, April 1965), p. 16; Florida State Department of Education, Division of Research, “Research Report – 53: Florida High School Graduates... 1966,” (Tallahassee, FL, May 1967), p. 16; Florida State Department of Education, Division of Research, “Research Report 63: Florida High School Graduates... 1967,” (Tallahassee, FL, May 1968), p. 14; Florida Department of Education, Division of Elementary & Secondary Education, Bureau of Research, “Research Report 89: Florida High School Graduates, 1970” (Tallahassee, FL, March 1971), p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> White, 29-31, 33.

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Havana, Gadsden County, FL

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(e) one bandroom; (f) a gymnasium with inadequate locker areas and toilet facilities; (g) three relocatable classrooms; (h) a good library...; (i) inadequate counseling suite; (j) administrative suite with inadequate teacher lounge and work areas; (k) excellent, well-equipped cafetorium; (l) inadequate science facilities... (m) relocatable building is used for art; (n) inadequate storage space; and (o) boys' and girls' toilet rooms.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Gadsden County remained very much entrenched within the Old South in regards to race relations. In a report of the situation in the county in 1969, there were a number of issues that were identified. Physicians' offices still maintained separate seating for black and white patients and the county hospital was still reluctant to fully integrate. There were also no black doctors or dentists in the county. Blacks held no position of authority within the upper levels of the school system. They also held no positions of authority within the tobacco industry beyond the handling level despite comprising the overwhelming majority of the workforce. There was also no elected black official in the county. Blacks still faced discrimination in hotels and restaurants in the county and black law enforcement officers remained reluctant to arrest whites.<sup>41</sup> As the 1960s wore on, the school was not only confronted by a changing racial situation in the county, but also by the economic changes brought on by the collapse of the shade tobacco industry. This forced a number of black residents to seek employment elsewhere. By the 1970s, competition from international markets and a general decline in cigar smoking brought an end to tobacco growing in the county. This marked a culture change for the black residents as well, as the large tobacco operations that once dominated black life disappeared.

**Historical Context – Havana Northside After 1970**

When it became an integrated middle school in 1970, the name of the school changed to Havana Northside Middle School. Its tenure as a middle school did not last long. It quickly became apparent after integration that the former black school was better equipped to handle the high schoolers than the former all-white Havana High School. It became a high school again in 1971-1972, and its name was changed to Havana High School. In 1980, the name was changed to Havana Northside High School, and it would remain in operation until 2004, when East Gadsden High School was built.<sup>42</sup>

There were some changes that occurred to the school since its period of significance. In the 1978-1979 school year, the original wood gym floor was replaced by its current flooring. The following year, new student lockers were added. In the 1976-1977 school year, there was a portable added for science classrooms which has since been removed. In the 1977-1978 school year, the gym was expanded and enlarged, along with the dressing

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<sup>40</sup> Gadsden County Board of Public Instruction, *A Comprehensive Educational Survey of Gadsden County*, by C.W. McGuffey, et al. (Tallahassee, FL: Associated Consultants in Education, 1969), p. 299.

<sup>41</sup> Gadsden County Board of Public Instruction, p. 24-26.

<sup>42</sup> Note: this information comes from an unpublished and untitled informal history compiled by alumni of the high school in the early 1990s.



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Havana, Gadsden County, FL

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rooms. The music room was renovated and modernized with soundproofing and individual rooms added. In the 1978-1979 school year, the fieldhouse and football field and track facilities were constructed.

After its closing as a school in 2004, members of the community began a long fight to both save the building complex and to open it as a community center. In 2005, a local group known as the Committee to Preserve the Legacy of Havana Northside High School secured a one dollar a year lease from the county school board to take over management of the property.<sup>43</sup> It was not until 2009, however, when the Havana Community Development Corporation (HCDC) was formed, that serious progress was made. Working in conjunction with the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners, Florida A&M University (FAMU), and the Florida Division of Historical Resources, the HCDC secured the funding necessary to restore the Agriculture Building, which was finished in 2017. The HCDC also entered into a cooperative agreement with FAMU. In exchange for a \$50,000 grant from the university, the HCDC agreed to allow the school to use the facility to teach and train in the building of aquaponics.<sup>44</sup>

**Architectural Context**

International Style

The origins of what came to be known as the International Style actually goes back into the Modernist architecture of Europe following the end of World War I. Of particular importance was the Bauhaus School in Germany, which was founded by Walter Gropius and was later run by Mies van der Rohe, two men who would figure very prominently in American architecture in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The term “International Style” was coined by architect Phillip Johnson and was introduced to the United States in 1932 with an exhibit with the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the publishing of a book written by Johnson and Henry-Russell Hitchcock titled *The International Style*. Many of the architects who fled Nazi persecution in the 1930s, including Gropius, Mies, and Marcel Breuer, were among the most influential practitioners of the International Style. The style really took hold and reached its peak in the United States after World War II, most notably in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>45</sup>

Some of the character-defining principles of the International Style are its usage of modern construction materials such as steel, concrete and glass; its usage of metal ribbon windows; lack of superfluous architectural adornment; its usage of box-like rectangular forms; and its emphasis on horizontality. Buildings in this style

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<sup>43</sup> Nikki Beare, “Preserving the Old for New Use,” *Tallahassee Democrat*, December 14, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Gadsden County Florida Development Council, “Grand Opening Northside High School Ag Center,” August 2, 2017, <https://www.gadsdenfldev.com/grand-opening-northside-high-school-ag-center/>.

<sup>45</sup> Phaidon, “A Movement in a Moment: The International Style,” <http://www.phaidon.com/agenda/architecture/articles/2016/june/30/a-movement-in-a-moment-the-international-style/>.

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often incorporated steel frame methods of construction and often featured flat roofs. It was a style that was mostly applied to institutional or governmental buildings, especially as advances in construction technology and techniques made them more cost effective.<sup>46</sup>

Post-World War II School Building Design

Following the end of World War II, there began a period marked by prosperity and population growth. With the influx of children being born to returning World War II veterans, many of whom were moving out into suburbs, there was a sudden need for new educational facilities. Between 1949 and 1960, the total student population nationally went from a little over 25 million students to around 36 million, eventually reaching 46 million by 1971. This provided architects across the country with an opportunity to implement a new design philosophy for schools. The conventional multi-story, heavily massed schoolhouse was instead replaced by a more expansive horizontal school layout spread out along corridors. The schools often featured low ceilings, little to no adornment, and open green spaces between the corridors. The horizontal layout of the schools made them quick to build, cost effective, and easy to expand. There was a general belief that this change would make for a more cheerful and less intimidating building that would be more conducive to learning. The ease of evacuation was also deemed desirable at a time of heightened Cold War tension. The Crow Island School in Winnetka, Illinois, designed in 1939-1940 by Eliel and Eero Saarinen, was one of the first to take this different philosophy. The architects of these new schools essentially incorporated many of the influences of the emerging International Style. From 1942 to 1946, the Museum of Modern Art in New York created a traveling exhibit known as "Modern Architecture for the Modern School," which used the Crow Island School and two California schools as the prototypes for a new design. After the war, the new designs found their way into the several leading architectural journals of the era and professional school planners rose in prominence. These International Style-inspired school complexes would dominate American school architecture in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>47</sup>

**Architectural Significance**

The Northside High School is a locally significant example of the International Style applied to an educational facility. Its long corridors, single story construction, usage of ribbon windows, horizontal massing, and general lack of architectural adornment are all character-defining features of the style. It is the best surviving example of this building type left in the town of Havana, Florida. There is one other historic school within Havana, Pine Park Elementary School, which is mostly contemporary to NHS and is similar in style. The original buildings in Pine Park which would have functioned as the first black high school in Havana are gone and its circa 1962

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<sup>46</sup> "Architectural Styles of America and Europe: International," <https://architecturestyles.org/international/>.

<sup>47</sup> Amy F. Ogata, "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* vol. 67, no. 4 (Dec 2008), p. 562-569; Lindsay Baker, *A History of School Design and Its Indoor Environmental Standards, 1900 to Today* (Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, 2012), p. 10-12.

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Havana, Gadsden County, FL

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school buildings are the oldest still standing on the site. The site of the school has been significantly built out since the 1970s, however. In contrast, the NHS has experienced minimal expansion outside of the original building complex. Hence, the integrity of setting is largely retained.

Countywide, the school perhaps most similar to Northside High School is Carter-Parramore High School, which was finished in the mid-1950s and served as the high school for the black community of the entire county until Northside's construction in 1962. Carter-Parramore, which is located in Quincy, like Northside is of concrete block construction but it lacks a brick façade, is far more pronounced in its usage of shed roofs, and the fenestration, which consists of metal ribbon windows, is much more square in appearance.

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Havana, Gadsden County, Florida

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary encompasses a portion of parcel number 2-26-3N-2W-0210-0000E-0010 of the Gadsden County, Florida, Property Appraiser's office records. The boundary extends roughly along the parking lot and immediately around the footprints of the school building complex. See map for more details.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the property historically associated with the Northside High School operations.



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Havana, Gadsden County, Florida

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Name of Property: Northside High School

City or Vicinity: Havana      County: Gadsden      State: Florida

Photographer: Andrew Waber      Date Photographed: July 2018

Description of Photographs and number, including description of view indicating direction of camera

1. View of main (west) facade, facing east
2. View of west elevation of cafeteria/auditorium, facing southeast
3. View of west elevation of north wing, facing northeast
4. View of east (rear) elevation, facing northwest
5. View of east (rear) elevation, facing west
6. View of north elevation, facing southwest
7. View of south elevation of gymnasium, facing northwest
8. View of exterior walkway connecting north and south wings, facing south
9. Exterior view of ramp leading to band room, facing north
10. Interior view of south wing hallway, facing west
11. Interior view of south wing classroom, facing northwest
12. Interior view of south wing classroom, facing
13. Interior view of staircase leading to bandroom, facing south
14. Interior view of chorus room, facing northwest
15. Interior view of band room, facing south
16. Interior view of gymnasium, facing southwest
17. Interior view of gymnasium, facing east
18. Interior view of gymnasium boys' shower and locker room, facing south
19. Interior view of gymnasium boys' bathroom, facing south
20. Interior view of boys' coach's office, facing east
21. Interior view of gymnasium girls' shower and locker room, facing
22. Interior view of gymnasium girls' shower and locker room, facing
23. Interior view of gymnasium girls' bathroom, facing
24. Interior view of girls' coach's office, facing east
25. Interior view of gymnasium addition, facing west
26. Interior view of gymnasium concession stands, facing north
27. Interior view of gymnasium public men's room, facing
28. Detail view of interior wall and ceiling damage in gymnasium, facing
29. Detail view of interior wall damage in gymnasium, facing
30. Detail view of gymnasium roof damage

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Havana, Gadsden County, Florida

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31. Interior view of cafeteria/auditorium, facing east
32. Interior view of cafeteria/auditorium, facing southwest
33. Interior view of auditorium stage, facing north
34. Interior view of kitchen, facing southeast
35. Interior view of tray handling and food serving area, facing east
36. Interior view of kitchen hallway, facing east
37. Interior view of administrative building, facing south
38. Interior view of library, facing west
39. Interior view of librarian's office, facing south
40. Interior view of north wing hallway, facing east
41. Interior view of north wing boys' bathroom, facing north
42. Interior view of Room Number 1, facing south
43. Interior view of Room Number 2, facing west
44. Interior view of Room Number 8, facing west
45. Detail view of Room Number 2 classroom closet, facing northwest
46. View of Agricultural Building south elevation, facing northwest
47. Interior view of Agricultural Building garage space, facing east
48. Interior view of Agricultural Building classroom, facing
49. View of brick signs, facing east

# Northside High School

Havana, Gadsden Co., FL

Exterior Photo References



1:2,500

Date: 9/13/2018

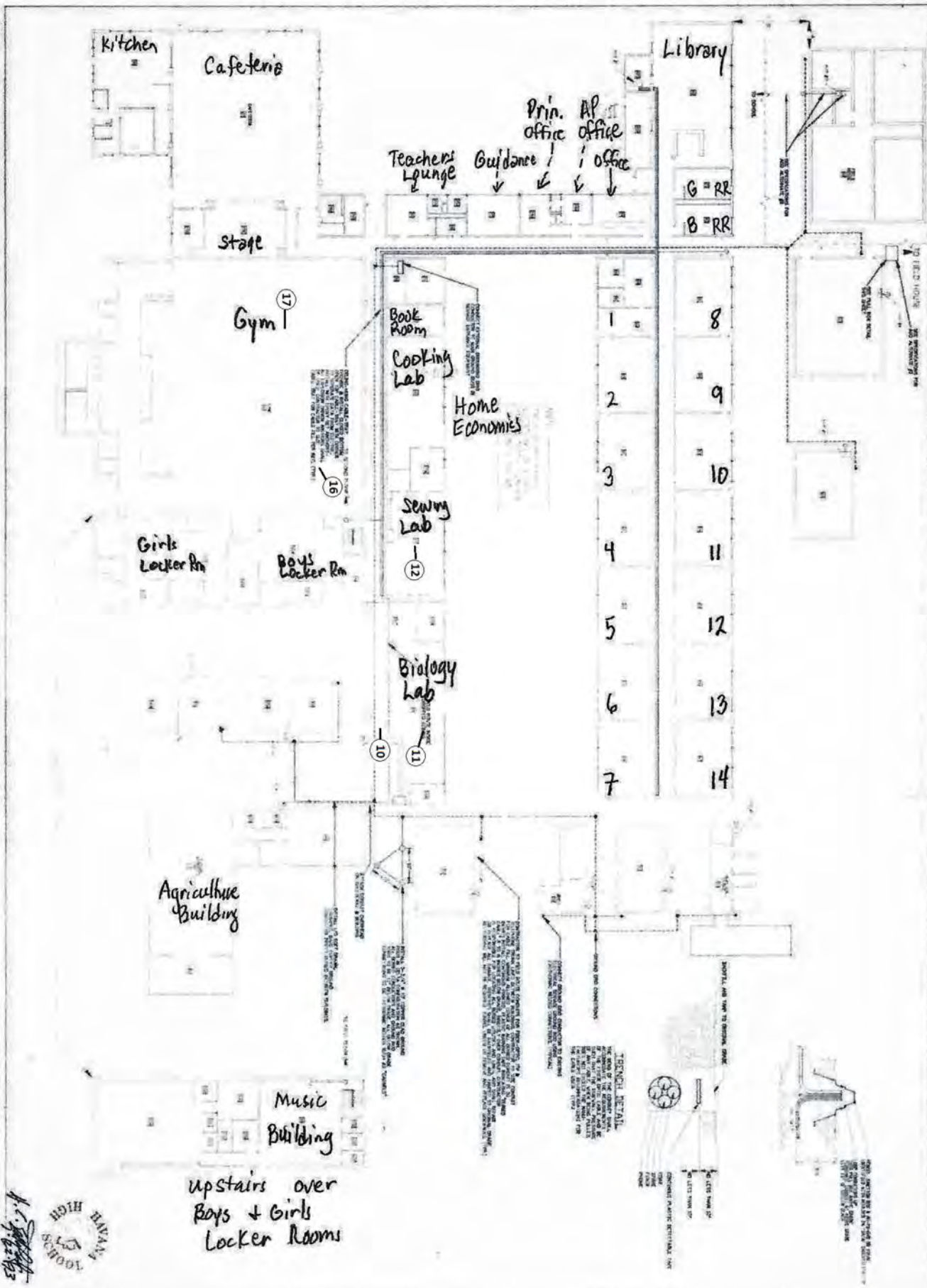


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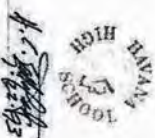
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West



South

North



C1

DATE	DESCRIPTION
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10/1/83	REVISED
10/1/83	REVISED

HAVANA HIGH SCHOOL  
 RETROFIT FOR TECHNOLOGY  
 CABLE TRAY & GROUNDING PLAN

BE

East

# Northside High School

Havana, Gadsden Co., FL

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1:3,000

Date: 9/13/2018



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Basemap Source: Source: Esri,  
DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar  
Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS,  
USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping,  
Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo,  
and the GIS User Community





NORTHSIDE  
CAREER SCHOOLS



1

































HOME OF THE  
GLADIATORS





















RE  
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SIDE  
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1-030A











The first document is a large, yellowed page with two columns of text. The text is written in a cursive script and appears to be a historical record or a legal document. The second document is a smaller, white page with a single column of text, also in a cursive script. The third document is a larger, white page with a single column of text, possibly a letter or a report. The fourth document is a smaller, white page with a single column of text, similar to the second document. The fifth document is a larger, white page with a single column of text, similar to the third document. The sixth document is a smaller, white page with a single column of text, similar to the second document. The seventh document is a larger, white page with a single column of text, similar to the third document. The eighth document is a smaller, white page with a single column of text, similar to the second document. 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1-008A

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FIBER  
PLATE

YOU ARE NEVER A LOSER UNTIL YOU GIVE UP!







TRYING





Johnny Lock

FL  
CJX 578

PENSACOLA, FL.  
904-477-7645







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Northside High School

Multiple Name: Florida's Historic Black Public Schools MPS

State & County: FLORIDA, Gadsden

Date Received: 12/21/2018      Date of Pending List:      Date of 16th Day:      Date of 45th Day: 2/4/2019      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100003408

Nominator: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |                                          |                                             |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |                                             |

X Accept       Return       Reject      2/4/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Meets the registration requirements of MPS. Good example of modernist design for the community's segregated school

Recommendation/ Criteria Accept / A & C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



## FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

**RICK SCOTT**  
Governor



**KEN DETZNER**  
Secretary of State

December 13, 2018

Dr. Julie Ernstein, Deputy Keeper and Chief,  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Dr. Ernstein:

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for **Northside High School (FMSF#: 8GD01571) in Gadsden County**, to the National Register of Historic Places. The related materials (digital images, maps, and site plan) are included.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 245-6364 if you have any questions or require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ruben A. Acosta  
Supervisor, Survey & Registration  
Bureau of Historic Preservation

RAA/raa

Enclosures