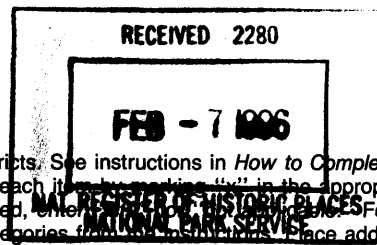


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "full" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A". For 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 Poydras High School

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 460 West Main Street N/A not for publication

city or town New Roads N/A vicinity

state Louisiana code LA county Pointe Coupee code 077 zip code 70760

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.)

Jonathan Fricker 1/29/96
 Signature of certifying official/Title Jonathan Fricker, Date
Deputy SHPO, Dept of Culture, Recreation and Tourism
 State of Federal agency and bureau

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

 Signature of certifying official/Title Date

 State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall
 Signature of the Keeper

 Date of Action
 Entered in the
 National Register

3/7/96

Poydras High School
Name of Property

Pointe Coupee Parish, LA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)
Category of Property (Check only one box)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object |

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Brick

roof Other: Tar & Gravel

other Concrete

Narrative Description

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

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Poydras High School, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 1

Poydras High School is a three story building built in 1924 on the edge of downtown New Roads, the parish seat of Pointe Coupee. The school is of beige and brown brick with off-white cast concrete decorative elements. It is set back about two hundred feet from the small community's major traffic artery, Main Street. Representing the eclecticism of the period, the well-detailed building borrows loosely from various sources and is hard to pigeonhole into a particular stylistic category. Nonetheless, because there are a number of design motifs reflecting the neo-classical taste, that stylistic term is being used in the computer data entry section of this form. The high school has received only very minimal alterations since construction.

Poydras High has the five-part articulation common to school buildings of the period. The walls advance and recede to mark projecting end pavilions and a slightly projecting entrance pavilion. The central entrance pavilion is highlighted by a decoratively shaped parapet containing a shield with a lamp of knowledge as relief design. Immediately below the shield is a plaque proclaiming the name of the school. The school's handsome entrance porch features three fluted columns on each side and matching pilasters. The capitals are ornamented with what appear to be stylized papyrus leaves. The entablature features a dentil band and rosettes at the corners. The entrance porch balcony has bulbous balusters and paneled piers. At the third floor level there is a diminutive curving balcony, the bottom of which is formed of elongated acanthus leaves.

The school's various types of windows are an important element in its overall architectural character. The most visually dominant windows are those located on the second and third floors between each end pavilion and the central entrance section. Grouped in pairs, they feature a prominent panel with engaged balusters resembling a balustrade. They have twelve over two panes, as do most of the other windows. The windows on the first story are accented with shallow arches and a cast concrete keystone. The doors on the second and third stories of the entrance section (opening onto balconies) feature transoms and multiple panes of glass. To each side is a small nine over two window with a shallow arch brick accent. Finally, on the front and rear of the end pavilions at the second and third story levels are small six pane windows grouped in pairs (one pair on each story).

Poydras High is particularly noteworthy for the quality of its brickwork. The first story is of brown brick accented with projecting horizontal brick bands. The second and third stories are beige brick with the horizontal bands done in brown brick. On each end pavilion is a large rectangular panel set off by a brown brick band. Within the composition is a striking beige and brown brick design featuring diamond patterns. The side elevations feature a continuation of the previously mentioned horizontal brick banding, while the rear, is of plain brick, as would be

CONTINUED

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Poydras High School, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA
Section number 7 Page 2

expected.

Other exterior features of note include an owl located within a niche crowning each end pavilion, patera designs marking the corners of the decorative brick panels on the end pavilions, a cast concrete water table, a cast concrete belt course marking the division between the first and second stories, cast concrete coping defining the parapet, and a cast concrete quoin-like design around the doors on the entrance pavilion (second and third stories).

The building's floor plan is typical for a school building of the period. Extending off the back, at the center, is an auditorium wing. Hallways on each floor provide access to large classrooms with adjacent cloakrooms. In one of the end pavilions at the third floor level is a pair of chemistry classrooms with a chemical storage area between them which retains its original wooden, glass door cabinets. Doors feature movable transoms with their accompanying hardware. Much of the flooring on the first floor is concrete scored to resemble tile. Wooden floors survive in the remainder of the building. A functional wooden staircase is located on each end of the building just before the end pavilion.

Assessment of Integrity:

Poydras High School is very well preserved both on the interior and exterior. Exterior alterations, all minor, are confined to two windows on each side elevation that were bricked in, presumably when the fire escapes were added; filling in large openings on the sides of the auditorium wing; and the loss of a small number of window panes due to vandalism. On the interior the only noteworthy changes are the installation of fire doors in the hallways and at the tops of the stairs and the loss of a small number of original doors (less than 5%). Unlike many other period schools, the ceilings have not been lowered, and the floors have not been covered. Finally, the school has suffered some deterioration due to the fact that it had been vacant for several years before being rescued by its new owner, the Pointe Coupee Historical Society.

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

N/A

(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):

N/A

- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1924

Significant Dates

1924

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

William R. Burk, Architect

Burkes & Haley, Builders

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Poydras High School
Name of Property

Pointe Coupee Parish, LA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property @ 1.6 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	15	649640	3396400
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 National Register Staff

organization Division of Historic Preservation date October 1995

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160

city or town Baton Rouge state LA zip code 70804

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 Pointe Coupee Historical Society
c/o H. T. Olinde, Jr., President

street & number 514 Olinde Street telephone (504) 638-9031 (work)

city or town New Roads state LA zip code 70760

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

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

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Poydras High School, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA
Section number 8 Page 1

Poydras High School is locally significant in the area of education because its construction represented a "coming of age" for public education in the parish seat of New Roads. As will be explained below, the erection of a large modern brick school made possible improved education in various respects, not to mention its considerable symbolic value as a milestone. The school is also locally significant in the area of architecture as a major "high style" landmark within the parish.

EDUCATION:

Poydras High is the descendant of a succession of schools made possible by the philanthropy of Julien Poydras, a local planter and public benefactor. Poydras died in 1824. His will contained a clause bequeathing the sum of \$20,000 for an educational fund, the interest from which was to be used for the erection of a school. Established in 1829 near New Roads, Poydras College operated until the outbreak of the Civil War. A "Poydras School of New Roads" operated for a few years in the 1880s, and in 1889, the immediate predecessor of the nominated building was established on the present site. It was called Poydras Academy. By 1912, the school had outgrown the resources of the Poydras Fund, and it was taken over by the Pointe Coupee School Board, which operated the school as Poydras Academy until 1923. In that year, a school district was formed, a \$100,000 bond issue was passed, and the school board purchased the property in question. (It was still owned by the Pointe Coupee Police Jury, the custodian of the Poydras Fund.)

It is clear that the new building represented a considerable improvement in the physical plant, which translated into a considerable improvement in the quality of public education provided in New Roads. The main building at Poydras Academy was a relatively small one story frame structure. A 1935 history of the school states that it had one large central room with three adjacent rooms separated by high folding doors. Other sources reveal that there was another relatively small one story frame building and a frame dormitory. Apparently one building was for the primary grades and the other for more advanced children. (Both Poydras Academy and its successor, Poydras High, taught grades 1-12.) Proceedings of the Pointe Coupee School Board from 1923 indicate that the Poydras Academy buildings were "badly in need of repairs . . . , and if said buildings are not repaired immediately, they will soon be totally unfit and unsafe for habitation."

This transition from frame school buildings to "modern" brick facilities is a recognizable chapter in the history of public education in the state, with the latter universally by their very nature considered to be better. The *Annual Report of the State Department of Education in*

CONTINUED

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Poydras High School, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Section number 8 Page 2

Louisiana for 1924-25 bragged that the number of brick school buildings in the state had grown from 40 in 1900 to 388 in 1925. By way of explanation, the report noted: "In the earlier years the custom was to erect cheap frame buildings. The custom now is to use permanent materials. . . ."

Building materials aside, New Roads' "modern brick high school," as it was referred to at the time, brought a greatly expanded physical plant. This large, three story building made it possible to separate students by grades and expand the curriculum. It had a large auditorium, a library, a chemistry lab, a suite of rooms for the home economics department, a music lesson studio and a so-called "commercial" department (per a 1935 history of the school). The commercial department provided for instruction in typing, shorthand, etc. The 1935 school history noted that the commercial course was open to anyone in the parish and had an enrollment of 88 at that time.

With this "magnificent new high school," as it was termed on the front page of the local paper, New Roads entered a new era in public education. "We were all amazed at such wonderful facilities for education in Pointe Coupee," notes William Mumford Haile, Jr., a graduate of Poydras High's predecessor.

ARCHITECTURE

The Poydras High School is also of architectural significance when viewed within the context of Pointe Coupee Parish. Pointe Coupee is a decidedly rural parish, with the parish seat and largest town, New Roads, having a population of only about 4,000. An early area of settlement, Pointe Coupee is known for its important collection of French Creole architecture. However, there are very few architectural landmarks from later periods. This conclusion is documented by the Division of Historic Preservation's historic structures survey which has identified 799 50+ year old buildings in the parish. The majority of these are unstyled vernacular rural dwellings. The parish's surviving landmarks from the post-Creole period are limited to a handful of residences, a few churches, the Pointe Coupee Parish Courthouse (NR), and the Poydras High School. Within the context of Pointe Coupee, Poydras High is a "high style" work of architecture. It is an architect's very individual reflection of the eclecticism popular at the time, with the greatest stylistic influence being neo-classical. The building is very intensively articulated with considerable attention to details, as described in Part 7. As one of few well-developed stylistic statements from the post-Creole period, it is a landmark to even the most casual observer. In addition, it has a monumental presence within the context of a rural parish of mainly one story small frame buildings.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Poydras High School, Pointe Coupee Parish, LA

Section number $\frac{9}{10}$ Page $\frac{1}{1}$

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Copies of all of the following sources are located in the files of the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation (National Register and survey):

“A History of Poydras High School and its Background.” 1935 typescript, prepared by seniors at Poydras High.

Annual Report of the State Department of Education of Louisiana for the Session 1924-25.
Baton Rouge, 1926.

Haile, William Mumford, Jr. Letter to Pointe Coupee Historical Society, March 13, 1995. Mr. Haile is a graduate of Poydras High’s immediate predecessor, Poydras Academy.

Historic Structures Survey, Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation.

McFarland, A., Superintendent. “A Brief History of Poydras Academy.” *Louisiana Schools*, February 1935.

Pointe Coupee Banner, August 11, 1923.

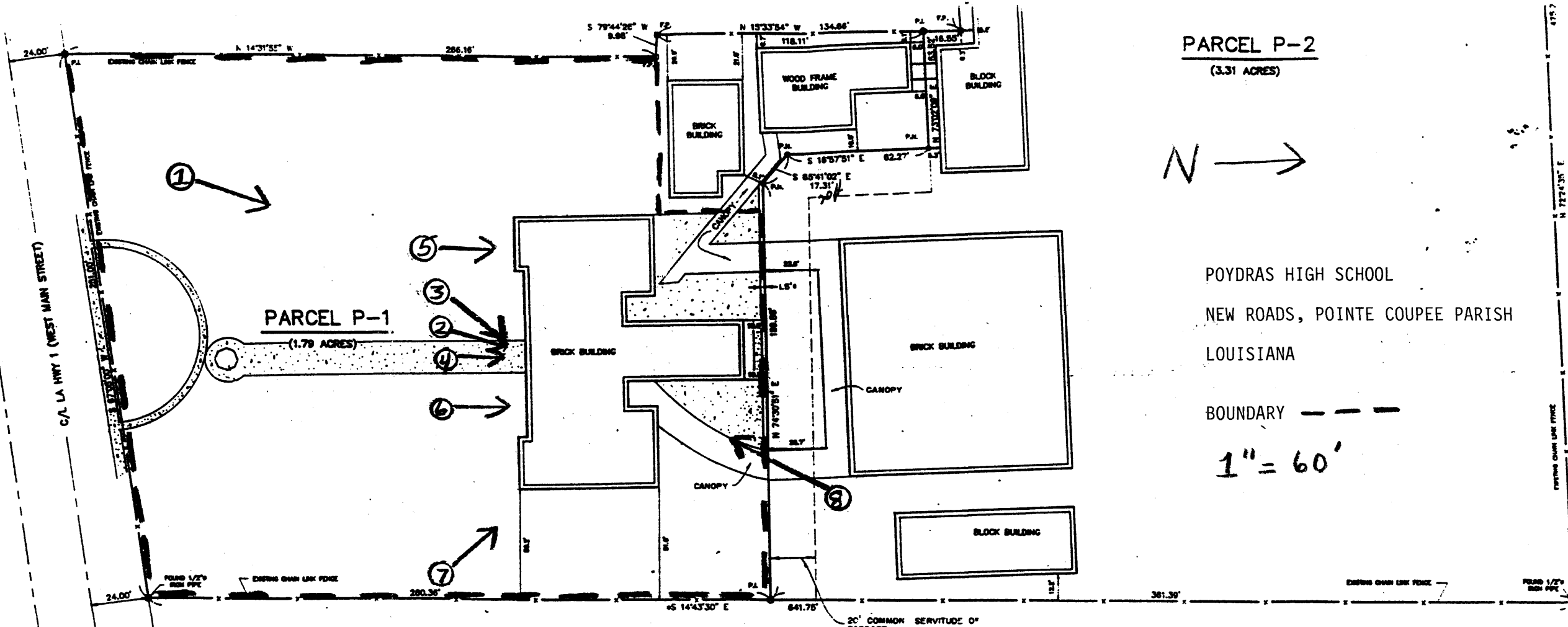
Pointe Coupee Parish School Board Minutes, various dates in 1923 and 1924.

Sanborn Insurance Company Maps, 1909, 1923, 1930.

Zink, Frances Pirotte. *Julien Poydras: Statesman, Philanthropist, Educator*. Lafayette, Louisiana: University of Southwestern Louisiana, 1968.

Boundary Description: Please refer to enclosed plat map.

Justification: As shown on the plat map, boundaries follow property lines to the south, east and west. The rear (northern) boundary lines cuts in at the corner to exclude non-contributing elements.



PARCEL P-2
(3.31 ACRES)



POYDRAS HIGH SCHOOL
NEW ROADS, POINTE COUPEE PARISH
LOUISIANA

BOUNDARY - - - -

1" = 60'

CONGREGATION OF ST. MARY'S
FALSE RIVER ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
340 WEST MAIN STREET
NEW ROADS, LA. 70760

CONGREGATION OF ST. MARY'S
FALSE RIVER ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
342 WEST MAIN STREET
NEW ROADS, LA. 70760

**SUBDIVISION OF
POYDRAS HIGH SCHOOL TRACT**