

Note about the Historic Resources of the Kansas City Missouri School District Pre-1970 MPDF.

This document consists of the following:

- Original 2012 MPDF with the Associated Historic Context:
 - Public Education in the United States (1776 – 1970), page 4 of this pdf, Bookmark1.
 - Public Education in Kansas City, Missouri (1867 – 1970), page 12 of this pdf, Bookmark2.
 - Public School Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri (1867 – 1970), page 30 of this pdf, Bookmark3.

- Cathy Sala
Administrative Assistant
May 2018

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

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Resources of the Kansas City Missouri School District Pre-1970

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying them, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES (1776-1970)
PUBLIC EDUCATION IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI (1867-1970)
PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI (1867-1970)

C. Form Prepared by

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organization Rosin Preservation, LLC date 06/22/12

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city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code 64108

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.


Signature of certifying official Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO

August 20, 2012 See continuation sheet
Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

Date

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Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Public Education in the United States (1776-1970)

The American concept of a free public education evolved from English educational traditions imported to the colonies in the 1600s. Education in seventeenth-century England was accessible only to those with the means to pursue it, with the majority of middle- and upper-class children taught in the home by tutors or governesses.¹ Petty schools, similar to the modern American private school, prepared young sons of wealthy families for admittance to Latin Grammar schools and then either Cambridge or Oxford University. Private tutors taught young girls.² The remaining citizenry learned trades through apprenticeships and rudimentary academic instruction at home or in charity schools operated by a religious institution. American colonists adopted a similar notion of education as an indication of social and economic status, particularly in the upper echelons of society in the Southern colonies.

Education was otherwise the purview of parents and, through them, the local church.³ Colonists regarded basic education as a means to enhance religious observance, believing it to be in the best interest of citizens to be able to read and write. Massachusetts passed a law in 1647 that required towns with at least 50 households to appoint a teacher from within its population and those with at least 100 households to establish a grammar school. While this was still a fee-based education system, where students were required to pay what their families could afford, it was a system imposed by the government that recognized the importance of education as a foundation for the betterment of the community.⁴

By the eighteenth century, educational philosophy borrowed from European models was centered on the developmental patterns of children, emphasizing learning through doing and thinking, not by parroting.⁵ The standard teaching program included studies of geography, natural science, and industrial and agricultural education.

A number of forces during this period enhanced public interest in schooling and literacy. Protestantism promoted literacy as a means of truly understanding scripture. Success in urban commerce was dependent on at least basic literacy and understanding of math. New political theories were spread

¹ Lester D. Crow, Ph.D. and Alice Crow, Ph.D. *Introduction to Education: Fundamental Principles and Modern Practices* (Chicago: American Book Company, 1947) 4.

² Crow, 4.

³ Crow, 5.

⁴ Crow, 10.

⁵ Crow, 19.

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through written publications during the era of rising tensions with England.⁶ It was critical that citizens could read in order to remain current with these revolutionary ideas.

Following the American Revolution, a basic education was increasingly regarded as the most efficient means of promoting democracy in the nascent country. People of all economic and social levels became aware of the function and value of education.⁷ The federal government worked to increase educational opportunities in new and existing states. Thomas Jefferson's Land Ordinance of 1784 included a provision that each new state set aside one section in each township to support common (public) schools.⁸ Believing that it was the State's responsibility to educate its citizens, Jefferson envisioned a complete educational system that extended from the elementary level through the university level for those with the academic aptitude and desire. The University of Virginia (1819) was a later manifestation of those ideas.

In the nineteenth century, American leaders understood that public education was essential to a successful democratic government with informed and thoughtful participants.⁹ Horace Mann in Massachusetts (1837) and Henry Barnard in Connecticut (1838) and Rhode Island led efforts to establish State Boards of Education in these New England states to oversee the implementation of a public education system. The State Boards and State Superintendents of Public Instruction delegated authority over local schools to county superintendents. These models proved successful and were copied by states across the expanding country. The system centralized administrative control of schools in individual communities while standardizing and expanding the curriculum and improving the quality of instruction. Each state enacted its own educational program, yet similar educational policies, particularly at the elementary level, led to a generally accepted and fairly standard American educational system.¹⁰

Massachusetts was a leader in public education, passing laws that required towns with more than 500 families to have a high school (1827) and establishing the first graded elementary school (1848). The high schools taught algebra, geometry, bookkeeping, surveying, rhetoric, logic, and history, providing competition for private academies. In addition to basic reading, writing, and arithmetic, Mann enriched the elementary curriculum with geography, physiology, history, vocal music, and hygiene. As much as the citizenry desired educational opportunities beyond the elementary level, the implementation of

⁶ Sarah Mondale and Sarah B. Patton, *School, The Story of American Public Education* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), 12.

⁷ Crow, 27.

⁸ Andrew Gulliford, *American Country Schools* (Washington D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1984), 36.

⁹ Crow, 17.

¹⁰ Crow, 19.

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these new schools, including acquiring space and hiring teachers, imposed a heavy tax burden that was not always well received.¹¹ This was a common theme in other states, including Missouri.

It took almost another century before free public education became widely accepted. The Industrial Revolution and the Progressive Era led to a wide range of technological and social advancements that increased the number of children who attended school. Industrialization, the expansion of the railroad system, and a surge in immigration swelled American cities in the late 1800s. In response, the administrative and organizational structures of education systems grew to include compulsory school attendance and the implementation of a graded system after the turn of the century. State-level child labor laws were often tied to compulsory school attendance laws, making it more difficult for families to remove their children from school to join the workforce.¹² While some parents protested this action as limiting their right to make economic and educational decisions for their own families, most parents accepted this as an opportunity for their children to get an education. The exponential increase in high school enrollment (178 percent between 1900 and 1930) reveals how quickly public education became accepted, as parents recognized the value of higher education beyond the elementary years.¹³

Education was the primary factor in social and economic successes achieved during the Progressive Era (1900-1930). During this period all aspects of American life focused on the general betterment of society, aiming to achieve a higher standard of living, material advances, and improved health conditions for all people. Congress established the Children's Bureau in 1912 to investigate matters across the country related to children, including birth rates, desertion, dangerous occupations, accidents and diseases, and employment.

Education was widely recognized as the key to maintaining an informed and engaged citizenship, thus perpetuating the Democratic ideals on which the country was founded. Federal, state, and local governments as well as private institutions transferred information and knowledge through a variety of avenues: public schools with more useful and practical curricula; summer and night school programs; correspondence schools; free newspaper delivery to rural areas; and Carnegie libraries in small towns.¹⁴ Increased knowledge led individuals to question existing conditions and gave them the confidence and support to make improvements, whether in their own lives or for the greater society. This led to improved working conditions for women and children through work-place laws and child labor laws. Advances in health education and hygiene produced a healthier population that was better

¹¹ Crow, 19.

¹² Missouri's Compulsory Attendance Law passed in 1905.

¹³ Public Works Administration, *America Builds: The Record of the PWA* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1939) 127.

¹⁴ S. E. Forman, *Advanced American History* (New York: The Century Co., 1921) 564.

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equipped to work and contribute to the economy. Within the schools new courses taught children to learn by doing rather than by rote memorization of facts or patterns, while programs focused on highly specific skill sets prepared individuals to become contributing members of society.

Examination of specific practices and theories in public education raised an interest in the psychology of teaching and the nature of the learner. This investigation resulted in the use of textbooks and standardized curricula designed by qualified educators, rather than by individual teachers in disparate classrooms.¹⁵ A 1913 Presidential Commission studied the relationship between vocational education and occupational needs and found that increased training would benefit citizens entering the workforce. Following passage of the Smith-Hughes Act in 1917 educators began examining the value of vocational training for all students and pursued its integration into the standard curriculum alongside academic instruction. This legislation, along with the George-Reed Act (1929), George-Ellzey Act (1934), and George-Deen Act (1937) provided municipalities with federal aid to establish vocational training in agriculture, trades and industries, home economics, and distributive trades (salesmanship and merchandising). The funds were designated for obtaining necessary equipment and hiring teachers trained to teach and supervise these specific courses. These programs were adopted nationwide in order to better prepare young people for the working world. The money also funded training for teachers who provided instruction in these fields.¹⁶ While the curriculum became better equipped to handle the influx of students during this period, existing school facilities did not. School districts in growing cities across the country scrambled to add classrooms to existing buildings or to construct new buildings.

The surge in demand for education affected urban school districts much differently than it did districts in small towns and rural areas. The inherent density of cities meant that small areas could have student populations that equaled or exceeded that of smaller communities. This required multiple buildings and numerous teachers, and much higher costs for the district. Overcrowded schools in growing cities was a common problem. In the late nineteenth century, city schools were often built on small or sloped lots that were least desirable for residential or commercial purposes. This made it difficult to expand facilities on the existing site. Urban schools had the added challenge of educating students with more diverse backgrounds and future prospects. Large immigrant populations needed programs to help them assimilate into American culture and learn English, and while the majority of children attending rural schools pursued agricultural careers, children in urban areas needed an education that would prepare them for a wider selection of jobs and industries.

¹⁵ Crow, 32.

¹⁶ Crow, 37.

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The desire to improve school facilities coupled with the surge in enrollment that followed passage of compulsory attendance laws led to a national school building boom between 1900 and the mid-1920s. Architects applied the same principles of standardization that improved the educational curriculum to school building design in order to support the Progressive Era focus on safety and sanitation. Construction materials (brick, concrete, clay tile) and finishes (glazed tile, polished concrete) were chosen for their fireproof and hygienic qualities. Technological advances in ventilation and electricity were widely publicized and readily incorporated. A more linear, rather than square, building form was adopted as the standard for Progressive Era schools, creating long double-loaded corridors on the interior. Wide concrete corridors and stairwells provided better egress in the event of a fire. Educational philosophy recognized the importance of physical activity and play in creating balanced individuals and an enticing environment, and designers focused more attention on recreational areas both within and immediately surrounding the building.

The threat of fire was an ever-present concern, particularly in dense urban areas, when open flame was often still the source for light and heat. Everyone was constantly trying to improve the fireproof quality of buildings, especially those that accommodated large groups of people, such as factories, hotels, and schools. Small and large fires routinely damaged school buildings. New building technologies were readily incorporated to improve safety. A reinforced concrete frame paired with the masonry cladding made the school building as close to fireproof as possible. Wide corridors and stairwells enabled efficient egress. New developments in the scientific study of infectious diseases and methods of personal care directly impacted the actions of educators and health officials, and as a result, the design of school buildings. As the number of school children attending school grew and the school year became longer, schools became the front line in addressing numerous health issues.

Nineteenth century schools were typically organized around an 8-4 plan, with eight years of elementary education followed by four years of secondary education. The elementary program focused on fundamental knowledge, while secondary school offered deeper study of academic subjects and vocational skills. Even as a high school education became more widely valued, many schools had difficulty retaining students after elementary school. Educators began to question this system as early as 1888.

Studies in the 1910s examined the needs of the adolescent learner and finally led to a revised school program.¹⁷ The last two years of elementary school were often spent reviewing the basic lessons learned in the previous six years and were considered wasteful when students could take introductory college preparatory or vocational courses. Educators instead recommended that schools organize

¹⁷ Randal Alan Lutz, "Response of Selected Middle Schools to the Accountability Demands of *No Child Left Behind* within the Mathematics Curriculum and Instruction" (doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2004), 4.

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along a 6-2-4 or 6-3-3 plan, creating a transitional program to accommodate seventh and eighth or seventh through ninth grades in a junior high school. Junior high schools resembled high schools in many ways - the organization of the facility, the breadth of the curriculum, and the freedom of students to choose the course of study that best suited their interests and career prospects. Engaging coursework and more vocational courses taught by qualified teachers helped to retain a greater number of adolescents in the secondary schools. The first junior high schools opened in Columbus, Ohio and Berkeley, California in 1909.¹⁸

The start of the Great Depression in 1929 initially halted the school construction begun a quarter-century earlier. After Congress passed the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in 1933 to address labor issues and stimulate the building industry, NIRA created the Public Works Administration (PWA) as a vehicle to allocate federal money to much needed public works projects throughout the country. The PWA provided employment in the building and materials industries, created demand for construction materials, and infused the economy with large sums of money.¹⁹ The PWA fully funded all federal projects and awarded grants of between 30 and 40 percent of project costs to state and local agencies. Municipalities across the country used the money to repair or update existing public buildings and to erect new buildings, including schools. Projects involving existing buildings included site improvements, interior painting, and updating mechanical systems.²⁰ New buildings were often grand architectural works designed by prominent architects as testament to the resilience of the American spirit. Funding for PWA projects continued until the agency closed in 1941.²¹ Between 1935 and 1943 the Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided similar employment opportunities on locally-sponsored construction projects, including airports, public buildings, and roads. Under these programs the country built thousands of new schools and renovated or refreshed thousands of existing school buildings.²²

America's involvement in World War II initiated another construction hiatus with nationwide rationing of building materials for projects not directly related to the war effort. Municipalities built few, if any, schools during this time.²³

¹⁸ Lutz, 6.

¹⁹ Jack F. Isakoff, *The Public Works Administration* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1938), 137.

²⁰ Public Works Administration, 128.

²¹ Isakoff, 150.

²² Elizabeth Rosin, Historic Preservation Services, LLC, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form "New Deal-era Resources of Kansas," 10 June 2002, E-10, E-19.

²³ Amy F. Ogata, "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 67, No. 4, December 2008, 562.

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The baby boom that followed the war, coupled with the years of deferred maintenance and evolving theories regarding the nature of learning, highlighted the inadequacy of existing school buildings. School districts surveyed their existing building stock and found buildings to be undersized, obsolete, and unable to meet the new demand.²⁴ Extensive building campaigns began in the early 1950s to replace most of the remaining late-eighteenth century schools still in use and to expand the early twentieth century schools.

The primary shift in educational theory begun during the Progressive Era did not manifest itself in physical form until the 1950s. It called for child-centered rather than teacher-centered classrooms.²⁵ In the teacher-centered classroom, the large teacher's desk stood at the front of the room, sometimes on a raised platform, and neat rows of student desks were spread out in fixed rows before it. In this environment, the teacher imparted information and the students received it. In the child-centered classroom, the child had more freedom to move about and explore learning for themselves through a variety of materials. The introduction of freedom and flexibility into the method of teaching had direct impacts on the design of the physical space in which that learning occurred. General safety remained a concern, but in the Cold War era, with the ever present threat of nuclear attack, the one-story structure was promoted for the ease of evacuation.

The first generation of experimental school buildings, the Finger Plan, had multiple long corridors with individual classrooms branching off to either side. The self-contained classrooms had windows on three sides with sheltered courtyards between them and comfortable, movable furniture. The indoor/outdoor classrooms provided students with direct interaction with nature, which was believed to foster individual creativity. To create a more home-like environment, ceiling heights were lowered.²⁶ To minimize distraction and diffuse natural light for optimal learning, glass block filled most large openings. A narrow "vision strip" of clear glass in operable sashes ran along the bottom of each opening.²⁷ The use of bright colors to create a welcoming and invigorating environment was also based in scientific study. Most of these experimental schools were designed and built in California, where weather was rarely an impediment to such practices, although elements of the Finger Plan were adopted by school districts nationwide.

²⁴ Department of Public Instruction, *Kansas Study of School Building Facilities: An Inventory of Existing Public School Facilities, Needs, and Resources as Reported by 3,568 School Districts*, Conducted by the Department of Public Instruction, Adel F. Throckmorton, State Superintendent, Topeka, 1952.

²⁵ Ogata, 564.

²⁶ Ogata, 566-567.

²⁷ Ogata, 570.

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Architects increasingly focused on flexibility as the primary goal of school design.²⁸ A group of architects and educators formed the Educational Facilities Laboratory (EFL) in 1958 in order to study educational practices and building designs and find the best ways to approach both.²⁹ This led directly to the Open Plan school. According to a report published by the EFL:

“Old walls should not stifle new ideas. Identical boxes must not enforce the same program on all students and teachers; each is a unique individual. Fixed furnishings must not quash spontaneous inquiry. Dismal, spiritless, and uniform decors must not blight a child’s creativity.”

Ronald Gross and Judith Murphy, *Educational Change and Architectural Consequences: A Report on Facilities for Individual Instruction*, New York, 1968³⁰

Only the exterior walls were permanent in Open Plan schools, aside from the few fixed partitions necessary for bathrooms. Movable partitions, movable furniture, and a variety of teaching surfaces or areas were designed to promote group learning in an environment that could quickly adapt to fit the group. These spaces more closely resembled the corporate office than the domestic living room of the Finger Plan schools.³¹ Several different experimental forms utilized the Open Plan. Some buildings did not have any windows. Others had a circular footprint.

While the experimental plans of the 1950s and 1960s were not widely adopted, other design elements of the Modern Movement era became the norm for school architecture in subsequent decades. Low, horizontal building massing; masonry curtain walls with extensive glazing; steel framing; and low ceilings were standard elements of late-twentieth century school buildings.

The ultimate success of the modern learning environment, however, was determined by the willingness of teachers to adopt the pedagogical techniques for which the space was designed.³² Traditional teaching methods were significantly handicapped in this environment. The open plan and soft partitions provided poor acoustics and more distractions. Lack of natural light and the potential to access fresh air in windowless buildings also limited their appeal.

By the 1980s and 1990s, the spartan, ornament-free facades of schools built during the post-war decades gave way to designs with stylized elements with a Postmodern aesthetic on the exterior of school buildings. Despite the tendency of educational philosophy during this period to gravitate toward child-centered methods of teaching, team-teaching, and group teaching, the physical plant retains the

²⁸ Ogata, 579.

²⁹ Ogata, 581.

³⁰ Ogata, 581-2.

³¹ Ogata, 585.

³² Ogata, 583.

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same basic organizational elements as it did at the start of the century -- rectangular classrooms with static teaching surfaces and separate spaces designated for eating, exercising, and congregating.

Public Education in Kansas City, Missouri (1867-1970)

The United States government acquired the land that became the State of Missouri with the Louisiana Purchase in 1804. Organized first as the District of Louisiana, it became the Territory of Missouri in 1812 and was admitted to the Union as the State of Missouri in 1821.³³ The first constitution in 1820 attempted to address the educational needs of a predominantly rural frontier state. It required each established township to organize one or more free primary schools for educating the poor as soon as it was necessary due to the size of the population and economically feasible.³⁴ In accordance with Jefferson's Land Ordinance, the Missouri Constitution set aside every sixteenth section of land for school purposes. As these 1,254,200 acres were sold, the proceeds were invested to establish the state's school fund.³⁵

Legislation enacted in 1825 established a general system of public education through the formation of school districts.³⁶ Early settlers, however, were more concerned with meeting the basic needs of food, shelter, and occupation than education.³⁷ As was common in agricultural societies across the country, families in Missouri did not consider formal schooling an important part of the educational process. Children learned work on the farm. Families, churches, and neighbors were responsible for the rest of a child's basic education.³⁸ Most western Missouri settlers emigrated from Tennessee and Kentucky and brought with them the educational traditions of the Southern States where typically only the wealthy received any formal education and often in a private setting.³⁹ The earliest schools in Jackson County, primarily in the city of Independence, were log houses with glass windows, a chimney, and a fireplace.

Governor Lilburn W. Boggs implemented a more formal public school system in 1839. The organization was led by a state superintendent and funded from state, county and township funds.⁴⁰ Legislation enacted in 1853 required that the State apply, at minimum, one-quarter of its annual

³³ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, (Kansas City, MO: Union Historical Company, 1881) 24.

³⁴ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 55.

³⁵ Claude A. Phillips, *A History of Education in Missouri* (Jefferson City, MO: The Hugh Stephens Printing Company, 1911) 7.

³⁶ Phillips, 8.

³⁷ *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 231.

³⁸ Mondale, 12.

³⁹ Phillips, 2.

⁴⁰ Phillips, 10.

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revenue to support public education. This legislation also articulated a uniform curriculum for elementary schools, complete with textbook recommendations for specific grades.⁴¹

Missouri's education system developed slowly. As settlements became towns, the growing population yielded a critical mass of school-aged children, leading to the establishment of more schools. The first public high school in Missouri opened in St. Louis in 1853. The biggest impediment to the success of the public education system was the lack of a legal authority to levy property taxes for school purposes. Without guaranteed funding municipalities could neither establish nor maintain school districts. As was the case across the country, Missourians did not initially support publicly-funded education. Families with the means to send their children to private institutions believed this would compromise their elevated social status and embarrass their children. Soon, however, the general population began to appreciate the benefits of having a better-educated citizenry. Increased enrollment as a percentage of the total number of eligible children proved this shift in attitude towards public education.⁴²

Efforts to expand public education in Missouri halted during the Civil War. Even many private schools closed during this tumultuous time. After the conflict, the effort resumed with full force. Laws were enacted to organize country, village, town, and city schools and to levy taxes for buildings and supplies. School districts had organizational structures similar to corporations, with a board of directors governed by state law that operated independently of the local municipal government.⁴³ These laws also specified the qualifications for teachers and school officers.⁴⁴

The state constitution adopted in 1865 addressed Missouri's public education system. It established an elaborate system of supervision, including state and county superintendents and a Board of Trustees for each district; a means of taxation to support the system; and provisions to educate Missouri children of all races. After the highly divisive years of the Civil War, it was difficult for the public to reach consensus on numerous topics.⁴⁵ The public education system was no different. The state constitution of 1875 also addressed public education, the distribution of state funds to support a public education system, and the establishment of a Board of Education to supervise the schools. The 1875 constitution mandated free public schools for all children between the ages of six and twenty, including African American children, although this was achieved through segregated schools.⁴⁶ Upon taking office in January of 1875, State Superintendent Dr. Shannon set out to articulate the values of a public

⁴¹ Phillips, 10.

⁴² *History of Jackson County, Missouri*, 240.

⁴³ Cammack, *Kansas City and Its Schools* (Kansas City, MO: The Schooley Stationary & Printing Co., 1917) 11.

⁴⁴ Carrie Westlake Whitney, *Kansas City Missouri: Its History and Its People 1808-1908*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1908) 305.

⁴⁵ Phillips, 17-19.

⁴⁶ Phillips, 26-27.

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education system and in doing so generated public support for the state's elementary schools, high schools, and normal schools.⁴⁷

Early Years (1867-1899)

Kansas City, Missouri officially incorporated in 1853 as the City of Kansas with roughly 2,500 residents. The small frontier town expanded its boundaries multiple times over the next half-century. The first expansion, just six years after incorporation, nearly quadrupled the size of the city to include an area of nearly four square miles with boundaries at 20th Street on the south, Troost and Lydia Avenues on the east, the state line on the west, and the Missouri River on the north. Arrival of the Missouri Pacific Railroad in 1865 and construction of the Hannibal Bridge in 1869 (the first railroad bridge to cross the Missouri River) ensured the long-term prosperity of Kansas City as a transshipment hub. Markets for mules, yellow pine, hay, winter wheat, and meat packing flourished.⁴⁸ A small expansion of the city limits in 1873 made 23rd Street the southern boundary and Woodland Avenue the eastern boundary, adding little over one square mile in area. In 1885 the city doubled in size again, reaching thirteen square miles by moving both the southern and eastern boundaries. Finally, an expansion to the east and south in 1897 brought the city to an area of over twenty-five square miles. The city of Westport was annexed into Kansas City at this time. By 1900 the population of Kansas City was 163,752.⁴⁹

The early years of the Kansas City School District (District) were spent establishing an organizational structure and building facilities to meet the growing demand for public education. Educational practices followed national trends. The curriculum of fundamental subjects was taught by a single teacher who lectured from the front of the classroom to a class of forty to sixty students sitting at wooden desks organized in neat rows.

The Kansas City Board of Education (Board) was organized on August 1, 1867 under the state law passed the previous year.⁵⁰ The Board consisted of six individuals elected at-large for a term of six years, with two members retiring every two years. An equal number of members represented each political party in an attempt to create a non-partisan, or at least a bi-partisan, entity. Initially Board members served on numerous standing committees that administratively addressed the organization of the District, facilities and furnishings, and teachers and instruction.⁵¹ Additional administrative staff members headed departments that supported and implemented the Board's decisions. The Secretary

⁴⁷ Phillips, 28.

⁴⁸ Cammack, 7.

⁴⁹ Campbell Gibson, Population Division, *Population Division Working Paper No.27: Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790-1990*, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). Online at: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/twps0027.html> <Accessed 1 May 2012>.

⁵⁰ Phillips, 231.

⁵¹ Phillips, 234.

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was also Purchasing Agent and Treasurer and managed the business department; an appointed Architect supervised the building department; and a chief engineer managed the repair department.⁵² The Superintendent directed the day-to-day administration of the schools.

The District Architect was responsible for the design of all new buildings and additions. The gentlemen who held this position were formally trained, practicing architects when they were hired by the Board. Only three individuals are known to have filled the role of District Architect: Manuel Diaz (1883-1887), William Hackney (1887-1899), and Charles A. Smith (1899-1936). Although as Architect they regularly consulted the Board, the Chief Engineer, and published texts regarding optimal features in school design, these three men were most responsible for the physical appearance of Kansas City's public schools, using their knowledge of architectural styles and building construction to produce facilities that reflected the educational theories practiced within.

Without money to acquire or build a school, the Superintendent and sixteen teachers rented rooms in October 1867 and began educating many of the 2,150 school-aged children who lived within the city limits. It is unclear how many children attended Kansas City's first public school or how the children were divided within the classrooms, as the graded system was not yet implemented. As the city's population surged after the Civil War, the number of school-age children grew by more than fifty percent between 1867 and 1869.⁵³ Kansas City's first high school, Central High School, opened in rented space in September 1867.

After the first school bond issue passed later that year, the Board purchased several sites and began erecting school buildings. From the beginning Kansas City's public schools were permanent masonry buildings with load-bearing brick walls and stone ornament. The Washington School (Independence Avenue and Cherry Street) and the Humboldt School (12th and Locust Streets) were the District's first purpose-built schools (*Figures 9 and 10*). Completed in 1868, they had eight and six rooms, respectively.⁵⁴ One-story frame dwellings were typical of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

While support for public education in Kansas City, like the rest of the state, grew slowly prior to the Civil War, establishment of the Board and construction of permanent school buildings proved the city was serious about providing a comprehensive education for its citizens. As was common in urban areas across the country, the Board authorized construction of more schools and the expansion of existing buildings to accommodate the growing population of school-age children as well as the growing demand for education. Over the next three years, the District built five more schools, bringing the total

⁵² Phillips, 235.

⁵³ Whitney, *KC MO, Its History*, 306.

⁵⁴ Whitney, *KC MO, Its History*, 306. The Washington School and the first Humboldt School were demolished by the 1970s.

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to eight schools by 1871. At this time, the Board initiated the practice of naming schools after important U.S. citizens or Board Members and Superintendents, replacing the earlier convention of simply numbering them as construction was completed.⁵⁵ Among those eight schools was the Lincoln School (1869), the city's first school designated for African American children. After Woodland School opened in 1871, it was nine years before another new school was built.⁵⁶ In the intervening years, the Board authorized the installation of steam heating plants in existing schools.⁵⁷

Following the 1885 city expansion, the Board opened twenty new schools in a period of five years. The earliest extant public schools in Kansas City date to this expansion: Webster School (1885), Jackson School (1888), an additional building on Switzer School grounds (1889), and Hamilton School (1890). These were brick-clad ward or graded schools with four to eight rooms.

Educators in Kansas City focused initially on organizing the district and providing adequate facilities for education. Following one-year terms by J. B. Bradley and E. B. Tucke, John R. Phillips served as Kansas City's Superintendent of Schools from 1869 to 1874. At the start of his tenure, Phillips implemented the graded elementary system and an eleven-year course of study with seven years of primary education in the ward (elementary) school and four years of high school.⁵⁸ While it differed slightly from the more common 8-4 plan, locals liked that Phillip's 7-4 plan enabled students to enter college or join the workforce a year earlier. In the 7-4 plan, elementary schools housed first through seventh grade students. Eighth grade was omitted, and secondary school began with ninth grade.

J. M. Greenwood succeeded Phillips as Superintendent in 1874, holding this position until 1913. Greenwood systemized the curriculum across all grades with a focus on language and composition. Foreshadowing the educational philosophies of the mid-twentieth century, he also emphasized that teachers and methods of instruction should be adapted to the learning style and capacity of the student by regular analysis of the student's reading and composition abilities. Through a series of monthly meetings, teachers received instruction in how to conduct these analyses. Written assessments, daily work, and behavior were all taken into consideration for student promotion, rather than relying exclusively on final examinations.⁵⁹ This approach valued attendance and the good behavior in addition to academic work. During Greenwood's tenure, the Board also established the Department of Health

⁵⁵ Whitley, *KC MO, Its History*, 310. None of the first eight District schools (Washington, Humboldt, Franklin, Lathrop, Benton, Morse, Woodland, and Lincoln) are extant. All have been demolished or replaced with newer buildings.

⁵⁶ Whitley, *KC MO, Its History*, 337.

⁵⁷ Whitley, *KC MO, Its History*, 326.

⁵⁸ *History of Jackson County*, 606.

⁵⁹ *History of Jackson County*, 607.

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and Physical Education in 1885. Under this program, classroom teachers led calisthenics and games in the classrooms, halls, and in the limited space outside surrounding the building.⁶⁰

In 1897 after extension of the city limits, the Board built three new school buildings to accommodate students in the new areas of the city. The expansion of city boundaries also brought nine existing schools into the District. These included the (Old) Allen School in Westport and the (Old) Westport High School, which were officially annexed into the Kansas City School District in 1899.⁶¹

Westport

The town of Westport originated in the early 1800s as a trading point with Native Americans in eastern Kansas Territory. By the 1830s it had become an outfitting point for travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. The settlement prospered and developed into an independent community in the 1840s and 1850s as emigration to the west coast via the Oregon and California Trails remained popular. Although Westport families had several private school options, the town established its first free classes in the basement of the Methodist Church in 1854. Just after the Civil War, Westport levied a 1 percent property tax to build a new school building. The four-room brick school opened as the Main School in 1868.⁶² While Westport continued to grow, the exponential growth of Kansas City following the arrival of the railroad soon threatened to overtake the pioneer town. When Kansas City annexed the eight square miles of Westport in 1897, the small school district operated four elementary schools and one high school.⁶³ The original Main School had expanded to ten rooms. It was renamed the Allen School when Kansas City annexed the district.⁶⁴ The (Old) Allen School was demolished in 1914, two years after the current Allen School was built.

Figure 1. New School Buildings (1868-1899)

School	Date	Extant
Washington School	1868	No
(Old) Humboldt School	1868	No
(Old) Franklin School	1869	No
(Old) Lincoln School*	1869	No
Lathrop School	1870	No

Figure 2. Schools Annexed in 1897

School – Annexed	Date	Extant
(Old) Allen School	1899	No
(Old) Ashland School	1899	No
Hendrick School	1899	No
Hyde Park School	1899	No
Ivanhoe School (Old Horace Mann)	1899	No

⁶⁰ Dr. Fred Burger, Kansas City Board of Education, Department of Hygiene and Physical Education, *A Record of the Health Work in the Public Schools of Kansas City, Missouri, September 1899-1930*, (Kansas City, MO: The Board of Education, 1930), 4.

⁶¹ Of the new schools constructed, only Thacher is extant. None of the nine annexed schools are extant.

⁶² "Allen School" *Kansas City Times*, September 5, 1938, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶³ Cammack, 10.

⁶⁴ "Allen School (Westport)" *Kansas City Star*, April 10, 1914, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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West Kansas School	1870	No
(Old) Morse School	1870	No
(Old) Woodland School	1871	No
(Old) Karnes School	1880	No
Chace School	1881	No
(Old) Switzer School	1882	No
Sumner School	1883	No
(Old) Phillips School	1883	No
(Old) Martin School	1883	No
(Old) Jefferson School	1884	No
Webster School	1885	Yes
(Old) Garfield School	1886	No
(Old) Bryant School	1886	No
Adams School	1886	No
Garrison School*	1888	No
Oakley School	1887	No
Madison School	1886	No
(Old) Douglass School*	1886	No
(Old) Lincoln High School*	1887	No
Emerson School	1887	No
Clay School	1888	No
Irving School	1888	No
Jackson School	1888	Yes
(Old) Whittier School	1889	No
Hamilton School	1890	Yes
Lowell School	1890	No
(Old) Linwood School	1890	No
(Old) Longfellow School	1890	No
(Old) Scarritt School	1891	No
Page School	1890	No
Attucks School*	1893	Yes
Yeager School	1894	No
Manual Training High School	1897	No
Bruce School*	1898	No
Thacher School	1898	Yes
Switzer School Addition	1899	Yes

(Old) Kensington School	1899	No
(Old) Manchester School	1899	No
Penn School	1899	No
(Old) Westport High School	1899	No

*School designated for African American Children

Progressive Era (1900-1932)

The largest expansion of the Kansas City limits, and consequently the District, occurred after the turn of the century. After the annexation of Westport, residents continued platting land and building homes on undeveloped land further south and east. Suburban and rural areas quickly grew into dense residential

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neighborhoods with the help of real estate developers. In 1909, the city added over thirty-four square miles by extending the southern city boundary to 77th Street. This new area included the Blue River and Swope Park and the (Old) Border Star and (Old) Troost Schools. The District built new schools to replace these 1860s pioneer schoolhouses in the early 1920s.

The expansion of the school district paralleled the growth of the city. In 1911, the District annexed several districts in Blue Township, located between Kansas City and Independence in unincorporated Jackson County (*Figure 47*). In 1877, just ten years after its organization, Kansas City had eight elementary schools, one high school, and sixty-two teachers for 5,309 enrolled students. In 1901, there were thirty-eight elementary schools, four high schools, and 637 teachers for 28,280 students.⁶⁵ By 1915, 1,354 teachers taught 46,684 students.⁶⁶ As enrollment nearly doubled within a decade, the District was in desperate need of more space.

The Kansas City School District constantly struggled to keep pace with the rapidly growing population. The Board proposed multiple bond issues during this period to cover the costs of erecting the much-needed new buildings. Five new elementary schools, one new high school, and several building additions were completed before 1910, but the Board still received criticism for not doing enough to meet the city's educational needs.⁶⁷ In response, the Board issued two more bond proposals for \$2 million each, primarily to fund more building construction. Between 1910 and 1915, thirteen new elementary schools, one new high school, and four buildings additions opened.

The District's new school buildings (and building additions) reflected a fundamental shift in the way children were educated. Rather than rote memorization and recitation, students were encouraged to learn by doing and trying. This was a key tenet of Progressive Era educational theory. Building plans also incorporated classrooms designated for teaching specialized subjects, such as art, music, domestic science and manual training. Instruction in these subjects developed skills that were useful once students reached the workforce; they also encouraged individuality and helped students identify and pursue personal interests. The District implemented higher standards for teachers as a means of securing individuals trained to each special subjects, rather asking a teacher with a general education background to provide specialized instruction.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Whitney, *KCMO Its History and Its People*, 333.

⁶⁶ Cammack, 12.

⁶⁷ "Buildings, New," *Kansas City Star*, September 12, 1915, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁶⁸ S. E. Forman, *Our Republic: A brief history of the American People* (New York: The Century Co., 1922) 730.

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With an increase in the number of children attending school and the lengthening period of the school year, schools became the front line in addressing numerous health issues. In 1910, the Board established the position of Health Officer within the Department of Hygiene and Physical Education to examine each child in the District at the start of every school year. While the department had been in existence since 1899, its focus prior to 1910 was physical education. The Health Officer coordinated examinations, analyzed the data, and made reports to the Board regarding the health conditions observed.⁶⁹ By 1920 this practice had expanded to include dental as well as physical examinations.⁷⁰

A 1912 article in the *Kansas City Times* published the opinion of a local Catholic pastor who visited schools on the north side of the city (Washington and Karnes Schools). In his statement, the pastor implied that there was a direct correlation between crowded, outdated schools that lacked good ventilation, playgrounds, or gymnasiums and underachieving children and the city's overflowing jails.⁷¹ Schools built after 1900 occupied larger lots than earlier buildings, with outdoor play areas surrounding the school. They also provided indoor bathing facilities, as District officials recognized that such facilities were not standard in all homes.⁷² The first District school designed with a gymnasium was Karnes School in 1913. The Playground and Recreation Association of America, a national organization founded in 1906, was dedicated to promoting recreational activities in indoor and outdoor public spaces as a means to support the physical, social, and mental health of children. After the organization formed a Kansas City branch in 1915, the District added gymnasiums to nineteen existing schools.⁷³ The new gymnasiums also supported the District's implementation of a modified Gary Plan/Platoon Plan system, discussed below in more detail.

The District's most aggressive school building campaign occurred during the 1920s. By 1920, over three hundred classrooms had more than forty-five students, making them officially overcrowded. Restrictions on building materials imposed during World War I and a general lack of funds left the Board with little financial means. The immediate result was 6,000 students placed on a half-day schedule.⁷⁴ The problem was eventually resolved over the course of the next decade. Bond proposals totaling \$21 million (\$5 million each in 1921, 1922, and 1929 and \$6 million in 1925) covered the

⁶⁹ Burger, 4.

⁷⁰ "Dental and Medical inspection, Free," *Kansas City Star*, December 8, 1920, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷¹ "Criticism on poor school buildings in congested districts," *Kansas City Times*, March 28, 1912, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. Neither of these two schools is extant.

⁷² "Baths in new buildings, Showers proposed," *Kansas City Times*, June 5, 1912, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷³ Burger, 5. The Playground and Recreation Association of America officially formed in 1906

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construction of twenty-five new schools and at least eighteen building additions or expansions between 1923 and 1932.⁷⁵

In addition to addressing the problem of overcrowding, the building campaigns of the 1920s also reflected revised educational standards that required a new type of school: the Junior High School. Overcrowding at Central High School in 1917 prompted the Superintendent to implement half-day sessions. The upper three grades attended the morning session while the ninth grade attended the afternoon session. Soon seventh graders began attending the afternoon session with the ninth graders. This was both an attempt to relieve overcrowding in the surrounding elementary schools and an effort to address concerns raised nationally about the need to engage students at this level. By 1919, Central High School had a separate principal and course of study for students in the seventh through ninth grades.⁷⁶ This intermediate step created a place where students had access to more subjects than in elementary school and the freedom to experiment to help identify their interests. When they entered high school to finish their education, students could specialize their learning focus.⁷⁷

Like high schools, junior high schools were regional schools, serving a larger population than the neighborhood ward or elementary schools. They were built near the public high schools, creating a campus of secondary education facilities. The local ward or elementary school was often part of this larger campus too. Kansas City's first building specifically designed as a junior high school was Westport Junior High School (1923), followed shortly by Central (1924), Northeast (1925), and West (1926) Junior High Schools. Westport is an extraordinary example of this school type. The five-story building has elaborate plaster molding and marble tile in the first-floor corridor. Taking advantage of the sloped site, there are an additional two levels below ground that contain multiple gymnasiums and a swimming pool.

The 1929 school bond, the last of the 1920s building wave, funded four new schools and six building additions. Nearly all of the construction occurred south of 50th Street, with the exception of Stark School at the east edge of the city.⁷⁸ This building campaign highlights the pattern of the city's growth and the southward shift of the population.

⁷⁴ "Crowded Condition – Half-day sessions for six thousand school children," *Kansas City Times*, March 3, 1921; "Crowded Condition," *Kansas City Star*, October 18, 1922; "Building Program," *Kansas City Times*, March 6, 1925; Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷⁵ "Crowded Conditions – Half day sessions."

⁷⁶ Kansas City Board of Education, *Course of Study of the Public High Schools of Kansas City, Missouri: 1921*, (Kansas City, MO: Cline Printing Co., 1921), 10.

⁷⁷ "Crowded Conditions – Half day sessions."

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Open Air Movement

The focus on hygiene at the turn of the twentieth century developed into a particular concern for anemic and tubercular students. German educators established “Forest Schools” around 1900 in order to improve student health through rest and direct exposure to fresh air.⁷⁹ Educators and health specialists in the United States understood that the contemporary home environment was not necessarily the healthiest place for children with such diseases, and they strove to provide better conditions within the public schools. In 1912, the federal government established the Children’s Bureau to study the lives of children, including such factors as birthrate, infant mortality, employment, accidents, and diseases.⁸⁰ Creation of this federal agency as well as the health reports produced by the District’s own Department of Hygiene led the Board to consider proactive measures to address health issues among local students. Anemia and low weight were the most common health concerns observed in the Kansas City schools. In addition to making children susceptible to more serious diseases, these conditions contributed to underperformance in school, which was believed to carry over into adult life. Devoting space and resources to these issues in their early stages reduced the incidence of more threatening diseases and enabled the child to better participate in their education. In 1913, Assistant City Health Commissioner Dr. H. DeLamater, Superintendent J. M. Greenwood, Board Architect Charles Smith, and Board Engineer J. H. Brady toured a school in Toledo, Ohio designed specifically to house and educate tubercular students full-time for months at a stretch. The group brought recommendations and ideas back to Kansas City.⁸¹

Rather than construct a separate school entirely devoted to tubercular students, the plans for Karnes School, then on the drawing board, were adapted to include fresh air rooms. Fresh air rooms had many large operable windows on at least two walls. Smith modified the plans for Karnes to include several fresh air classrooms as well as open play areas. The fresh air classrooms had large expanses of operable windows, sometimes with arched openings, and access to rooftop play areas. The plan for Karnes School was modified and repeated over the next two years at McCoy, Swinney, Moore, Bryant, and Twain schools.⁸² Given the large expanses of windows in all of Smiths buildings, the Board was able to designate fresh air classrooms within many existing schools.

⁷⁸ “Building Program,” *Kansas City Times*, January 3, 1930, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁷⁹ “Open Air Schools in 13 Schools – Fight Tuberculosis,” *Kansas City Star*, December 20, 1934, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁰ Dorothy E. Bradbury, *Four Decades of Action for Children*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1956), 3.

⁸¹ “Open Air Schools,” *Kansas City Star*, January 24, 1913, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸² Of these six schools, McCoy, Swinney, Moore, and Bryant are extant. Karnes and Twain were demolished.

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The Open Air curriculum operated on its own schedule. Children would bathe in the basement lavatories each day before heading to their top-floor classrooms for instruction, rest, and lunch. The Board furnished the room, the teacher, and regular academic equipment, but multiple philanthropic organizations supported other aspects of the program. The Anti-Tuberculosis Society furnished food specially prepared in the home economics room and heavy hooded jackets and mittens so that the children could tolerate the daily exposure to fresh air in the winter. The Visiting Nurse Association provided nurses for health supervision within the classrooms. The Pan Hellenic Society donated dining room equipment and toothbrushes.⁸³

Sick children were treated in hospitals or under the care of doctors. The specialized environment provided by the Open Air programs was intended as a preventive measure for children who were vulnerable to disease, mainly those who were underweight, had weak hearts, or other ailments where rest was the prescribed treatment. The purpose of the program was to develop physical strength and to stave off contagious or infectious diseases.⁸⁴ School nurses examined all children at the beginning of each school year. The District physician examined those recommended for the Open Air program and made the final decision about enrollment.⁸⁵ Teachers and nurses inspected home conditions as well and if necessary, enlisted the help of city health services.⁸⁶ By 1930, twenty-one fresh air classrooms in fifteen Kansas City schools served 800 students.⁸⁷ While there were some children who attended fresh air classrooms for their entire elementary school career, in most cases only one year was necessary to restore a child to health and instill better hygiene habits.

Gary Plan/Platoon Plan

The Gary, Indiana school system grew exponentially following the establishment of the steel industry in the community. Rather than implementing a half-day schedule, the standard practice for overcrowding, Dr. William Wirt, Superintendent of the Gary School District instituted a radical new curriculum in 1908 that maximized the number of students utilizing each building during the school day.⁸⁸ In one building, students of all grades, including high school, pursued instruction in four departments: traditional academic subjects; music, drawing, or natural study; auditorium work such as dramatic reading, plays, or folk dancing; and recreation as play and physical development on the playground, in the gymnasium,

⁸³ Cammack, 65.

⁸⁴ Cammack, 65.

⁸⁵ "A New Open Air School," *Kansas City Times*, September 2, 1925, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁶ "Open Air Schools," *Junior Post*, September 11, 1927, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁸⁷ "Open Air Schools in 15 Schools," *Kansas City Star*, November 23, 1930, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. Only Yates and Wendell Phillips were specifically identified as having open air classrooms.

⁸⁸ Crow, 531.

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or in the pool.⁸⁹ This plan to educate the whole child, called the “work-study-play program,” embraced learning through physical activity, academic instruction, artistic expression, and scientific experimentation and utilized all available space on school grounds. Students rotated through the four different departments each day. Students also worked in the school repair shop to assist in maintaining their building. In addition to being yet another activity to occupy students, it saved on maintenance costs. Through this system, traditional classrooms, the gymnasium, the auditorium, and the play-yard were in continuous use throughout the school day.

As urban populations boomed across the country, school districts, including Kansas City, looked for immediate and creative solutions to overcrowded classrooms. The Kansas City Board of Education sent representatives to Indiana to study the Gary Plan and to determine if it could be applied at home, where existing classrooms rapidly filled with students following the expansion of the city limits (1909) and annexation of surrounding districts (1911). The Board decided to test the Gary Plan at the Irving School in 1913.⁹⁰ If successful, this approach could be implemented elsewhere. Irving remained an elementary school but increased its enrollment from 750 to 1,000 students.⁹¹ The Board implemented a similar, modified Gary Plan at Karnes School. Irving operated on the Gary Plan through 1917 before enthusiasm for the program waned. The recreational activities were promoted as relief from the stress of intellectual study, but parents grew wary that the schedule did not afford enough time for academic work. In April 1917, 242 parents of Irving School students petitioned the Board to abandon the Gary Plan.⁹² The Board never formally terminated the Gary Plan but morphed it into the more popular Platoon Plan.

The Gary Plan as implemented by the District did not fully adopt the complex system of scheduling used in Gary, Indiana. Charles Smith, Superintendent Cammack, and the Board evaluated the philosophy and physical requirements of the Gary Plan and selected the components they felt best suited their students. To maximize success of the Gary Plan, with all of the activities required and the full range of student ages, every school would have to be modeled after the modern (early twentieth century) High School, which meant an auditorium, gymnasium, library, manual training rooms, academic classrooms, and an outdoor play area. This was the one concept that Smith, Superintendent Cammack, and the Board agreed to apply to all schools, existing and new. Each new school was

⁸⁹ “Mr. Patterson’s Report,” *Kansas City Star*, November 3, 1913, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁰ The Irving School (renamed the Booker T. Washington School in 1942) was demolished for the New Attucks School built in 1990.

⁹¹ “Gary System,” *Kansas City Star*, November 7, 1913, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹² “The Gary System Opposed,” *Kansas City Star*, April 20, 1917, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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designed with designated space for academics, domestic science, and manual training, as well as an integral gymnasium, auditorium. Gymnasiums, auditoriums, and fresh air classrooms were added to existing facilities.

Evolved from the Gary Plan, the Platoon Plan also organized students by grade but put less emphasis on recreation. Students were divided into two groups with subdivisions for each grade. Each day the groups rotated between regular academic subjects and special subjects, such as manual training and nature study. Like the Gary Plan, the Platoon Plan utilized library, auditorium, gymnasium, and outdoor play areas, but for instruction rather than unstructured recreation. The auditorium played a central role in the Platoon Plan as a space to pursue activities including music, art, speech, and debate. Exploration of these subjects in a group environment promoted citizenship, self-confidence, and self-expression.⁹³ The plan was instituted with great success in Detroit and Pittsburgh.⁹⁴ The Kansas City Board of Education implemented the Platoon Plan at Kumpf and Greenwood schools in 1922. The success of the program at these two schools reinforced the importance of having an auditorium and a library in every District school.⁹⁵

Figure 3. New School Buildings (1900-1930)

School	Date	Extant
Benton School (D. A. Holmes)	1903	Yes
Horace Mann School	1903	Yes
Humboldt School	1905	No
Greenwood School	1906	Yes
(New) Morse	1906	No
Westport High School	1908	Yes
Ashland School	1909	No
Bancroft School	1909	Yes
James School	1910	Yes
Allen School	1911	Yes
Faxon School	1911	Yes
Ladd School	1911	Yes
E.C. White School	1912	No
Van Horn School	1912	Yes
Harrison School	1913	Yes
Karnes School	1913	No
Northeast High School	1914	Yes
Emerson School	1914	No

Figure 4. Additions to Existing Schools (1900-1932)

School – Additions/Expansions	Date	Extant
Irving School	1905	No
Norman School	1911	Yes
Bancroft School	1913	Yes
Thacher School	1914	Yes
Greenwood School	1915	Yes
Irving School	1918	No
Humboldt School	1919	No
Bancroft School	1922	Yes
Ladd School	1922	Yes
Humboldt School	1922	No
Horace Mann School	1923	Yes
Hamilton School	1923	Yes
Kensington School	1923	Yes
Harrison School	1925	Yes
Blenheim School	1926	Yes
Border Star School	1926	Yes
Pershing School	1927	Yes
Longfellow School	1927	Yes

⁹³ Kansas City Missouri Board of Education, *Activities of the Auditorium, Platoon Schools*, (Kansas City, MO: Lathrop Trade School Printing Department, 1926), 9, 13.

⁹⁴ "Platoon Plan," *Kansas City Star*, November 7, 1922, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁵ "Platoon Director Predicts Growth," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 15, 1924, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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Longfellow School	1914	Yes
McCoy School	1914	Yes
Swinney School	1914	Yes
Moore School	1915	Yes
Bryant School	1915	Yes
Twain School	1915	No
Kensington School	1915	Yes
Kumpf School	1919	No
Manchester School	1920	Yes
Woodland School	1921	Yes
Troost School	1922	Yes
Askew School	1923	Yes
Cook School	1923	Yes
Nelson School	1923	Yes
Westport Junior High School	1923	Yes
Paseo High School	1924	No
Blenheim School	1924	Yes
Border Star School	1924	Yes
Pershing School	1924	Yes
Graceland School	1924	Yes
Central Junior High School	1925	Yes
Springfield School	1925	No
R.A. Long High School	1925	No
Northeast Junior High School	1925	Yes
Southwest High School	1926	Yes
Jefferson School	1926	Yes
Nichols School	1926	Yes
West Junior High School	1926	Yes
Bruce School	1927	No
Marlborough School	1927	Yes
Meservey School	1927	Yes
Seven Oaks School	1927	Yes
Knotts School	1930	No
Pinkerton School	1930	Yes
Stark School	1930	Yes
Chick School	1930	Yes

Swinney School	1927	Yes
Nichols School	1930	Yes
Border Star School	1930	Yes
Cook School	1930	Yes
Nelson School	1930	Yes
Greenwood School	1931	Yes
East High School	1931	Yes
Phillips School	1932	Yes

New Deal Era (1933-1940)

The limits of Kansas City did not change again before World War II. The population continued to grow, but not at the rate of previous decades. Like other urban centers during the Great Depression, Kansas City used federal funds for large and small public building projects, including Municipal Auditorium (1934-35) and City Hall (1935-37). In February 1934, the Board of Education accepted a \$500,000 federal grant to enhance their existing \$1.75 million building program. The grant was used to carry

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existing debt charges, which would eliminate the need to raise taxes or issue bonds.⁹⁶ Although specific projects were not discussed, the Board emphasized that the building program would stimulate the local economy, especially the construction industry, and employ men who had long been out of work. Less than a year later, the Board announced twenty-two possible projects totaling \$6.75 million that were eligible for the federal grant funds. The projects included building concrete stadiums, modernizing plumbing systems, replacing windows, enlarging gymnasiums and cafeterias, and building additions to elementary and high schools. The Board also identified six high schools, four junior high schools, and twenty-five elementary schools in need of plaster repair and painting.⁹⁷

While it is difficult to confirm whether or not some of these projects were executed, the Board did construct three school buildings during this time. Lincoln High School (1935) was Charles Smith's last building before retiring in 1936. The Board used the PWA program to fund construction of the long, L-shaped building. The exterior Gothic Revival ornament was executed in low relief, highlighting the influence of Art Deco styling. This building replaced the earlier Lincoln High School in a new location but remained dedicated to educating African American students. The building was praised for its modern features and amenities, with a two-story auditorium and multiple gymnasiums.

When Charles Smith retired in 1936 after thirty-eight years as Board Architect, the Board chose not to replace him, but began a trend of hiring different local architecture firms for building projects. The first firm the Board hired was Wight & Wight, a prominent architecture company who also designed Kansas City's City Hall and the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Wight & Wight designed the Gothic Revival Southeast High School in 1937, incorporating many of the features and amenities used by Smith at earlier high schools. Keene & Simpson, another well known Kansas City architecture firm, designed the R. J. Delano School in 1938. This public school was specifically for children with physical disabilities. Hallways designed for accessibility and rooms designated for treatments in one consolidated facility provided a great improvement over the individual classrooms previously located in different buildings around the District. The Delano School served this segment of the school population until it closed in 2011.

Figure 5. New School Buildings (1933-1940)

School	Date	Extant
Lincoln High School	1935	Yes
Southeast High School	1937	Yes
R. J. Delano School	1938	Yes

Figure 6. Additions to Existing Schools (1933-1940)

School - Additions	Date	Extant
Nichols School	1935	Yes
Switzer Annex	1939	Yes

⁹⁶ "Building Projects of Board of Education – Federal Aid," *Kansas City Times*, February 1, 1934, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

⁹⁷ "Building Projects of Board of Education – Federal Aid \$6,750,000," *Kansas City Star*, January 30, 1935, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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Modern Era (1950-1970)

Nearly forty years after Kansas City's 1909 expansion, the city limits were extended south to 85th Street in 1947. Growing in tandem with the city, the Kansas City Missouri School District annexed the Ruhl-Hartman School District. This was the final expansion of city limits that synced with the Kansas City Missouri School District. Most of the city's growth after World War II occurred north of the Missouri River, although small areas were annexed along the southern and eastern boundaries in 1957 and 1958. By 1960, Kansas City covered nearly 130 square miles.⁹⁸ The District also continued to grow, annexing smaller school districts in unincorporated areas or in other municipalities, such as Independence, that were outside the city limits (*Figure 47*).

In 1958, the Board set the limits of the Kansas City Missouri School District at the Missouri River on the north and the state line on the west. The eastern boundary south of the 47th Street was the city limits. The eastern boundary north of 47th Street was Vermont Street in Independence and the limits of the annexed Rock Creek and Pitcher-Fairview Districts. This meant that some Kansas City children attended school in different districts. Areas south of 85th Street were in the Center and Hickman Mills Districts. Areas in the far eastern parts of the city were in the Raytown and Independence school districts. Students living north of the River attended North Kansas City and Park Hill schools.

As occurred around the country, Kansas City's school-age population grew during the post-World War II baby boom. The need for more space, coupled with changing ideas about education and learning environments resulted in a building campaign initiated in the early 1950s. Voters approved an \$18 million bond proposal in May 1951. The Board acknowledged the need to modernize the city's public schools because the oldest schools were considered safety hazards.⁹⁹ The Board identified five outdated buildings as candidates for replacement. The new Douglass School (1953) erected on the site of the old Douglass School (1886) was the first new building constructed since 1938. Between 1953 and 1957, the Board spent \$33 million to add 256 classrooms to accommodate 9,000 students. Yet, overcrowding remained a problem due to the soaring birthrate.¹⁰⁰ Despite a vigorous building program that produced seven elementary schools, two junior high schools, and six building additions, ten schools remained over capacity in 1958. Smaller bond proposals in 1958 and 1962 funded the construction of six more schools and three building additions. Two separate factors exacerbated the growing enrollment and the need for new school buildings in previously undeveloped areas. Urban redevelopment of a southeast transportation corridor pushed the population further south and east into

⁹⁸ A. Theodore Brown and Lyle W. Dorsett, *K.C. A History of Kansas City, Missouri* (Boulder, CO: Pruett Publishing Company, 1978) 251.

⁹⁹ "Boon to City Schools," *Kansas City Star*, January 13, 1955, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁰⁰ "New Classrooms by the Score," *Kansas City Star*, January 18, 1955, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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the newly expanded city limits, and nationwide desegregation in public schools increased the enrollment of African American students in previously all-white schools.¹⁰¹

In an effort to stay current with national educational trends, the Kansas City Board of Education began exploring experimental school designs. During the mid- to late-1960s the Board adopted the philosophy of the Open Plan program and began applying the design to new school buildings. Circular designs provided a great deal of flexibility for group instruction and freedom within the classroom. The Board proposed a \$10 million bond issue in 1967 to fund three new buildings: Franklin School, King/Weeks School, and Manual School.¹⁰²

Kansas City schools were racially segregated from the time the Board organized in 1867 until the Supreme Court ruled segregation illegal in the Brown vs. Board of Education decision of 1954. Thirty years later, the District embarked on an extensive building campaign as part of a court-ordered desegregation program. During the late 1980s and early 1990s existing schools were upgraded, additions were constructed, and new schools were built to create an elaborate magnet school program. All of the schools operating in the District today have alterations from this era.

After World War II, development of new suburban areas in surrounding communities led to the first loss of population in Kansas City's history. Enrollment in Kansas City schools plummeted after 1970, from 77,000 in 1963 to 44,000 in the 1980s.¹⁰³ In 2009, with a student population of 17,500 housed in fifty-eight buildings, the District embarked on a "Right Sizing" program that consolidated operations in thirty-one schools. An additional ten schools were mothballed to accommodate future needs. Thirty school sites were placed into a Repurposing program that involved the surrounding neighborhoods and private sector in an effort to identify appropriate new uses for these facilities.

Figure 7. New School Buildings (1950-1970)

School	Date	Extant
Douglass School	1953	Yes
Hartman School	1953	Yes
Martin School	1954	Yes
Lincoln Junior High School	1954	Yes
Longan School	1955	Yes
Wheatley School	1955	Yes

Figure 8. Additions to Existing Schools (1950-1970)

School – Additions	Date	Extant
Marlborough School	1952	Yes
East High School	1953	Yes
Graceland School	1953	Yes
West Junior High School	1956	Yes
Askew School	1956	Yes
Longfellow School	1957	Yes

¹⁰¹ "Sees School Needs as Big Challenges," *Kansas City Star*, September 22, 1959, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁰² "Schools Float Big Bond Issue," *Kansas City Times*, May 3, 1967, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. Franklin School and King/Weeks School had open plans.

¹⁰³ University of Missouri, Kansas City Department of Architecture Urban Planning and Design, *KCMSD Repurposing Guidebook* (Kansas City, MO: University of Kansas City Missouri, 2010), 2

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Dunbar School	1956	Yes
Fairview Junior High School	1957	Yes
Switzer Primary School	1957	Yes
Bingham Junior High School	1959	Yes
Melcher School	1959	Yes
Garfield School	1960	Yes
West Rock Creek School	1961	Yes
Southeast Junior High School	1962	Yes
Richardson School	1963	Yes
Franklin School	1968	Yes
King School	1968	Yes
Manual School	1968	Yes

Phillips School	1960	Yes
Scaritt School	1960	Yes
Westport High School	1964	Yes

Public School Buildings in Kansas City, Missouri (1867-1970)

Late Nineteenth Century Schools (1867-1899)

Ward Schools/Graded Schools

Kansas City's earliest schools occupied lots in mixed-use neighborhoods among smaller one and two-story dwellings and commercial strips with rows of narrow stores in the heart of the city. The buildings sat near the street at the corner of a parcel composed of multiple city lots. Prior to 1885, outdoor space was of little concern, as there was no physical education program in place for the District.

These school buildings were not one-room frame schoolhouses, but rather masonry clad buildings. Located in an urban center, rather than a rural setting, where masonry was readily available and a greater number of students were educated made this an appropriate choice. The masonry exteriors communicated a sense of stability and permanence. These early school buildings had load-bearing masonry or frame structures clad with red brick or cut stone and trimmed with limestone. The designs incorporated a variety of elements that expressed the Victorian architectural styles popular at the time of construction. Asymmetrical Romanesque Revival or Victorian massing often featured a short tower that projected above a hip or gable roof. Ornament included quoins and window hoods. As these early buildings did not have ventilation systems, light and fresh air came from large windows on every exterior wall. Narrow stairs led to a hall on each floor surrounded by four to eight identical classrooms. In accordance with common teaching practices, all the classrooms were used in the same manner. Narrow open cloak rooms were adjacent to the classrooms.¹⁰⁴ The earliest schools had tall, narrow bell towers that rose above the roofline on the front elevation. In May of 1886, a tornado destroyed the bell tower at the Lathrop grade school. The damaged tower crashed through the roof, killing fifteen students

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(Figure 13).¹⁰⁵ The Board removed all remaining bell towers (Figure 11), and future schools were designed without this distinctive element.¹⁰⁶

The first two public schools built by the Kansas City Board of Education opened in 1868. The first, Washington School, opened that April at the southwest corner of Independence Avenue and Cherry Street. Humboldt School opened five months later at the northwest corner of 12th and Locust Streets (Figures 9 and 10).¹⁰⁷ It is unclear who designed these buildings. The Board could have easily consulted pattern books or publications dedicated to describing the ideal school facility. Washington School was a narrow red brick building with stone trim and lancet windows. The brick façade of Humboldt had dark stone quoins and a corner tower. The two-story rectangular building had tall, arched window openings and cross-gable roofs. The ward schools built over the next few decades used similar design elements.

In 1884 Manuel Diaz was the first architect hired by the Board of Education. He applied Victorian details to the ward schools he designed, using elements such as segmental arched windows with decorative hoods and round arched Romanesque Revival entries. Diaz's Webster School (1885) is the oldest extant public school building in the city (Figures 11 and 12).

Diaz resigned in 1887 after just three years with the District. The Board next hired William F. Hackney, who served as Board Architect until his death in 1899. While only one extant school can be attributed to Diaz, four extant schools (Jackson, Hamilton, Attucks, and Thacher) date to Hackney's tenure.

Early Twentieth Century Schools (1900-1940)

Standardization efforts among school districts initiated during the Progressive Era affected school design as well as curriculum.¹⁰⁸ Architects and educators published plan books for school buildings similar to those that popularized residential designs. Their ideal school was two or three stories tall with a symmetrical facade and a flat roof. Limestone, pressed metal, or terra cotta trim commonly ornamented red brick walls using elements from one of the revival architectural styles popular during this period, although the expression of style was typically restrained. Articulated entrances centered on the symmetrical front elevation and parapets or cornices were the most ornate elements of school

¹⁰⁴ Whitney, *History & People*, 334.

¹⁰⁵ "1886 Tornado," *Kansas City Star*, May 10, 1936, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹⁰⁶ The bell tower at Webster School was recreated as part of the rehabilitation of this building.

¹⁰⁷ Whitney, *KC MO, It's History*, 306.

¹⁰⁸ Brenda Spencer, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*, 22 April 2005, E-18.

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buildings.¹⁰⁹ These buildings were often built in phases as funds allowed and population warranted. Kansas City's schools were designed in units that could be erected in sections as needed. Execution of the full design completed the symmetrical façade.

Materials and design elements reflected a concern for safety. Fireproof materials, such as concrete, steel, and masonry, were widely used for building structures. Brick, concrete or stone clad the exterior, while combustible woodwork was minimized on the interior. Wide hallways and stairways enabled efficient evacuation of a school in the event of an emergency. The term "fireproof" was often one of the first adjectives used to describe schools in promotional literature published during construction or upon opening.

School buildings evolved from the vernacular eight-room ward school to a more formal massing with multiple classrooms flanking a double-loaded corridor (*Figures 22 and 33*). The most common floor plans were T, I, L or U-shaped.¹¹⁰ By the 1910s school buildings had specially-designed areas for the study of science, home economics, and agriculture, industrial and manual training in order to execute the Progressive Era principle of learning through doing rather than by rote. Lower level floors contained playrooms and lavatories for girls and boys. With the exception of a few single-stall bathrooms scattered throughout the building, the basement lavatories were the main facilities. The lavatories had exterior entrances so that children could enter through these rooms after outdoor activities prior to returning to the classroom.

Wilbur Thoburn Mills' *American School Building Standards* published in 1910, described in explicit detail the features and dimensions of the ideal American public school. Mills believed schools should have simple plans and "should be built of the most enduring materials procurable; first, because this contributed to safety and second, because the true character of the building would be best expressed through such materials."¹¹¹ This meant that both the interior and exterior should be masonry to make the building as fireproof as possible, particularly the corridors, stairs, and entries.

The ideal classroom size was 24 by 30 feet or 25 by 32 feet with 12-14 foot ceilings for a class of up to forty pupils, although in the real world class size often exceeded forty pupils.¹¹² Large bands of windows, set as close to the ceiling as possible and as close to each other as possible, admitted a

¹⁰⁹ Spencer, E-20.

¹¹⁰ Spencer, E-20.

¹¹¹ Wilbur Thoburn Mills, *American School Building Standard* (Columbus, OH: Franklin Educational Publishing Company, 1910) 34.

¹¹² Mills, 26.

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maximum amount of natural light and fresh air. Classroom furniture was oriented so that the windows lit the room from left, as most children were right-handed.¹¹³

Operable transoms aided in ventilating the corridors and provided cross-ventilation. Elaborate ventilation systems were also designed to extract “foul air” and introduce fresh air into classrooms, offices, and corridors. Large fan belts helped to circulate the air through an elaborate system of ducts and ventilation shafts. The foul air was drawn from each room into a large space in the attic, from which it was vented through a single stack. Placement of vents within rooms was designed to maximize the flow of cool and warm air. Gymnasiums, auditoriums, libraries and cafeterias served specialized functions. Auditoriums and libraries were often utilized by the larger community for meetings and other functions. By the 1920s, branches of the Kansas City Public Library were built within new public schools.

The greatest expansion of the Kansas City School District occurred during this time period. By this time the Board had divided the city into neighborhood wards or districts. New schools were erected at the center of each ward.

The Board hired Charles A. Smith as Board Architect in 1899 after his employer and collaborator William F. Hackney passed away. Smith, in collaboration with the Board and Superintendent, was the most significant figure in transforming the city’s collection of educational resources. With so many extant resources from this era, patterns of development and design become clear. Smith’s job was to translate educational philosophy into the physical environment. He toured schools around the country with various Board members and the Board’s chief engineer to observe experimental programs in action before collaborating with the Board and the Superintendent to design schools using modern technology to incorporate the most desirable components of leading educational practices. The school plans that Smith designed met current physical and philosophical requirements and were adaptable to fit a specific building site.

Charles Smith designed fifty-four new buildings and twenty-six additions or expansions for the Kansas City Board of Education between 1899 and 1936. Of these structures, forty-one new buildings and twenty-two additions are extant (*see Appendix A for the list of surveyed resources*). Most of the schools from this period were built in phases, as funds allowed and population dictated. Smith and his associates varied interior and exterior ornament to differentiate buildings, but interior plans remained relatively similar, evolving occasionally to reflect advances in technology and educational philosophy.

¹¹³ Mills, 28-29.

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The architectural styles Smith employed reflect the variety of historical revival styles popular during this period.

Bancroft School illustrates how elementary schools evolved during this period to meet the constant demand for more classrooms and the District's evolving philosophy about school plant design (*Figures 17-24*). Between 1904 and 1907, three two-room frame school buildings were constructed on the southeast corner of East 43rd Street and Tracy Avenue to provide temporary classroom space for children in the growing neighborhood. A fourth frame building was moved to the site from East 39th Street and Warwick Boulevard in August of 1908 to accommodate the still expanding student population. Architect Charles Smith designed a twenty-one-classroom building for the neighborhood in 1908. The south half of the plan, containing eleven classrooms, opened in 1909. Construction of the north half in 1913 completed the original plan. In 1922, Smith designed an addition to the south end of Bancroft. This block contained four classrooms as well as stacked a gymnasium and auditorium to create the prescribed school plant.

Like school districts around the country, the Kansas City School Board was concerned about safety, particularly improving the fireproof quality of buildings. The wide variety of architecture and construction methods employed for district schools prompted the Board's fire inspection committee to visit seven buildings in 1908. The inspection committee included the chief engineer J. H. Brady, architect Charles A. Smith, and deputy factory inspector William Hicks. This group suggested safety improvements for these specific buildings, such as adding fire escapes to classrooms that lacked direct access to egress stairs and using metal lath in boiler rooms.¹¹⁴ Smith also adopted new building technologies into his school plans. Most notable was the use of poured concrete structures. When paired with masonry cladding this made the building as close to fireproof as possible. Wide corridors and stairwells that enabled efficient egress were also standard features in Smith's schools.

Experimental programs such as the Gary Plan/Platoon Plan and the Open Air Movement affected the design of school buildings in the late 1910s and early 1920s. The Open Air Movement provided academic instruction to anemic and tubercular children in a specialized, controlled environment with year-round exposure to fresh air. The fresh air classroom had large expanses of operable windows, often with arched openings and access to outdoor rooftop play areas. Aside from these specialized classrooms, the rest of the school building contained standard Progressive Era features, including classrooms for manual training, wide double-loaded corridors, and indoor bathrooms. The U-shaped double-loaded corridor surrounded a stacked gymnasium and assembly room below the roof-top play

¹¹⁴ "Fire Inspections," *Kansas City Star*, March 11, 1908, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Fire Inspections, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library. These seven schools are no longer extant.

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area. The Karnes School (1915, demolished) was the first school in Kansas City designed to incorporate the Open Air program (*Figure 27*).¹¹⁵ McCoy, Milton Moore, Bryant, and Swinney schools all opened in the next two years with similar floor plans including fresh air classrooms and roof-top play areas (*Figures 28 and 29*). The design of Moore was unique for its limestone façade.

The Gary Plan attempted to maximize the number of children who could attend school on any given day. To achieve this, educators devised programs to utilize all available space. In addition to pursuing academics in the classrooms, children rotated through programs on dramatic and cultural activities in the auditorium, physical activities in the gymnasium, and outdoor activities on the school grounds. While the Board never adopted the full scope of the Gary Plan in Kansas City, they adopted several key features of the plan, including the variety of activities available to children throughout the school day. New schools designed after 1913 included gymnasiums and auditoriums, and additions containing a stacked auditorium and gymnasium were constructed at many existing schools during this period as well.

Frame Schoolhouse

During periods of rapid expansion in the early twentieth century, the Board often erected one or more frame schoolhouses on a new school site before building a permanent masonry school (*Figures 15 and 17*). Frame buildings on stone foundations could be built quickly and with relatively inexpensive materials, using published standard plans that did not require the services of an architect. These one-story buildings had a rectangular footprint that held between one and four rooms. Buildings with multiple rooms had a center hall. The simple buildings were clad with wood clapboard or shingle siding. They did not have electricity or indoor plumbing. Wood-burning stoves provided heat. In 1916 there were thirty-six frame school buildings in Kansas City, including the Wheatley School for African American children, which still stands at 54th Street and South Benton Boulevard (*Figures 25 and 26*).¹¹⁶ Children attended classes in four two-room frame schoolhouses on the site of Bancroft School before the District completed the permanent school building in 1909. The temporary buildings were moved throughout the District as needed. When their useful life expired, the frame schoolhouses were demolished or sold for a new use.

Modern Era School Buildings (1950-1970)

Kansas City's population surged after World War II following national trends. Despite significant residential development south and west of the city, just across the state line in Kansas, population growth within the city necessitated an expansion of the school building program. In 1951, voters

¹¹⁵ Cammack, 65.

¹¹⁶ "Buildings, New" *Kansas City Star*, September 12, 1915, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

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approved an \$18 million bond issue to build one new high school and eight new elementary schools to replace obsolete buildings and to construct additions to seventeen existing schools. Smaller rehabilitation projects included life safety (fire prevention) improvements, modernization of mechanical and electrical systems, and remodeling cafeterias, industrial arts classrooms, and home economics classrooms.¹¹⁷ Only \$7 million of the work was executed, but that included five new elementary schools (Douglass, Hartman, Martin, Longan, and Wheatley), one new junior high school (Lincoln Junior High School), and additions to seven existing schools. By 1956, the District operated twenty-six buildings that were over fifty years old. A \$27 million bond issue proposed in 1956 covered the construction of nine more schools (Dunbar, Fairview, Switzer Primary Unit, Bingham, Whittier, Melcher, West Rock Creek, and Southeast Junior High School) and four additions, all of which were completed by 1964.¹¹⁸ Three additional schools were constructed in 1968. Like their predecessors, modern school buildings were erected in phases. Blocks of various sizes added in a seemingly haphazard manner resemble organic growth rather than an overall design intention.

The Kansas City School District did not adopt the more experimental school plans that became popular in California during this period. Instead the District remained focused on developing school environments that complemented traditional teaching methods. The exterior appearance of the new construction illustrated Modern Movement aesthetics. The long, low rectangular buildings with flat roofs and banded windows were simplified versions of Finger Plan schools. They featured curtain wall construction with masonry cladding. Douglass School (1953) was the first such school in the District (*Figures 39 and 40*).

Kansas City School District Architects

During the peak of school plant construction from the 1880s to the mid-1930s, the Kansas City Missouri Board of Education employed a Board Architect. While early Board Architects Manuel A. Diaz and William F. Hackney executed their duties satisfactorily, it was Charles A. Smith, serving in this position from 1898 to 1936, who made the greatest contributions to the Kansas City public school system. Smith designed more than sixty new school buildings and additions to existing buildings during this forty-year period. To meet this challenge, Smith developed a basic building plan that reflected the tenets of Progressive Era school design. Each building had a unique exterior, reflecting the wide variety architectural revival styles popular during this period. Smith embraced modern technologies, such as reinforced concrete construction and mechanical ventilation systems, to address increased public concern about health and safety in schools. The building plans evolved over time as new technologies appeared and as the Board adopted different educational philosophies. After Smith retired and the

¹¹⁷ Kansas City, Missouri Board of Education, *A proposed building program, public schools, public library system* (Kansas City, MO: Kansas City, MO Board of Education, 1956) 17.

¹¹⁸ KCMO Board of Ed., *A proposed building program*, 25.

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wartime construction hiatus ended, the Board began hiring local architects on a per-project basis to complete school design work. Most of these employed the Modern Movement style and reflected current educational philosophy regarding the school plant.

Manuel A. Diaz

Manuel A. Diaz served as Board Architect from 1884 to 1887. Not much is known about his life or work, other than that he worked as a civil engineer prior to becoming School Board Architect. Diaz resigned this position in 1887, although he continued to practice architecture in Kansas City, designing numerous private residences, before moving to Buffalo, New York in 1891. During his tenure with the District, Diaz designed (Old) Jefferson (1884), Webster (1885), (Old) Garfield (1886), (Old) Bryant (1886), Adams (1886), (Old) Garrison (1886), Madison (1886), (Old) Douglass (1886), and Oakley (1887).¹¹⁹ Only the Webster School is extant.¹²⁰

William F. Hackney

William F. Hackney was born in Springfield, Missouri in 1854, where he received his primary education. Hackney began his architectural career in the office of A. Piquenard in Chicago. When Piquenard died in 1875, Hackney assumed control of the firm. Hackney expanded the firm by partnering with M. F. Bell. Together they completed the Iowa and Illinois State Capitol buildings begun by Piquenard. After moving to Kansas City in 1887, Hackney was immediately hired by the Board of Education as their official architect following Diaz resignation.¹²¹ Hackney's firm designed fourteen schools of various sizes, including the 32-room Manual Training High School.¹²² In addition to his work for the school district, Hackney designed the Kansas City Missouri Public Library and several private residences.¹²³ Hackney died in May, 1899. Hackney designed (Old) Lincoln High School (1887), Emerson (1887), Clay (1888), Irving (1888), Jackson (1888), (Old) Whittier (1889), Hamilton (1890), Lowell (1890), Linwood (1890), (Old) Longfellow (1890), (Old) Scarritt (1891), Page (1890), Attucks (1893), Yeager (1894), (Old) Manual Training High School (1897), Bruce (1898), and Thacher (1898). Jackson, Hamilton, Attucks and Thacher School are extant.¹²⁴

Charles A. Smith

¹¹⁹ Kansas City Landmarks Commission, City Development Department, *Kansas City Public Schools Survey, Final Report (pre 1940)* (Kansas City, Missouri: Landmarks Commission, 1989) 52. "(Old)" indicates that a school was replaced with a later building that is extant. Some replacement schools were not built in the same location as the earlier school. The remaining schools were demolished.

¹²⁰ The Webster School was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 2 September 1982.

¹²¹ Kansas City Landmarks Commission, 51.

¹²² Whitney, *KC MO Its History*, 340-341. Only two of these schools, the Jackson School and the Hamilton School, are extant.

¹²³ The Kansas City Missouri Public Library was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 23 May 1977.

¹²⁴ Attucks School was listed in the National Register of Historic Places under the *Historic Resources of the 18th and Vine Area MPS* on 9 September 1991.

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Charles Ashley Smith was born in Ohio in March 1866 but moved with his family to Iowa in 1874. Smith began his architectural career in Des Moines at age 16 as a draftsman in the firm Bell & Hackney.¹²⁵ When William Hackney opened an office in Kansas City in 1887, Smith moved with him, becoming a partner in 1892. Smith worked with Hackney on designs for the Kansas City Board of Education, and several new schools and additions from this period are attributed to both men. When Hackney died in 1899, Smith was appointed his replacement as architect for the Board of Education. When Smith retired from the position 38 years later, he had designed over 60 new school buildings and additions.¹²⁶ His work in the District includes elementary, middle, and high school buildings that feature a wide variety of exterior cladding materials, sizes, floor plans, and popular architectural styles. Smith often employed Classical Revival or classically-inspired styles, especially for larger buildings such as high schools and junior high schools. Smith's first school as the Board architect was the Benton School (now D. A. Holmes Apartments) in 1903. His final design was Lincoln High School in 1935.

In order to meet demand during periods of rapid expansion in the District, Smith designed a basic school plant that was highly adaptable. The plan included discrete building sections that featured all of the necessary components a school needed to operate. The basic building section could accommodate future additions in a seamless manner. A variety of architectural styles could be applied to the façade and corridor details to distinguish each school without altering the basic configuration. Smith was also able to transform his designs in response to emerging trends in educational philosophy. As needed, Smith designed classrooms for manual training, sewing, art, music; gymnasiums and auditoriums to accommodate the modified Gary Plan and the Platoon Plan; and classrooms with walls predominantly composed of windows in accordance with the Open Air Movement. The wide range of architectural styles employed throughout his career illustrates Smith's familiarity with local and national design trends.

A profile of Smith written in 1912 notes that Smith was recognized designing schools with "scientific ventilation and other sanitary features."¹²⁷ Although the specific systems are not described, these features were reportedly adopted in other public school buildings across the country.¹²⁸ The system used in Kansas City includes a central panel to control the flow of fresh and foul air through an extensive network of ducts and ventilation shafts. This system of mechanical automatic ventilation provided 30 cubic feet of fresh air each minute, giving every classroom a complete change of air every

¹²⁵ Carrie Westlake Whitney, "Charles A. Smith," *Kansas City Missouri: Its History and Its People. 1800-1909*, Vol. II (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1908) 643.

¹²⁶ See Appendix A for the list of Kansas City schools. Forty-eight of the new schools designed by Smith are extant.

¹²⁷ "Charles A. Smith," *Men of Affairs in Greater Kansas City, 1912* (Kansas City, MO: The Kansas City Press Club, 1912) 224.

¹²⁸ "Charles A. Smith," 224.

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ten minutes.¹²⁹ In addition to being a member of the Kansas City chapter of the American Institute of Architects, Smith was also a member of the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers.¹³⁰

During his tenure as architect for the Board of Education, Smith was also a principal in the prominent local firm Smith, Rea & Lovitt from 1910 to 1921. In addition to numerous commercial buildings and private residences, this firm designed the YMCA Building at 1822-28 The Paseo and the Kansas City Club at 1228 Baltimore.¹³¹ Smith, Rea & Lovitt is also credited with the design for the Bryant School in 1915. Throughout his career, Charles A. Smith designed many notable civic, commercial, religious, and residential buildings in Kansas City. Smith died in 1948.

School Architects Post-Smith (1937-1970)

The Kansas City Board of Education did not replace Charles Smith following his retirement, but hired local architects as needed for a variety of design work. The new projects included additions to existing buildings and new buildings to replace outdated late nineteenth or early twentieth century schools, to relieve overcrowding by constructing new Middle and Junior High Schools, and new schools to support population growth in developing areas of the city. This approach to school design accounts for the increased variety of school forms after 1950. The selected firms were locally known for their commercial, civic, and residential contributions to the Kansas City landscape. During the 1930s, only two new schools were constructed, both of which were PWA projects. These generally schools followed the Progressive Era prototype established by Smith. The post-war building boom began in earnest in 1953 with the construction of the Douglass School and continued through the 1960s. These buildings too followed national trends by employing Modern Movement features and experimenting with exterior form and classroom configuration.

Wight & Wight

Brothers Thomas Wight & William D. Wight, were born eight years apart (1874 and 1882) in Halifax, Nova Scotia where they both obtained an education in architecture. Each began his career at the age of eighteen as a draftsman in New York for the esteemed firm McKim, Mead & White. The elder Wight moved to Kansas City in 1904 and established a firm with Edward T. Wilder. The younger Wight moved to Kansas City in 1911, bought out Wilder's interest, and established the firm Wight & Wight. Having trained with some of the country's leading Beaux Arts designers, Wight & Wight designed several notable buildings in Kansas City, including the Kansas City Life Insurance Company Building (1923),

¹²⁹ "Buildings, New" *Kansas City Star*, September 12, 1915, Vertical File: Kansas City Public Schools, Microfilm, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹³⁰ Whitney, 644.

¹³¹ The YMCA Building at 1822-28 The Paseo was listed in the National Register of Historic Places 9 September 1991 under the *Historic Resources of the 18th and Vine Area MPS*. The Kansas City Club was listed in the National Register on 9 November 2002.

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the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art (1933), and City Hall (1937). The use of the Gothic Revival style for Southeast High School (1938) was a shift away from the Classical influences they employed in earlier designs.¹³² William D. Wight died in October 1947 and Thomas Wight died in September 1949.¹³³

Keene & Simpson/Keene & Simpson & Murphy

Arthur S. Keene & Leslie B. Simpson formed a partnership in 1907 and became Keene & Simpson & Murphy in 1955. In addition to numerous commercial buildings, the firm designed the Scottish Rite Temple (1930) and the Jackson County Courthouse (1933). The wide variety of buildings in their portfolio illustrates their depth of understanding of popular architectural styles and ability to adapt to evolving trends. Keene & Simpson designed the Colonial Revival R. J. Delano School (1938), a specialty public school for children with physical disabilities. Keene & Simpson & Murphy designed the academic and field house buildings for the Southeast Junior High School in 1963. Southeast Junior High School exhibits Modern Movement features such as a low profile and flat roof executed in traditional materials.

Joseph Radotinsky¹³⁴

Born in Kirkwood, Missouri in 1902, Joseph W. Radotinsky moved to Kansas City, Kansas in 1909. Throughout high school, he worked part time as a draftsman for the firm of Rose and Peterson. Radotinsky attended architecture school at the University of Kansas. After graduating in 1924, he traveled to New York, where he joined the architectural firm of Thomas W. Lamb. Lamb was a prolific designer of theaters across the United States, particularly for the Loew's company. Working with Lamb, Radotinsky designed the Loew's Midland Theater in Kansas City, Missouri (1926-27).¹³⁵

In 1928 Radotinsky returned to Kansas City, Kansas and obtained a job with the architecture firm Archer and Gloyd. He was appointed to the position of Kansas State Architect in 1930. While he performed his duties as State Architect, he continued his private practice. Radotinsky designed several school buildings (and other notable public, commercial, and residential buildings) in Kansas City, Kansas between 1934 and 1938. In 1938 he was selected to be the official architect for the Kansas City, Kansas Board of Education. He also worked for the Turner, Shawnee Mission, and Kansas City, Missouri school districts, designing schools in Prairie Village, Merriam, Lenexa, and Overland Park,

¹³² Kansas City Public Schools Survey, Final Report, 1989, 50.

¹³³ William D. Wight Obituary, *Kansas City Times*, October 30, 1947; Thomas Wight Obituary, *Kansas City Star*, September 7, 1949, Microfilm, Clippings, Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.

¹³⁴ Biographical information on Joseph Radotinsky was taken from: "Joseph W. Radotinsky, Architect," biography, vertical file, Kansas City Historic Preservation Office.

¹³⁵ The Loew's Midland Theater, located at 1232-34 Main Street in Kansas City, Missouri, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1977.

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Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri. In 1957, Radotinsky designed the Modern Movement Fairview Junior High School for Kansas City, Missouri.

In 1957 Radotinsky formed the firm Radotinsky, Meyn and Deardorff with partners Raymond E. Meyn and Fred M. Deardorff. They had offices in Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri. The partnership lasted for nine years before it dissolved. Radotinsky resumed his solo practice until he retired in 1970. He died in 1983 at the age of 81.

Monroe & Lefebvre

Monroe & Lefebvre formed in 1954 and designed several commercial and residential buildings in Kansas City. Two of the firm's projects received Kansas City Art Commission Awards: the 1965 Commercial Union Building on West Armour Boulevard for use of commercial property in a residential neighborhood and the 1968 Minute Circle Friendly House on Elmwood for attractive utilitarian design. Monroe & Lefebvre designed one of the most unique elementary school buildings in the Kansas City School District, the Richardson School, in 1963. Potentially inspired by the experimental designs endorsed by the Educational Facilities Laboratories described above, the building has a circular footprint with a center auditorium and gymnasium, and radiating classrooms.

Kivett & Myers¹³⁶

Clarence Kivett graduated from the University of Kansas in 1928. In 1931 he started his own firm, taking small jobs remodeling commercial buildings and managing construction projects. After graduating from the University of Illinois in 1940, Ralph Myers joined Kivett's architectural practice. The firm thrived for thirty years. Following World War II, it was Kansas City's leading architectural design firm and produced a broad spectrum of projects, including some of Kansas City's most notable structures. The firm's popularity grew with the increasing acceptance of Modern Movement architecture. Throughout the firm's history Kivett & Myers maintained a philosophy based on purity of form, structural expression and technological innovation that resulted in a high degree of stylistic consistency.

Through the 1950s, Kivett & Myers' projects included small commissions, such as office remodelings and home additions, as well as larger commissions, such as designs for residential and commercial buildings, hotels, libraries, country clubs, nursing homes, and schools. Kivett & Myers did the majority

¹³⁶ The biographical information about Clarence Kivett and Ralph Myers comes primarily from two sources: Donald Hoffman, "A Foundation of Midwest Architecture: Clarence Kivett is the Mentor of More than 50 Design Firms," *Kansas City Star*, 18 October 1982, 1B; and Joe Gose, "Incredible Inspiration is Gone: Clarence Kivett, a Leading Force in Kansas City Architecture Dies at 91.," *Kansas City Star*, 5 December 1996, A1. Both articles were found in the Clarence Kivett Vertical File at the Kansas City (Missouri) Historic Preservation Office.

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of design work for the local Katz Drug Store chain. During the 1960s and 1970s, Kivett & Myers received larger, more prominent commissions. These included schools, airports, stadiums, banks, and hospitals. Kivett & Myers worked mostly in the Kansas City area, but their portfolio also includes projects built across the United States. Locally their most notable works include Temple B'nai Jehudah (1959-demolished), Kansas City International Airport (1967), the Jackson County Sports Complex (1967), and the Alameda Plaza Hotel (1971), all in Kansas City, Missouri.

The firm designed the Douglass School in 1953 and the George Bingham Junior High School in 1959. Both of these schools exhibit typical Modern Movement features such as a low profile with banded windows and a flat roof. The paired elementary and junior high school buildings, renamed the Weeks Elementary School and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School (1968), were windowless T-shaped blocks connected by a wide covered walkway. These buildings adopted the prevailing notion of the period that eliminating windows and providing light and ventilation from above would minimize distractions and promote learning.

Others

Numerous other Kansas City architecture firms designed new buildings or additions for the Kansas City School District between 1952 and 1970. Peterson & Scharhag designed Longan (1954-55) and the addition to Ruhl (1955), while Peterson & Mantel designed Switzer Primary Unit (1957-58). Dan R. Sanford & Sons designed Hartman (1953-56). Hardy & Schumacher designed Martin (1954), Dunbar (1956), and Melcher (1959-60). Marshall & Brown designed Lincoln Junior High School (1954-55) and the addition to Longfellow (1957). Gentry & Voskamp designed Wheatley (1955) and Voskamp & Slezak designed the addition to Graceland (1953). Curtis & Cowling designed Whittier (1959) and the addition to Switzer/West Junior High School (1956). Folger & Pearson designed the addition to West Rock Creek (1967). Swanson & Brey designed Franklin (1968) while Swanson, Terney & Brey designed the addition to Scarritt (1960). Neville, Sharp & Simon designed Manual School (1968) and the addition to Pinkerton (1952-53).

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F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

PROPERTY TYPE SIGNIFICANCE

As described in Section E, the property types associated with Kansas City, Missouri School District evolved over time to meet the physical needs and to promote the prevailing educational theories adopted by the Kansas City School District. Property types and subtypes are discussed below in greater detail. Most public school resources will be locally significant. Properties eligible for listing in the National Register through this multiple property nomination are significant under Criterion A and/or C. Under Criterion C (ARCHITECTURE) they express the architectural vocabulary of educational resources that evolved to accommodate changing educational philosophies. The eligible property must clearly illustrate features designed intentionally to address specific educational theory or health and safety issues. Under Criterion A (EDUCATION) eligible properties demonstrate the evolution of public educational practices and trends in educational philosophy. Schools may be significant as locations where experimental educational theories were tested, as the first facility to implement specific Progressive Era teaching methods (such as vocational training) or organizational structures and programs (such as kindergartens or junior high school). The historic contexts presented in this document may not address all potential areas of significance. During the evaluation and nomination of individual school properties other areas of significance might become evident, such as Ethnic Heritage.

Kansas City public schools reflect a wide variety of physical characteristics, predominantly form, size, and materials. These characteristics define the property types, while function and the grades taught within the buildings distinguish the sub-types. Kansas City public schools represent evolving national trends in school design as a means of addressing educational philosophy.

The earliest school buildings were masonry structures that occupied small lots in dense urban centers. During subsequent periods of rapid expansion, the first generation of building on any school site was often a frame schoolhouse. The frame buildings were a temporary measure for the neighborhood until a permanent school could be built. Masonry buildings quickly replaced the frame schoolhouses as the neighborhood population increased and construction funds became available. Brick and stone school buildings designed during the late 1800s and early 1900s embodied the permanence and stability of the public school system. The school anchored the residential neighborhood. Often sited on a hill, the school occupied a place of prominence enhanced by its size compared to the surrounding private dwellings. Elementary schools and high schools had similar forms, architectural styles, and materials, differing only in size.

In the early twentieth century, the Progressive Movement had a significant impact on the design of public schools. An increased focus on safety and hygiene prompted the use of fireproof construction

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materials, improved ventilation systems, and indoor personal care facilities (lavatories and showers). New educational priorities required classrooms specifically designed for manual training and cultural studies in addition to the teaching of traditional academic subjects. The Kansas City Board of Education and the Board's architects studied national movements, such as the Open Air Movement, and experimental programs, such as the Gary Plan, for their potential benefits to Kansas City students. The most desirable features of these plans were then incorporated into Kansas City schools. With nearly fifty elementary schools constructed during this period, each school was a variation of one of a few basic building plans. Exterior ornament was applied to distinguish style, and the plan was adjusted to fit the site. However, each high school or junior high school had a unique design. These facilities served a regional, rather than a local neighborhood, population and were much larger than their elementary counterparts

In the mid-twentieth century, public school designers explored new building forms and configurations to address new theories of teaching. There was renewed interest in the interaction of the building and its occupants with nature. This resulted in several highly irregular building forms with unique façade materials and fenestration patterns. More conservative designs illustrate solid tenets of Modernism, including rambling massing, large banded windows, and a low profile with a flat roof. Schools that were built in less dense areas of the city reflect the population expansion south and east. Other schools illustrate the evolution of the urban site from the ward school to the modern facility.

The school was also a source of community pride and reflected the city's commitment to educating its citizens. Local newspapers publicized the construction of each new school, describing the physical features and promoting its benefits to the entire community. The presence of the school indicated growth and population increase in that geographic area.

Kansas City public schools are a threatened resource. Despite nationwide efforts to encourage sustainability by recycling, reusing, and adapting existing buildings, the perception of early twentieth century schools as inefficient, outmoded, and inflexible persists. This argument is often used to justify abandoning old school buildings in favor of constructing new ones. A lack of viable adaptive reuse options due to location or limitations of the building itself invites the threat of demolition.

In Kansas City, declining enrollment since 1970 has led to a significant number of school closures. Large vacant buildings are highly undesirable in any location, especially in residential neighborhoods. Most resources eligible under this MPDF retain good or excellent integrity, but if left vacant their condition worsens. Neglect often leads to water infiltration and significant damage to interior finishes. Vagrants and vandals can intentionally or unintentionally cause substantial damage, as in the case of recent fires at Horace Mann School and Thacher School. The District owns fifty-three of the seventy-

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seven resources surveyed during the preparation of this document. Of these, twenty-nine are currently closed and await processing through the District's Repurposing procedure. Of the twenty-four privately owned schools, eight buildings house academic or community functions, including charter schools. Thirty of the surveyed schools are currently vacant.

Period of Significance

The period of significance for properties eligible under Criterion C is tied to the building's date(s) of construction. Most schools in the District were built in phases, some over the course of a few years and others over a period of decades. These changes reflect the District's continuous efforts to improve its facilities to meet the needs of its students. Properties with Ward or Progressive Era buildings and Modern Era additions have a period of significance that begins with the earliest date of construction and ends with the last date of construction, so long as each section of the building retains integrity and meets the registration requirements for its respective property type.

Properties eligible under Criterion A have a period of significance that begins with date of construction and ends with the end date for the context of that property type.

GENERAL REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Setting and Location

Elements of setting contribute to the eligibility of resources under this MPDF. Ward schools and early twentieth century schools served defined neighborhoods and were typically surrounded by dense residential communities. Sites for Modern Era public schools sought idyllic locations on large open or wooded lots. Resources that have been moved from their original location are not eligible for listing, although the inherently temporary nature of frame schoolhouses and the common practice of moving them to different sites as needed is the one exception.

Changes in the location of a frame schoolhouse should not automatically render the property ineligible for register-listing, particularly if the resource continued to serve its historic function or if it retains integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. To address Criteria Consideration B, a moved resource must remain in a location and setting similar to its original and it must retain enough historic architectural features to convey its eligibility under Criterion C.

The sites of early ward schools were often constrained by small lots. The buildings were designed without much regard for exterior space.

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During the Progressive Era, however, school sites included large areas surrounding the building for outdoor activity. Many were sited with the primary elevation facing the play area and a secondary elevation facing the street. The often terraced lots were paved but did not have markings or play equipment. The space was adaptable for a variety of uses. To retain integrity of setting, the front of the building should remain open along with a minimal buffer at the rear.

High Schools and Junior High Schools, often arranged in a campus-like grouping, typically shared outdoor athletic facilities with tracks, play fields, stadiums, and miscellaneous outbuildings. Keeping these spaces open without retaining the specific athletic use maintains the overall setting; however, the loss of open space may not render the building not-eligible if other aspects of design, workmanship and feeling remain intact.

Designers of Modern Era schools considered the natural environment immediately surrounding the self-contained building to be part of the educational experience along with designated outdoor play areas. These buildings retain integrity of setting as long as some green space remains around the building. Replacing play areas at the rear of the building with parking will not impact the integrity of setting.

As the city evolves, it is common for the neighborhood surrounding a school to change as well. Ward schools were constructed in residential neighborhoods that have become commercial and/or industrial as the central business district expanded and residents sought dwellings well outside this growing area. Residential communities grew surrounding the park-like settings of mid- to late-twentieth century schools. So long as the school retains its original relationship to the site and the front or primary elevation remains visible, the changing character of the surrounding neighborhood does not compromise the integrity of setting.

Design, Materials, Workmanship

Design, materials, and workmanship create the physical characteristics that distinguish the property types. Therefore integrity in these areas is vital to the eligibility of resources. In order to be eligible for listing, properties must retain the massing and basic exterior massing, roof form, original primary building materials, pattern of window and door openings, and basic interior corridor configuration.

Kansas City public schools exhibit a wide variety of forms, architectural styles, and materials, all combined in different ways to generate the property types identified below, with form being the dominant distinguishing characteristic. Eligible properties include compact two-room frame schoolhouses, massive four-story masonry high schools, and sprawling one-story concrete and metal frame elementary schools. The majority of schools were designed by trained architects with clear parameters of the educational features to include. Architectural style was often represented in

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ornament applied to a standardized building form, particularly for Progressive Era schools where late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century revival styles were prevalent. Even in an era of experimentation, Modern Movement schools exhibited character-defining features such as a low profile, flat roof, banded windows or the absence of windows, and no applied ornament.

Temporary frame schoolhouses were clad in wood siding. More permanent ward schools were loadbearing masonry with brick or stone exteriors. Progressive Era schools had stone or concrete foundations, concrete structures, and brick or stone cladding with decorative brickwork, cut stone, or glazed terra cotta trim to communicate the style. Modern Era schools had concrete foundations, concrete and/or metal frames, and brick, metal, or glass curtain wall construction.

While in use as schools, these buildings were periodically updated to improve the overall quality of the experience within the building by meeting modern life-safety codes and the ever-changing needs of the public education system. Common alterations include replacing windows and doors within historic masonry openings, installing new mechanical and electrical systems, updating restroom facilities, reconfiguring interior partitions, installing elevators, reconfiguring circulation patterns, and replacing roof materials. Most schools have also undergone interior modernization. In most cases dropped ceilings with a lay-in grid of acoustical tiles and integral light fixtures were installed below the plaster ceiling. Composition tile or carpet was installed over tongue and groove hardwood or polished concrete floors. These alterations often addressed sound issues, are reversible, and do not impact the ability of the resource to communicate its historic function. Therefore, they do not render it ineligible for register-listing.

Alterations that should be evaluated with greater scrutiny include widening masonry openings for windows and doors or cutting new openings, particularly on primary elevations or highly visible secondary elevations; changes to roof form; and additions. Additions to the front elevation often compromise the integrity of design by obscuring historic entrances, fenestration patterns and ornament. Additions to the rear elevation may not impact the primary view of the building and therefore typically do not affect the eligibility of the resource. However, because schools are sited on lots that occupy full blocks or corner lots, at least one side elevation is often highly visible. Additions to side elevations should complement the character of the historic building and not compromise the building's appearance from the primary elevation.

Additions were often constructed within a few years after original building construction. Some followed decades later. Many of Smith's Progressive Era schools were constructed in multiple phases over a period of up to ten years. In the 1910s and 1920s, Smith designed a stacked gymnasium and auditorium block that could be easily added his earlier schools as the desire for formal presentation

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space and indoor activity space increased. Other school buildings have additions constructed in the 1950s. These additions reflected a significant shift in architectural design trends. Sympathetic additions older than fifty years of age are part of the evolution of the resource as it continued to serve its original function. They are therefore considered historic and do not compromise the building's integrity.

District schools are primarily discrete facilities designed with all necessary functions contained within a single, sometimes sprawling, structure. Small accessory buildings were only found with high schools and junior high schools. These were typically associated with athletic facilities. More research is needed to determine when these structures were built in order to fully evaluate their contribution to the significance of the property. Auxiliary resources should be assessed during the evaluation of their associated school building and may be contributing resources to a listed school property. Many Progressive Era schools had space near an entrance for a branch of the public library. The schools no longer house public libraries, but the carved stone lintel above the entrance indicates this historic function.

Buildings designed for the administrative operation of the District may also be significant under Criterion A for the area of Education. Administration Buildings, Board of Education headquarters, and Offices of the Superintendent are examples of this resource type. The Board of Education building at 1211 McGee Street was built in the 1950s. It and other resources associated with the District may be eligible in conjunction with this MPDF.

Name of Property Type: FRAME SCHOOLHOUSE

The Frame Schoolhouse is a simple, vernacular building with very little architectural ornament or formal style that adapted a common regional form.¹³⁷ The small wood frame buildings contain one to four rooms. The one-story rectangular structure rests on a rubble stone foundation. It has clapboard siding and a gable or hip roof. A center entry leads to a short hall between the rooms. The front and side elevations have double-hung wood windows. The simple buildings were heated with stoves and did not have electricity or indoor plumbing. The building is often sited near the street on a corner lot.

Frame schoolhouses were built for several different reasons. As such, these buildings do not necessarily follow the chronological development of school property types. They were often the first structure built on a new school site or they were built or moved from other sites to relieve overcrowding in an existing school. Frame schoolhouses were often built as temporary facilities during periods of

¹³⁷ A similar two-room frame schoolhouse was built in Leavenworth in 1913.

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rapid expansion within the District before a masonry building could be erected (*Figures 25 and 26*). Once the technology and the means were available and the neighborhood population could support a larger school, frame schoolhouses were demolished or moved and replaced with masonry buildings. Kansas City, Missouri Sanborn Maps from 1909 to 1917 show one or more one-story frame buildings on many school sites.¹³⁸ Building permits indicate that the District moved temporary frame buildings to different sites as needed.¹³⁹ Due to the temporary nature of the building and materials, very few frame schoolhouses are extant.¹⁴⁰

In the 1910s, vocational training classes built frame schoolhouses as class projects in at least three different locations (*Figure 25*).¹⁴¹ These buildings exhibit simple Craftsman details, such as brackets and board and batten siding.

The most common exterior alterations to frame schoolhouses include replacing windows and doors, installing updated mechanical equipment, and adding or replacing siding. Interior configurations may have changed to accommodate new uses. These interior and exterior alterations typically do not affect the historic character of the building or its ability to communicate its historic function. Rather than constructing additions to the existing footprint, new out-buildings or additional classrooms were constructed adjacent to the existing building.

Registration Requirements:

To qualify as eligible for listing in the National Register, a frame schoolhouse must retain:

- Historic form and massing, including roof form
- Original siding material or a compatible siding material, such as asbestos shingles
- Original window and door openings, replacement windows are okay
- Basic interior configuration

¹³⁸ Sanborn Map and Publishing Company, Ltd. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Kansas City, Missouri (New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1909) Vol. IV. Sheets 507 (Faxon School) and 541 (Bancroft School). Database online. Available at <http://sanborn.umi.com.proxy.mcpl.lib.mo.us/mo/4720/dateid-000005.htm?CCSI=45n>; Accessed 23 January 2012.

¹³⁹ City of Kansas City, Historic Preservation Commission Office, Building Permit # 44249 (8/5/1908). Frame schoolhouses were moved from 39th and Warwick Ave. to 43rd and Tracy Ave. as temporary buildings before the two-story brick Bancroft School could be built in 1909-10.

¹⁴⁰ Only the Wheatley Schoolhouse was identified in the 2011 survey. This building was constructed for African American students who lived in the surrounding neighborhood. The lot had three small frame buildings, all one-story. Only the largest of the three buildings is extant. The building experienced some exterior alterations when it was converted to a church in 1958 following the integration of the public schools.

¹⁴¹ Photographs were taken at the frame schoolhouses constructed by the Vocational Training Class in 1914 at the Sanford B. Ladd School (35th and Walrond), Kumpf School (45th and Olive), and the Marlborough School (75th and Tracy). None of these frame buildings are extant. The masonry Kumpf School has also been demolished.

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Name of Property Type: WARD SCHOOL/GRADED SCHOOL (1867-1899)

Ward schools are two-and-one-half story in height and have masonry cladding, typically brick with sandstone or limestone trim. The hipped roofs have wide overhanging eaves. These buildings often have symmetrical façades with a central recessed or projecting bay containing the entrance. Tall windows, often with segmental arched openings, pierce each façade. Tall floor heights, narrow windows, and steeply pitched roofs with dormers and/or bell towers emphasized the vertical massing of the ward school. These buildings filled much of their lots and stood close to the road. There may have been a small play yard for students, but regular physical activity was not part of the curriculum in the 1800s.

Ward schools exhibit a variety of Victorian architectural styles popular nationwide between the 1880s and the early 1900s. Italianate and Romanesque Revival idioms were particularly common, expressed through massing, materials, and ornament. Brick facades had stone trim, including decorative window hoods and entryways. Ward schools historically contained four classrooms on each floor (one in each corner) surrounding a wide hall and open stairwells. The classrooms had windows on two walls, providing ample light and fresh air. Schools built in the 1880s or later had boilers that provided steam heat and eventually incorporated electricity.

Ward schools were the first public schools constructed by the Kansas City Board of Education. They were neighborhood schools that served a designated area of the city. As these locations became increasingly commercial or industrial residents moved out, and the schools were often demolished.

The ward school buildings were not affected when the District instituted a graded system around 1869. The adaptability of the school plan allowed the District to divide students by grade among the same rectangular classrooms that once held students of all ages. The graded system simply established a new method of organizing students, not of teaching them. This system was imposed within the first two years of the District's existence and only two school buildings were constructed before 1869. The earliest schools built in Kansas City are no longer extant. The oldest extant public schools are: Webster (1885), Jackson (1888), Hamilton (1889), Switzer (1889), and Attucks (1893). All were constructed as graded schools.

The Board of Education expanded the capacity of ward schools by constructing two-story rectangular blocks to the side or rear elevation of the original building. The additions were often clad in the same material as the main block and featured identical or simplified ornament.

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Ward schools were built between 1885 and 1906 and represent a wide variety of forms and architectural styles. All have symmetrical facades with center entries, vertical massing, and hipped roofs. The three earliest schools, Webster, Jackson, and Carver express a Late Victorian aesthetic, while Switzer, Thacher, and Attucks reflect the rising influence of classical design. All of the buildings are red brick with simple stone ornament, with the exception of Thacher, which is clad with blond brick. Many of the ward schools were designed with bell towers. After the tragedy at Lathrop School in 1886, when a tornado destroyed the bell tower and killed fifteen children, the Board removed all of the remaining bell towers.¹⁴²

Registration Requirements

To qualify as eligible for listing in the National Register, a ward school must retain:

- Historic form and massing, including roof form
- Historic exterior materials
- Historic fenestration patterns, although windows and doors may have been replaced
- Basic interior configuration of corridors and stairwells

Name of Property Type: EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY/PROGRESSIVE ERA SCHOOL (1900-1940)

Elementary Schools

Charles Smith was Board Architect for nearly the entire period of Progressive Era school design. Over the course of his near-forty-year tenure with the District, Smith designed four basic school sub-types in response to changing trends in educational philosophy. Each school was a variation on a basic plan with individualized treatment on the exterior. No two schools were identical, but the form was clearly identifiable as a public school. All of these schools were designed after 1900. The first was the Benton School (now D. A. Holmes Apartments) in 1903. The Open Air Movement brought to Kansas City in 1913 had a significant impact on the appearance of public schools. Smith designed new forms to accommodate the highly specific features of the program. While the complicated and intense scheduling of the Gary Plan was not fully incorporated into the Kansas City school system, gymnasiums and auditoriums became regular features of Smith's buildings.

Smith's earliest Progressive Era elementary schools have a symmetrical H-shaped main block with a projecting center entry. A double-loaded corridor runs the length of the building. Mechanical systems are housed in a small wing at the center of the rear elevation. In many locations, the initial construction included just the center entry and one wing. The truncated building contained around eight classrooms,

¹⁴² The Webster School bell tower, removed in 1886 was reconstructed in 2003 based on historic drawings and photographs.

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the boiler room wing, and an office. When more space was needed, the second wing was erected to complete the symmetrical façade. A wing containing the auditorium and gymnasium, along with additional classrooms, was added to many schools in the late 1910s or early 1920s. These early additions employed the same façade materials, ornament, and fenestration patterns as the original structure, creating seamless transitions between building campaigns.

Examples of Progressive Era design, built between 1903 and 1913 include Benton (D.A. Holmes Apartments), Horace Mann, Greenwood, Norman, Bancroft, James, Allen, Faxon, Ladd, Van Horn (Volker), and Harrison schools. All are brick with the exception of Norman, which is limestone clad, a feature noted by the press when Norman opened in 1906 (*Figure 14*). Exposed concrete frames at Allen and Seven Oaks Schools illustrate locations where planned wings were never executed (*Figures 16 and 34*).

Open Air Schools

Two of Smith's sub-type school plans built between the mid-1910s and the mid-1920s incorporated aspects of the Open Air classroom. The first, built in 1914 and 1915, has a traditional massed form with multiple stories. Four extant schools share the shallow U-shaped three-story form, which has a two-story block at the center of the "U": McCoy (1914), Swinney (1914), Moore (1914-1915), and Bryant (1915) (*Figures 28 and 29*). Open Air classrooms on the third floor encircled the roof-top play area atop the center block. The rest of the building has typical Progressive Era classrooms, corridors, and stairwells. The extant schools exhibit simple architectural ornament applied to masonry facades. Like Norman, Moore is clad in limestone, while the remaining buildings are red brick with stone and glazed terra cotta trim. Aside from the alteration to Swinney's front façade, McCoy and Swinney are nearly identical in form and ornament. Bryant has Jacobethan ornament while Moore exhibits Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival ornament.

The second Open Air school sub-type, built between 1915 and 1923, is a one story building with skylights and exterior entrances at every classroom. Some have a small second story containing a suite of rooms. The six schools that share this combination of features are Kensington (1915), Manchester (1920), Troost (1922), Askew (1922-23), Cook (1923), and Willard (1923). Like the earlier Open Air schools, these buildings have H- or U-shaped double-loaded corridors surrounding a central auditorium and gymnasium. Each of these buildings expresses a different architectural style, including Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, Sullivan-esque, Gothic Revival, Tudor Revival, and Romanesque Revival. Classrooms had access to natural light from above and access to the outdoor play areas through their own individual doors. Covering the skylights is the most common alteration to these buildings, often due to maintenance issues.

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Smith produced numerous unique school designs in the 1920s and 1930s, including Woodland (1920), Pershing (1924), Border Star (1924), and Marlborough (1927). These buildings are difficult to categorize, compared to the schools he designed during the previous two decades, and therefore do not fall under a specific property sub-type. Although they have unique interior and exterior designs, the later schools share general characteristics with their predecessors, including concrete construction and masonry cladding, defined front entry, banks of tall and/or wide windows, and concrete flooring with integral bases. Common features typical of Progressive Era schools regardless of the exterior included a rectangular form, integrated auditorium and gymnasium, and classrooms dedicated to a wide variety of subjects, including nature study, music, kindergarten, and manual training. Architectural styles expressed on the exterior through ornament, parapet shape, and entryways include Romanesque Revival and Neo-Classical ornament.

Smith's schools illustrate the evolution of interior finishes and mechanical systems. The earliest schools, such as Thacher School, have wood floors in corridors and classrooms. Wide hallways have large classroom doors topped with operable transoms, as in Bancroft School (*Figure 35*). As Smith ventilation systems improved, transoms become unnecessary and were eventually eliminated. Corridors become narrower as the extensive use of concrete for framing and flooring improve the fireproof quality of the building. Seven Oaks School is a good example of this configuration (*Figure 36*).

R. J. Delano is the one truly unique school from this era. Designed as an elementary school for children with physical disabilities, the building had to incorporate accessible circulation and program-specific spaces in addition to traditional elementary school features. Kansas City architecture firm Keene & Simpson designed the Colonial Revival building with a winding ramp at the center. The L-shaped main block contains traditional features such as classrooms, an assembly room, library, and kindergarten. The large block at the east end of the building contains the physical and occupational therapy departments, with treatment rooms and offices for doctors and nurses (*Figures 45 and 46*).

High Schools

High Schools built during the early twentieth century were grand structures designed to highlight the value of education. These massive buildings were regional higher education centers drawing students from multiple neighborhood elementary schools. The buildings were much larger in height and footprint. High Schools incorporated additional features important to the Progressive Era, including multiple gymnasiums (boys and girls), a school library, a two-story auditorium with balcony, a pool, and multiple specific study rooms (music, manual training, domestic science, and science laboratories). Interior spaces, such as the lobby, main hall, and auditorium have a higher level of finish. Each of the six Kansas City high schools constructed during the Progressive Era has a unique design that expresses a different architectural style. Westport High School (1908) is a greatly expanded version of the

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Jacobethan elementary schools Smith designed around this time. Northeast High School (1913-14), Southwest High School (1925-26), and East High School (1926) have long, rectangular facades with high-style Classical ornament, including columns and large pediments. Lincoln High School (1935) has irregular massing and Gothic Revival ornament executed in the flat, low relief of the Art Deco manner (*Figures 30-32*). In addition to being the first PWA-funded new school in Kansas City, it was the last school Charles Smith designed for the District. Kansas City architecture firm Wight & Wight designed Southeast High School (1937), also a PWA project, in a similar restrained Gothic Revival style. Wight & Wight's plan included many of the same features and finishes as Smith's high schools.

Junior High Schools

The Kansas City School District adopted the concept of the junior high school in 1921. Bond proposals passed in the early 1920s provided the funds to erect these large buildings. Junior high schools were also regional schools. They were larger than elementary schools but smaller than high schools. They were typically situated near a high school, and often shared a design vocabulary. Like high schools, junior high schools had an auditorium, one or more gymnasiums, a pool, manual training classrooms, science laboratories, and fireproof construction. Westport Junior High School (1923), Central Junior High School (1924-25), Northeast Junior High School (1925), West Junior High School (Switzer) (1926) were all constructed during this time period. The grouping of a junior high school with a high school created a campus of educational facilities that often included playing fields and a stadium and sometimes an elementary school. The cluster of Northeast High School, Northeast Junior High School, and Thacher Elementary School is a good example of this type of campus-like grouping.

Additions/Alterations

Early twentieth century high schools often have large additions to accommodate changes in program and technological advances. Such additions often housed libraries and computer labs. Changes in the physical education program and maintenance costs eliminated the need for certain spaces, usually the pool. Similar fenestration patterns and cladding materials that reference the original building create sympathetic additions. These additions were often constructed on the rear or side elevations and do not necessarily compromise the integrity of the building. Windows and doors were typically replaced within the historic masonry openings.

Registration Requirements

To qualify as eligible for listing in the National Register, a Progressive Era school must retain:

- Historic form and massing, including roof form;
- Historic exterior materials;
- Interior (auditorium/assembly room and gymnasium) and exterior recreation areas;
- Historic fenestration patterns, although windows and doors may have been replaced;

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- Basic interior configuration of corridors and stairwells; and
- Additions that are sympathetic to the original design in form and materials may not compromise the integrity of the resource

Name of Property Type: MODERN ERA SCHOOLS (1950-1970)

Elementary Schools

Modern elementary schools were constructed in great numbers after World War II to accommodate growing populations and to replace outdated and unsafe school buildings. Form is the primary character-defining element of Modern Era elementary schools and illustrates the greatest shift in school building design. The low, sprawling buildings have flat roofs and streamlined façades that form simple rectangular boxes often grouped by function. The buildings are predominantly one story with some two-story blocks. The gymnasium, auditorium or assembly room, and cafeteria are housed in distinct blocks attached to the main form. This gives the building an irregular mass with blocks of different sizes and heights. These schools have very little applied ornament, using fenestration patterns instead to define the façade. Elementary schools have concrete and/or steel frame construction with brick cladding or metal and glass curtain-wall construction. The buildings often have L- or T-shaped plans and double-loaded corridors lined with classrooms. Glazing fills most of the exterior wall area in each classroom. These openings were often filled with glass block to diffuse light and feature a band of hopper sashes with clear glazing at the bottom. Walls were painted concrete block units. Designers used low ceilings, bright colors on the walls, and patterned flooring to create an inviting and encouraging environment where young children would feel welcome.

With a few exceptions, different architects designed each of Kansas City's Modern Era elementary schools, giving each one a unique appearance while maintaining the Modern Movement aesthetic. While older schools were built on sites leveled for construction, Modern Era schools are built into the topography, adding or lowering levels to fluctuate with the site. Douglass (1953), Wheatley (1955), and Melcher (1959-60) are good examples of this property type.

Additions to older school buildings exhibit these same Modern Movement features with simple, boxy forms, banded windows, and flat roofs. In some locations only portions of the earlier building were kept, such as the gymnasium or auditorium, in others new classroom wings were added to existing buildings. Longfellow (1914 and 1957), Graceland (1924 and 1953), Meservey (1927 and 1955), and Scarritt (1927 and 1960) are good examples of this construction history (*Figures 37 and 38*).

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High Schools/Junior High Schools

Modern Era high schools and junior high schools exhibit forms and stylistic features similar to elementary schools from this time period. These schools are larger with more component parts, but otherwise have the low, irregular form with flat roof, banded windows, and no applied ornament. Interior walls are painted concrete block units. Traditional rectangular classrooms lined double-loaded corridors. Fairview (1957), Bingham (1959), and Southeast (1962-63) were constructed as junior high schools. Bingham is an excellent example of curtain-wall construction with large expanses of glazed walls. Manual School (1968) is the one District's only Modern Era high school.

Experimental Schools

Experimental school design flourished throughout the country during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Experiments in form were tied to a shift in the psychology of learning. Circular forms were thought to be inviting to children. Open plans provided easily adaptable space to encourage more flexible and group-oriented methods of teaching. Windows were eliminated from facades in order to focus attention inward. Integral systems provided conditioned air and overhead lighting. These schools have concrete or steel frame construction, and brick cladding.

Richardson Elementary School (1963) is the only example in Kansas City of a circular plan school. The building contains a ring of classrooms surrounding a central core containing the gymnasium and assembly room (*Figures 41 and 42*). Chester Arthur Franklin School, designed by Swanson & Brey, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School, designed by Kivett & Myers were both constructed in 1968. These schools are good examples of Open Plan schools without windows. Perimeter classrooms at Franklin surround a center amphitheater. The classrooms have permanent walls for teaching surfaces and movable partitions for expanding the classroom space as needed (*Figures 43 and 44*). Experimental forms and teaching methods did not extend to junior high and high schools.

Registration Requirements

To qualify as eligible for listing in the National Register, a Modern Movement school must retain:

- Historic form and massing, including roof form
- Historic exterior materials
- Interior and exterior recreation areas
- Historic fenestration patterns, although windows and doors may have been replaced
- Basic interior configuration of corridors and stairwells, or lack thereof
- Additions that are sympathetic to the original design in form and materials may not compromise the integrity of the resource

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G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The boundaries of the Historic Resources of the Kansas City Missouri School District Multiple Property Submission encompass the limits of the Kansas City Missouri School District within the period of significance. This includes resources constructed by the District as well as resources constructed by other school districts that were acquired through annexation and subsequently operated by the Kansas City School District.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

Appendix A provides a list of all schools surveyed during the preparation of this document.

The *Historic Resources of the Kansas City Missouri School District Pre-1970* Multiple Property Submission was prepared during the winter and spring of 2011-2012 in conjunction with a comprehensive survey of school buildings operated by the Kansas City Missouri Board of Education prior to 1970. The survey was sponsored by the City of Kansas City and therefore limited to resources located within the bounds of the city. Extant schools built by the District but located in neighboring municipalities were not included in the survey.

Elizabeth Rosin, principal of Rosin Preservation, served as project manager, overseeing all project activities. Rosin Preservation associates Kristen Ottesen and Rachel Nugent completed the survey during the winter of 2011-2012 with assistance from consultant Brad Finch, f-stop Photography. The Kansas City Historic Preservation Office (Historic Preservation Office) generated a list of known Kansas City Missouri public schools within the city limits, forty-six of which had been previously surveyed. Forty-two schools were surveyed in 1987 as part of the Kansas City Landmarks Commission "Kansas City Public School Survey" of resources constructed before 1940. Historic Kansas City Foundation surveyed Switzer School in an undated survey. The Kansas City Landmarks Commission surveyed Attucks School in 1981 and Webster School in 1985. The Kansas City Historic Preservation Office surveyed Allen School in 2007. Prior to heading into the field, the survey team conducted preliminary research using historic maps and architect files to identify additional resources built by the Kansas City Board of Education. One additional resource was identified with the assistance of a neighborhood resident and former student of the school who alerted the survey team to its presence.¹⁴³ Seventy-seven resources date to the period of significance.

¹⁴³ The former Wheatley Schoolhouse occupies the site identified as such on the 1950 Sanborn Map, Volume 6, Sheet 786.

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The team took high-quality digital photographs of all surveyed resources. Information about the physical appearance of each property (form, materials, and condition) and the digital photographs were entered into a Microsoft Access database provided by the Historic Preservation Office. Information collected during the 1987 survey was verified and updated or corrected. Information about architect, builder, and a brief history of the building collected through archival research were entered into the database for each new survey entry. Construction dates were verified through historic drawings provided by the Kansas City Missouri School District and primary sources such as newspapers that celebrated the completion of a new school. The date of the Wheatley Schoolhouse (1913) is the only estimated date of construction. This date is based on multiple historic photographs in the Missouri Valley Special Collections General Collection showing young men in vocational training classes building similar structures on other sites. The images are dated between 1913 and 1915.

The contexts presented in Section E describe the history of public education on a national, regional, and local level and the associated development of various types of school buildings to address the evolving needs of the Kansas City public education system. While drafting the historic context for this document, Rachel Nugent reviewed extensive secondary literature on the history of public education and the architectural history of schools. She conducted research at the Missouri Valley Room of the Kansas City Public Library, the State Historical Society of Missouri Manuscript Collection (formerly Western Historical Manuscript Collection) at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, and the Kansas City Historic Preservation Office. Elizabeth Rosin and Rachel Nugent finalized the MPDF, developing the property types and registration requirements and adding examples from the survey to Sections E and F.

The period of significance for this MPS begins in 1867 with the organization of the Kansas City Board of Education and concludes in 1970 to encompass schools constructed at the end of the 1960s that illustrate the continuum of Modern Movement school design and terminate a period of continuous development that followed the end of World War II. After 1970, the District built no new schools until the mid-1980s when court-ordered desegregation compelled the District to improve educational facilities across the city.

Three school sites (five resources) are listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places: Webster School (NR listed 9/02/81), the three resources that comprise Switzer/West Junior High School (NR listed 12/18/09), and Bancroft School (NR listed 1/12/12). One school is a contributing resource to a National Register Historic District: D.A. Holmes (Benton) contributes to the Santa Fe Place Historic District (NR listed 5/30/86). One school is listed individually in the Kansas City Register of Historic Places only: Lincoln High School (listed 2/21/02). The majority of surveyed resources appear potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (see *Appendix A*). All of these

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resources retain integrity and appear meet the registration requirements defined above. The high number of potentially eligible resources reflects the quality of design and inherent adaptability of their form and features in order to serve their intended function over a long period without major physical alterations.

Four resources were constructed after 1962: Richardson Elementary School (1963), Chester A. Franklin Elementary School (1968), Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School (1968), and Manual School (1968). Additional scholarly research of comparable property types state- and nation-wide as well as more property-specific research will be necessary to properly evaluate resources less than fifty years of age for exceptional significance under Criteria Consideration G. To date these resources retain integrity and provide good examples of some of the more experimental forms designed in the 1960s. They should be re-evaluated for eligibility when they reach fifty years of age.

Two surveyed resources have served as Kansas City Missouri public schools for a number of years, but were constructed for other purposes and are therefore ineligible for National Register listing under this cover document as they do not meet the registration requirement of having been built for the Kansas City Missouri School District. Foreign Language Academy was built as an office building for the Standard Oil Company in 1955. Robeson Elementary School was constructed as the Jewish Community Center in 1960.

The property types surveyed in Kansas City illustrate national trends in the development of public school architecture. Examples of each property type and subtype were found throughout the city. Analysis of resource locations relative to the periodic expansion of the city limits highlights how population growth affected the distribution of public schools throughout the city.

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29. Swinney School, second floor plan, 1914. Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

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30. Lincoln High School, front elevation, 1935. Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.
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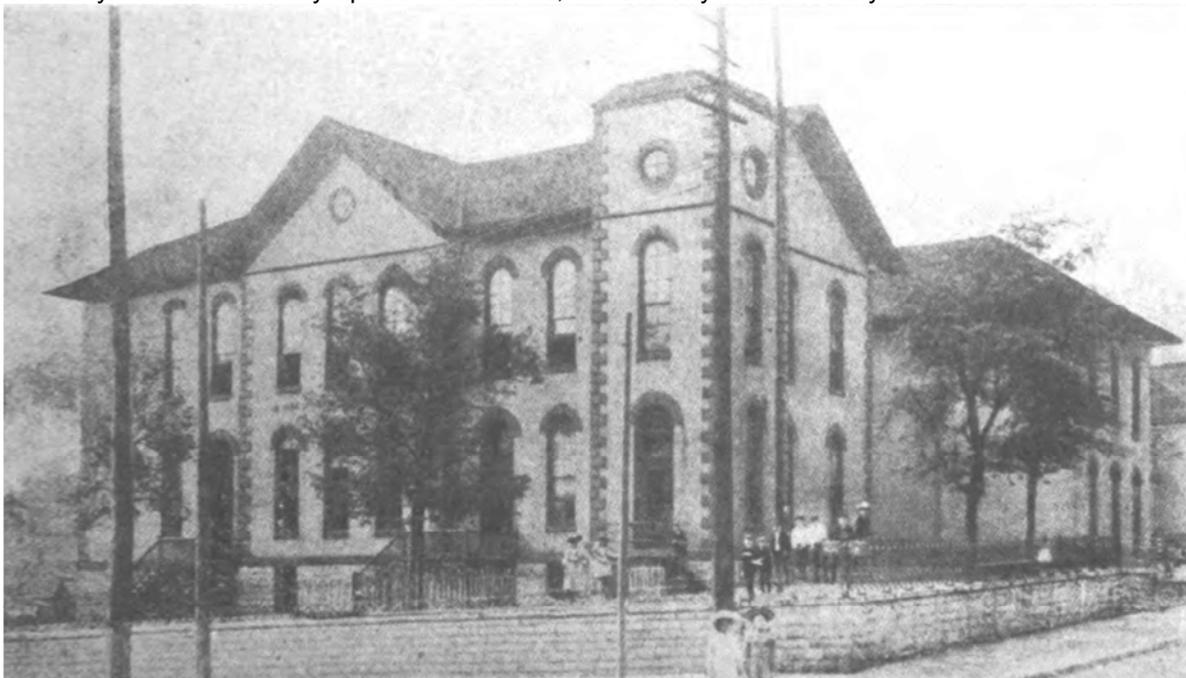
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Figure 9. Washington School, circa 1870.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 10. Humboldt School, circa 1870.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



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Figure 11. Webster School, circa 1900.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 12. Webster School, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 13. Lathrop School after 1886 tornado.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 14. Norman School, circa 1915.
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Figure 15. Allen School, circa 1912.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 16. Allen School without intended expansion, 2012. Brad Finch.



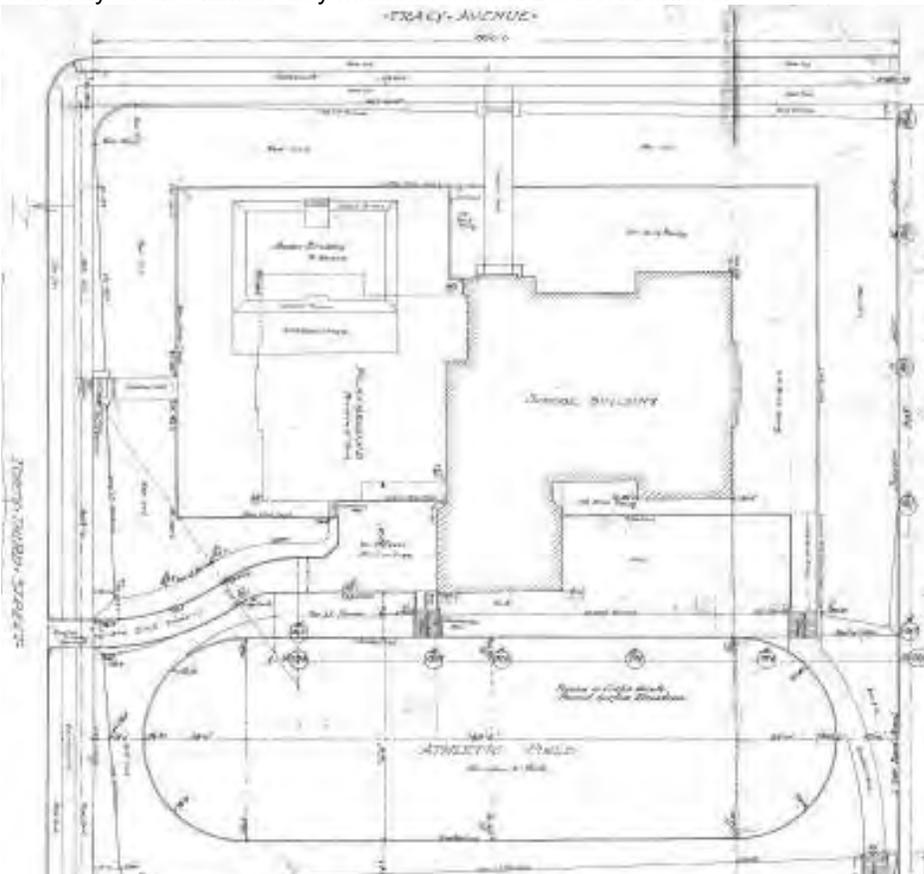
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Figure 17. Bancroft School, circa 1910.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 18. Bancroft School site plan, circa 1912,
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.



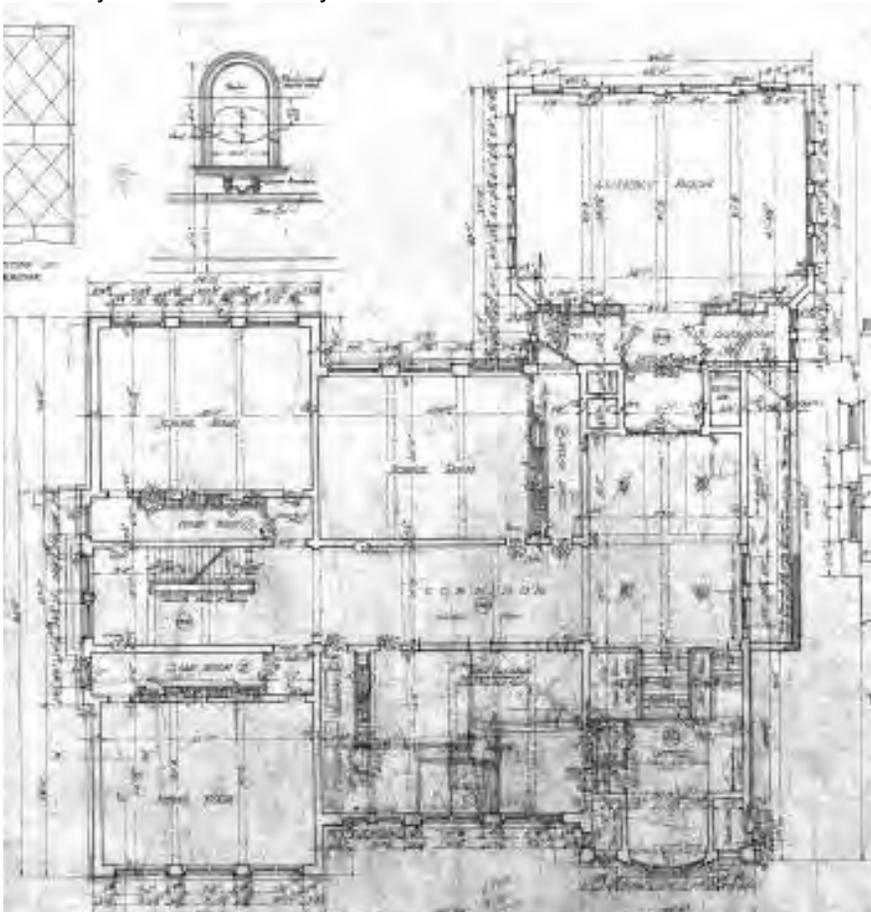
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Figure 19. Bancroft School timeline of additions and expansions.



Figure 20. Bancroft School, first floor plan, 1909.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.



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Figure 21. Bancroft School, front elevation, 1909.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

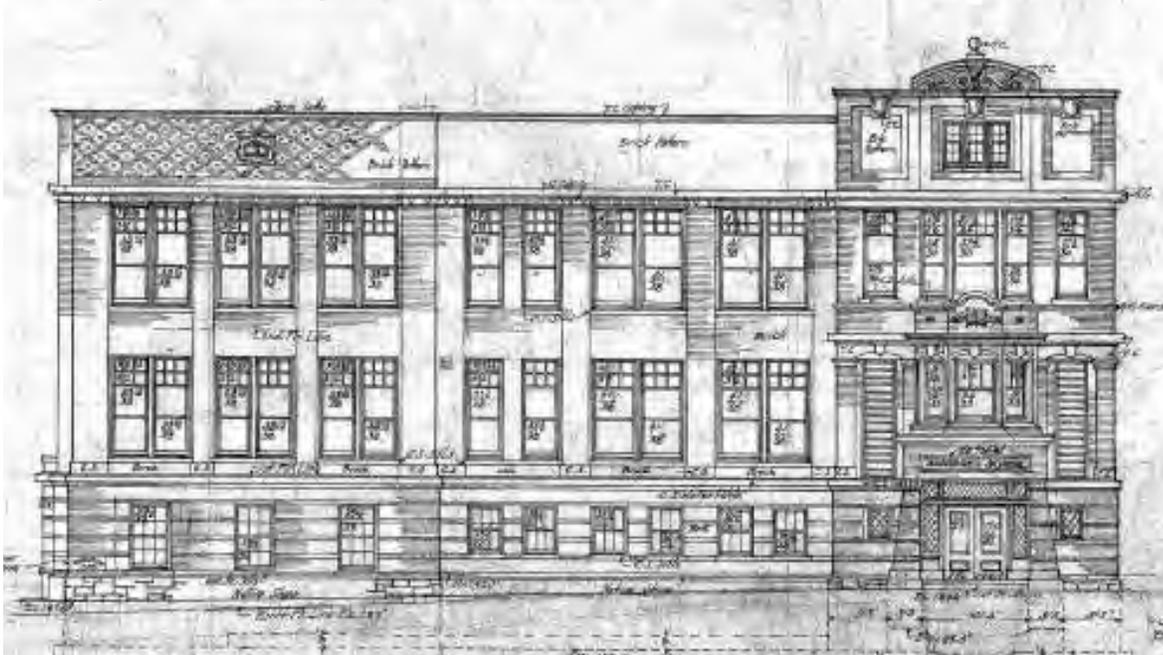
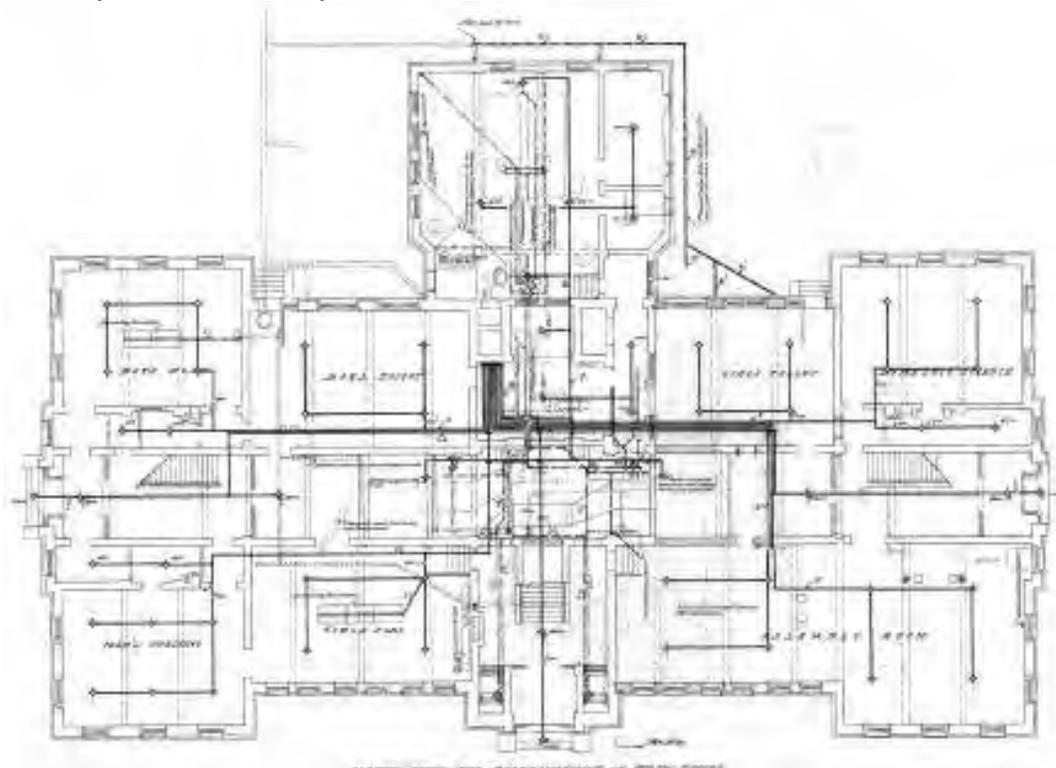


Figure 22. Bancroft School, first floor plan, with addition, 1913.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.



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Figure 23. Bancroft School, 1922 addition, basement and ground floor plans.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

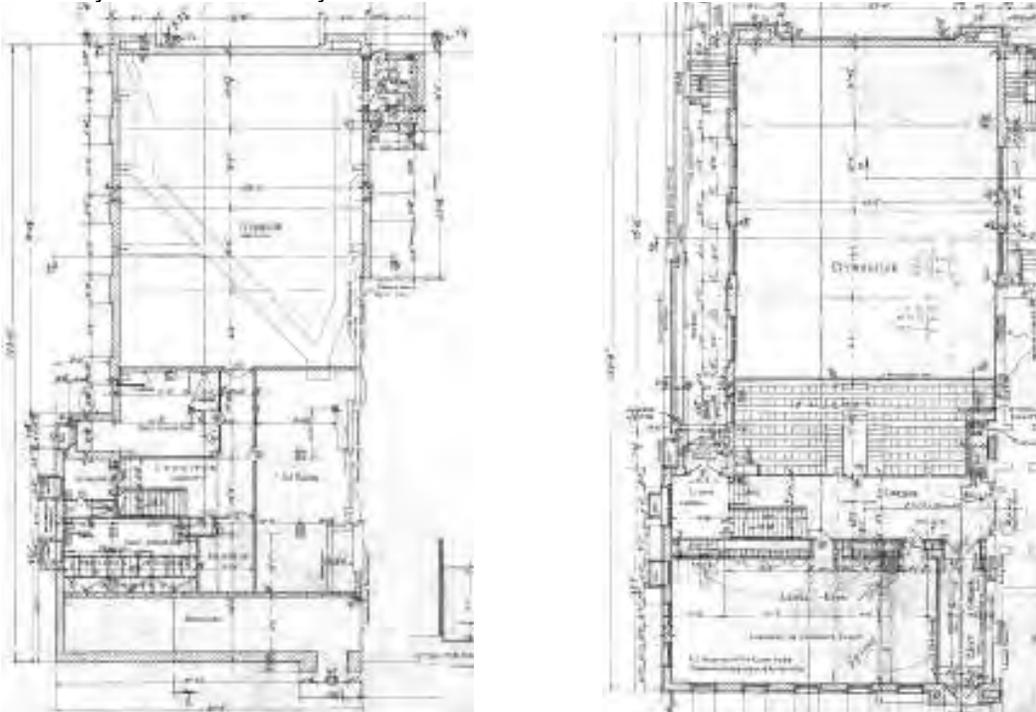
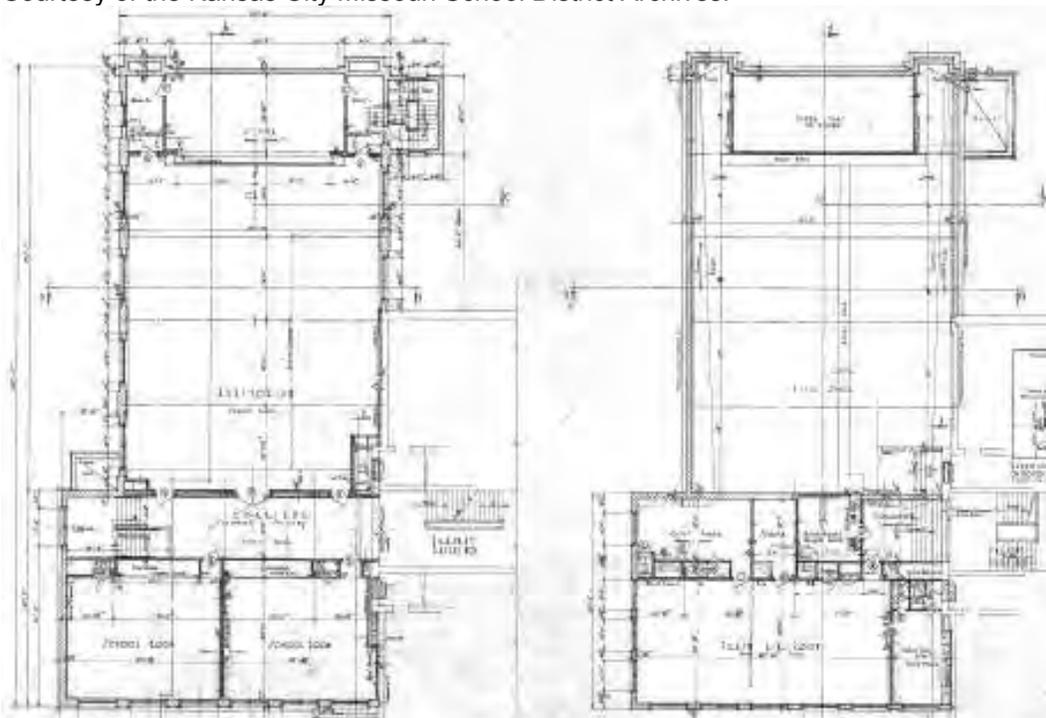


Figure 24. Bancroft School, 1922 addition, first and second floor plans.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.



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Figure 25. Vocational class constructing temporary frame schoolhouse at Kumpf School, 1914.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 26. Wheatley Schoolhouse, 2012. Brad Finch



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Figure 27. Karnes School, circa 1913.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 28. Swinney School, circa 1914.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



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Figure 29. Swinney School, second floor plan, 1914.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

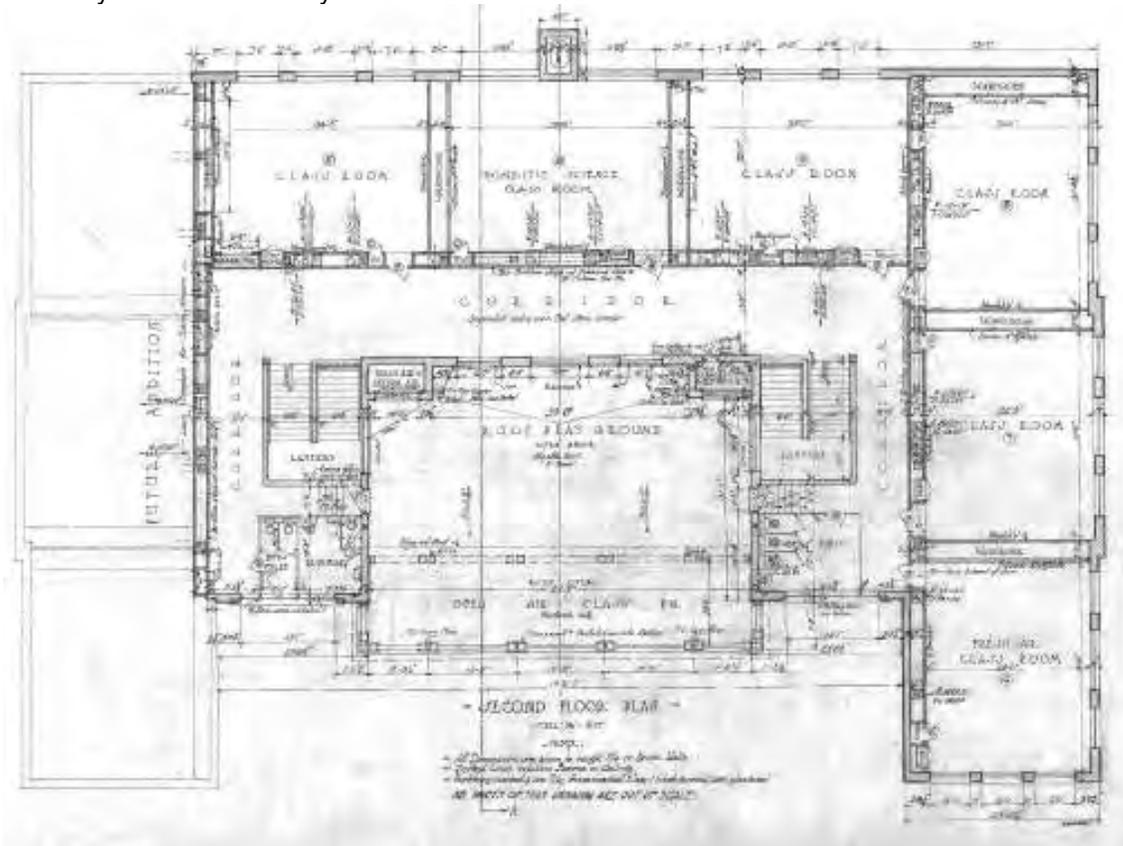


Figure 30. Lincoln High School, front elevation, 1935.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.



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Figure 31. Lincoln High School, first floor plan, 1935.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

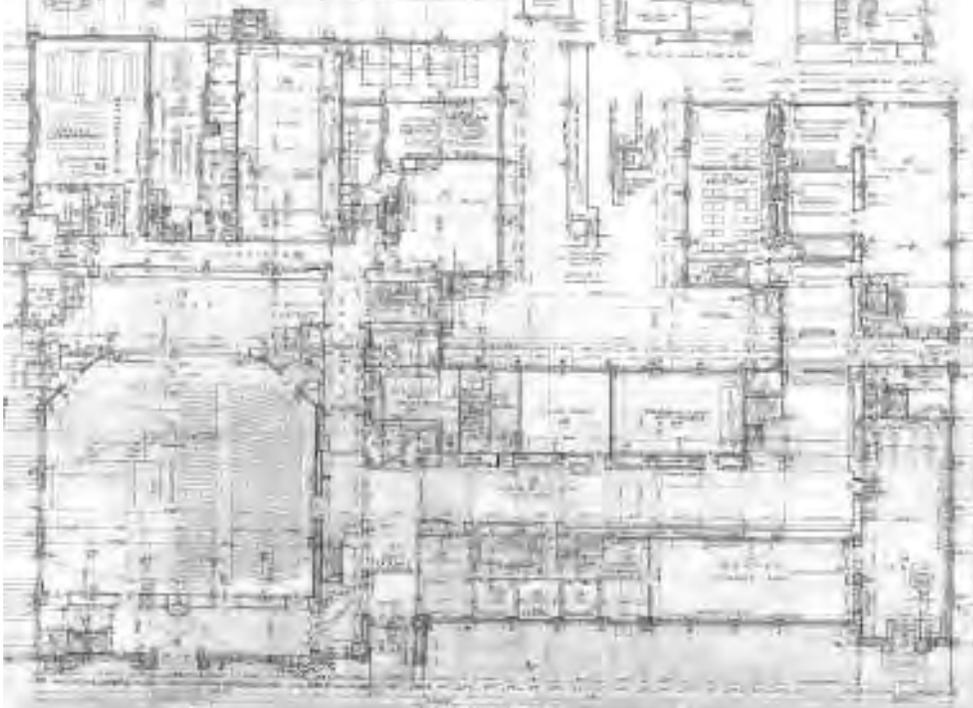
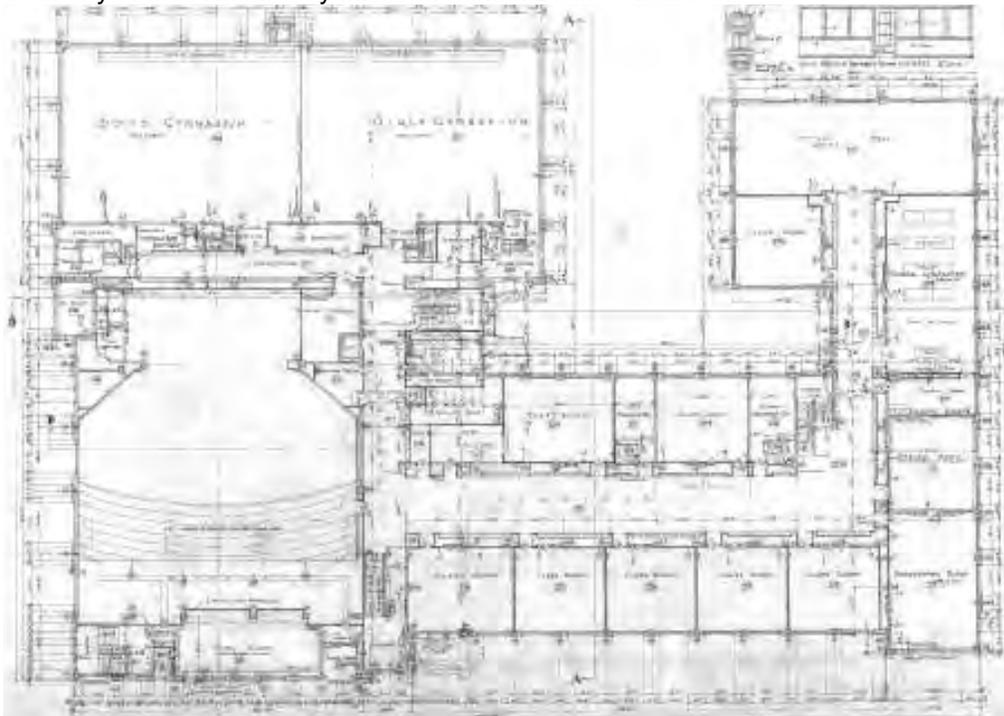


Figure 32. Lincoln High School, second floor plan, 1935.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.



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Figure 33. Seven Oaks School, first floor plan, 1927.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

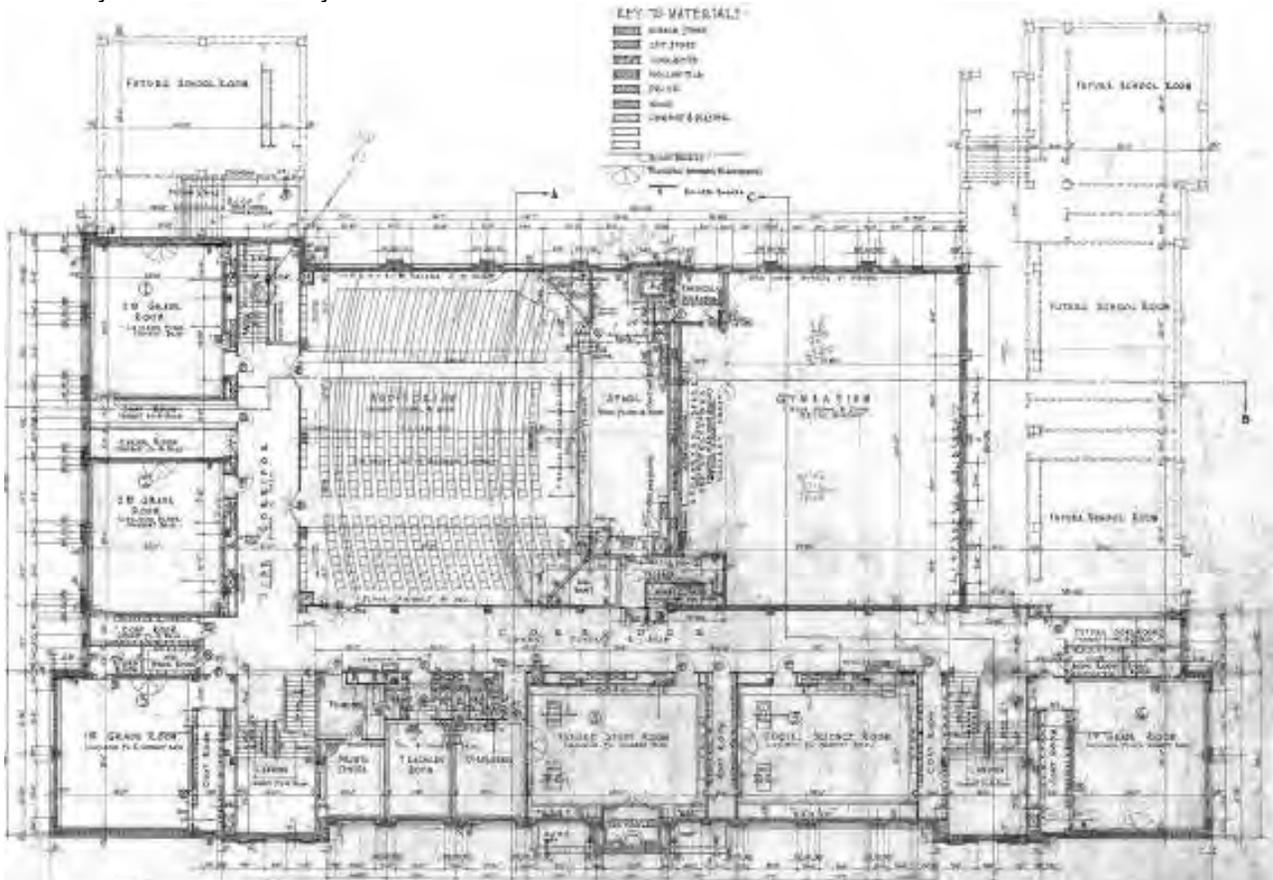


Figure 34. Seven Oaks School, south and west elevations, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 35. Bancroft School, second floor corridor, 2012. Brad Finch.



Figure 36. Seven Oaks School, first floor corridor, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 37. Graceland School addition, Voskamp & Slezak rendering, 1953.
Courtesy of Missouri Valley Special Collections, Kansas City Public Library.



Figure 38. Meservey School with 1955 addition, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 39. Douglass School, first floor plan, 1953.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

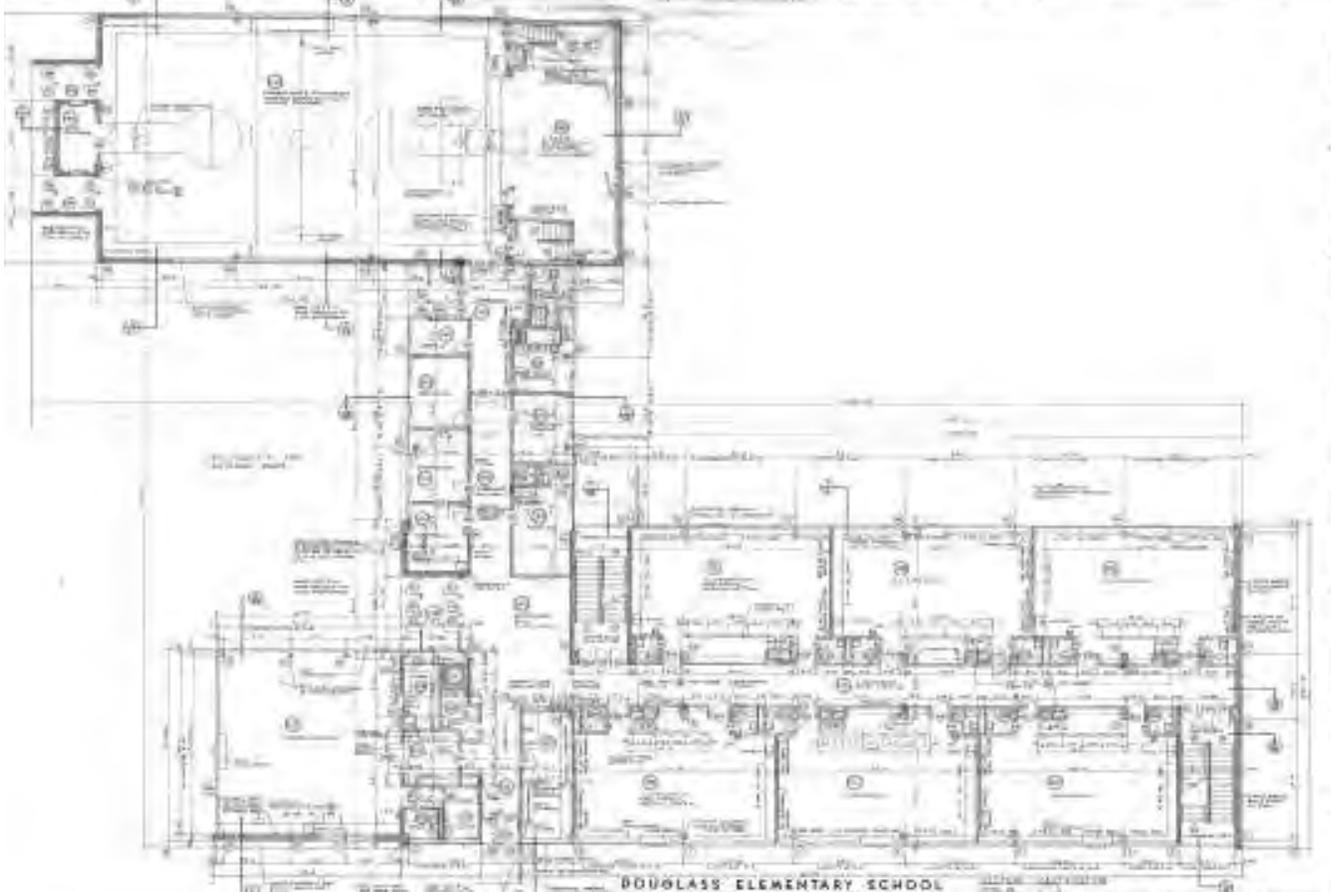


Figure 40. Douglass School, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 41. Richardson School, first floor plan, 1963.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

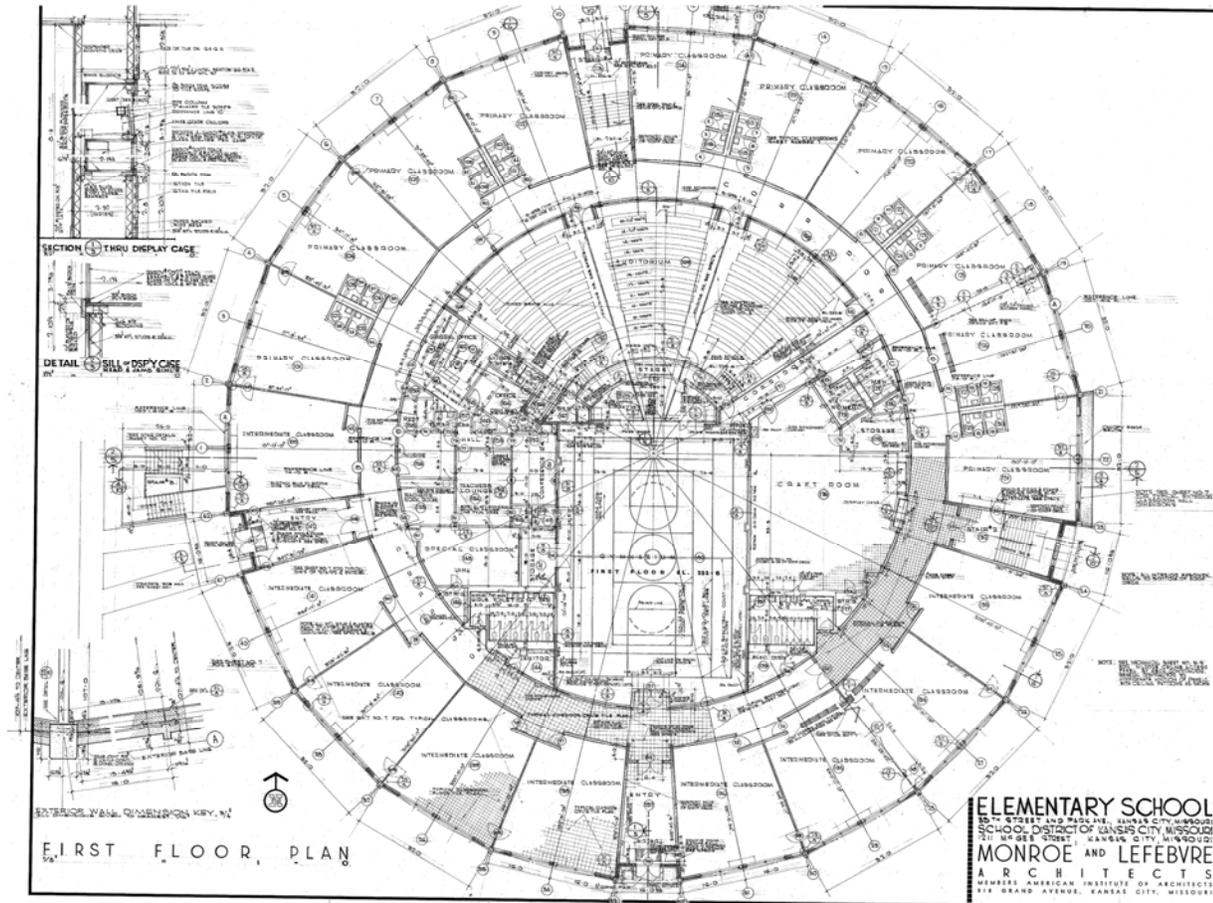


Figure 42. Richardson School, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 43. Franklin School, upper floor plan, 1968.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

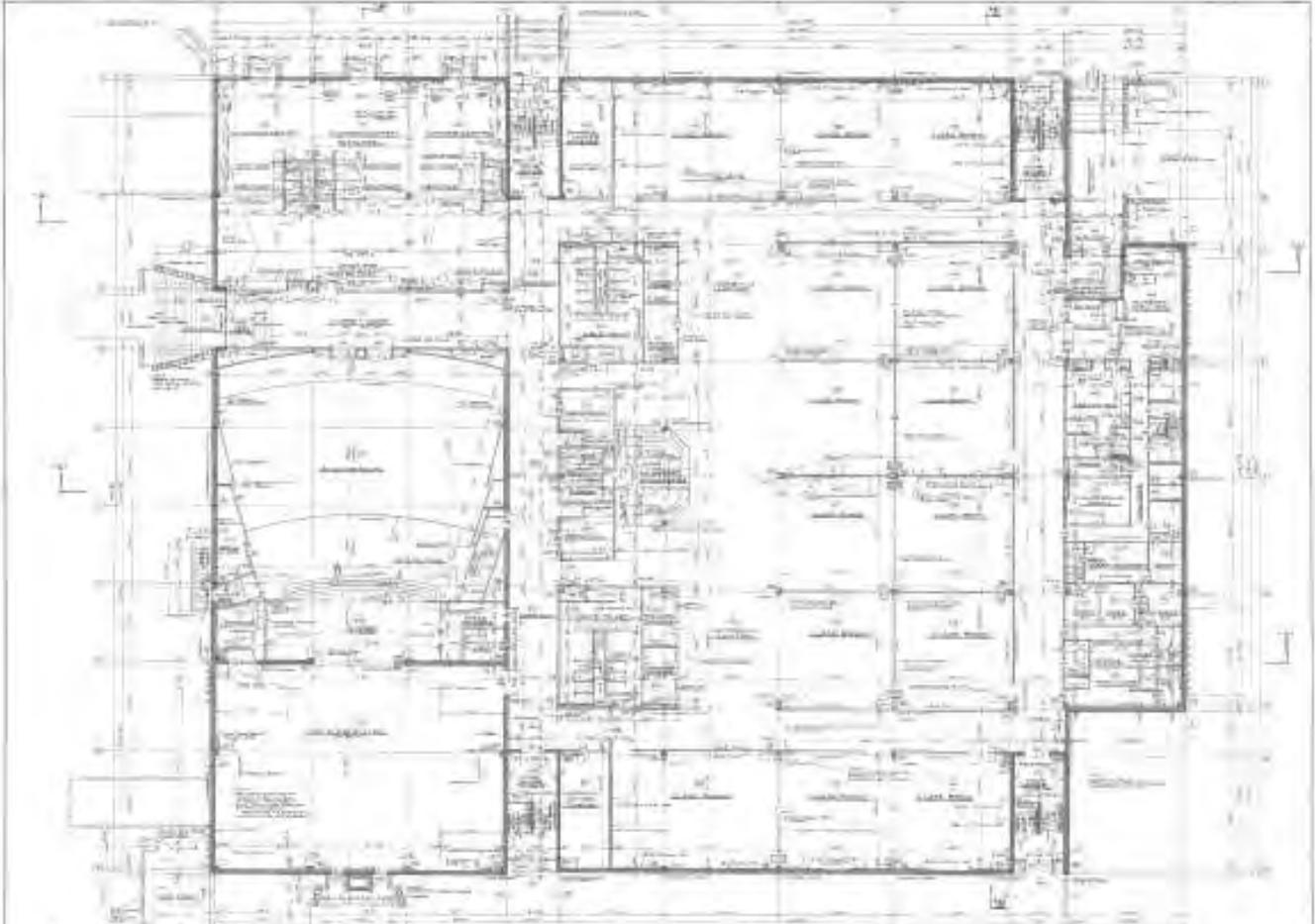


Figure 44. Franklin School, 2012. Brad Finch.



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Figure 45. Delano School, first floor plan, 1937.
Courtesy of the Kansas City Missouri School District Archives.

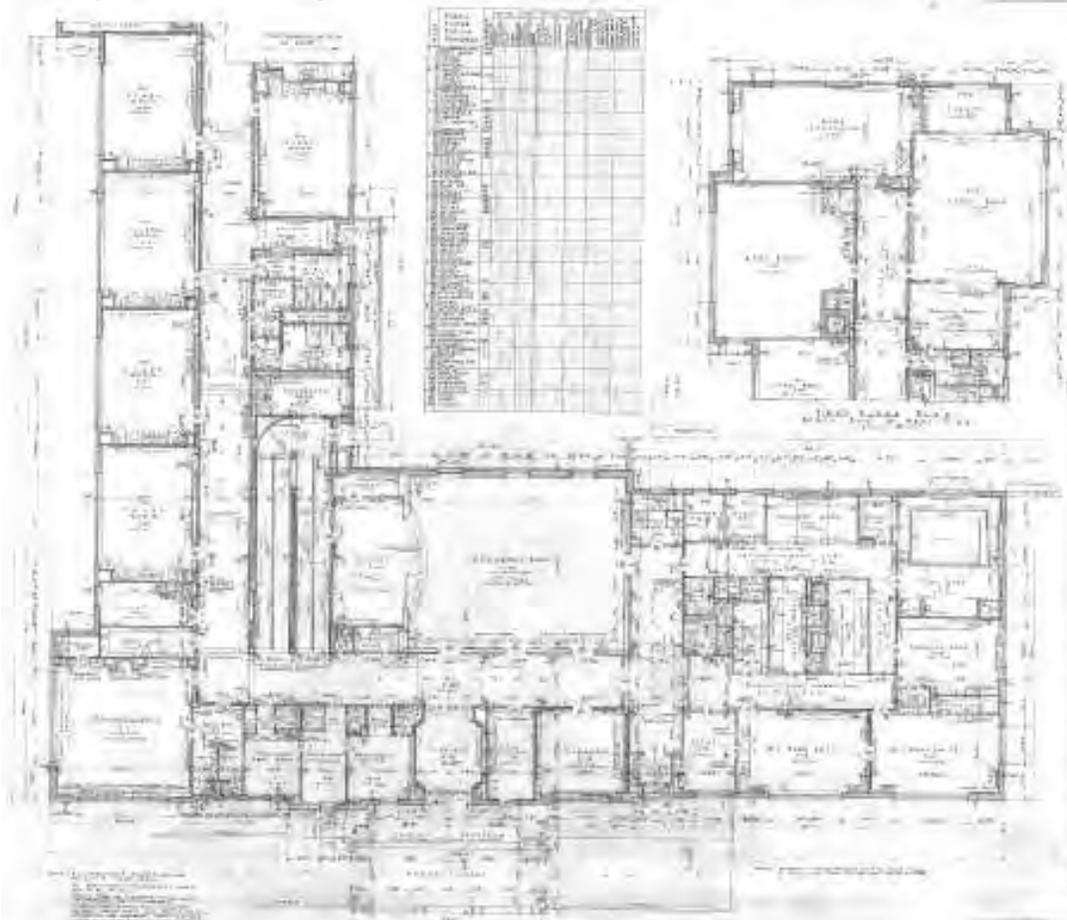


Figure 46. Delano School, 2012. Brad Finch.



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LIST OF SURVEYED SCHOOLS

Historic Name	Address	School Type	Date	Architect	Style
Allen Elementary School	706 W 42nd St	02	1911	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Askew School	2630 Topping Ave	05	1922-23; 1956	Charles A. Smith	Gothic Revival
Attucks School	1818 E 19th St	01	1893, 1906	William F. Hackney, Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Bancroft School	4300 Tracy Ave	02	1909; 1913; 1922	Charles A. Smith	Classical revival
Bingham, George Junior High School	7618 Wyandotte St	07	1959	Kivett, Myers & McCallum	Modern Movement
Blenheim School	2411 E 70th Ter	04	1924; 1926	Charles A. Smith	Moorish Revival
Border Star School	6321 Wornall Rd	U	1924; 1926; 1930	Charles A. Smith	Neo-Classical
Bryant, William C. School	319 Westover Rd	03	1915	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Central Jr. High School	3611 E Linwood Blvd	JHS	1924-25	Charles A. Smith	Neo-Classical
Chick, J.S. School	5316 Jackson Ave	04	1930-31; 1953-54	Charles A. Smith	Art Deco
Cook, Hale H. School	7302 Pennsylvania Ave	05	1923; 1930	Charles A. Smith	Tudor Revival
Delano, R. J. School	3708 Linwood Blvd	U	1938	Keene & Simpson	Art Deco
Douglass School	2640 Belleview Ave	07	1953	Kivett & Myers	Modern Movement
Dunbar School	5419 E 36th St	07	1956	Hardy & Schumacher	Modern Movement
East High School	1924 Van Brunt Blvd	HS	1926; 1931; 1953	Charles A. Smith; Sigmund H. Sieben	Neo-Classical
Fairview Alternative School	9917 E 38th Ter	JHS	1957	Joseph W. Radotinsky	Modern Movement
Faxon School	3710 Paseo Blvd	02	1911	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Foreign Language Academy	114 E Armour Blvd	U	1955; 1966	R.A. Niles	Modern Movement
Franklin, Chester Arthur Elementary	3400 Highland Ave	08	1968	Swanson & Brey	Modern Movement

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Historic Name	Address	School Type	Date	Architect	Style
Graceland School	2803 E 51st St	06	1924; 1953	Charles A. Smith; Voskamp & Slezak	Tapestry Brick
Greenwood School	3711 E 27th St	02	1906; 1915; 1931	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Hamilton School (Carver School)	1514 Campbell St	01	1889;1923	William F. Hackney, Charles A. Smith	Romanesque Revival
Harrison, Benjamin School	414 Wallace Ave	02	1913; 1925	Charles A. Smith	Classical Revival
Hartman (old)/Finlay Engineering College	7933 Main St	U	1925	Charles A. Smith	Classical Revival
Hartman, John T. Elementary School	8111 Oak St	07	1953; 1956; 1967	Dan R. Sanford & Sons	Modern Movement
Holmes, D.A. School (Benton)	3004 Benton Blvd	02	1903	Charles A. Smith	Romanesque
Horace Mann School	2008 E 39th St	02	1903-04; 1926	Charles A. Smith	Romanesque
Jackson Opportunity School	6801 E 12th St	01	1888	William F. Hackney	Romanesque
James, J. Crawford School	327 N Topping Ave	02	1910-11	Charles A. Smith	Flemish
Jefferson School	1310 Wabash Ave	06	1926	Charles A. Smith	Tudor Revival
Kensington School	5000 E 17th St	05	1915; 1923	Charles A. Smith	Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
King, Martin Luther Elementary School	4201 Indiana Ave	08	1968	Kivett & Myers	Modern Movement
Ladd, Sanford B. School	3600 Benton Blvd	02	1911-12; 1922	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Lincoln High School	2111 Woodland Ave	HS	1935	Charles A. Smith	Art Deco/Gothic Revival/ Modern Movement
Lincoln Jr. High School	1815 E 22nd St	JHS	1954-55	Marshall & Brown	Modern Movement
Longan, George B. School	3421 Cherry St	07	1954-55	Peterson & Scharhag	Modern Movement
Longfellow School	2830 Holmes St	06	1914; 1927; 1957	Charles A. Smith; Marshall & Brown	Gothic Revival/ Modern Movement
Manchester School	6835 E Truman Rd	05	1920	Charles A. Smith, Smith, Rea & Lovitt	Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
Manual School	1215 E Truman Rd	U	1968	Neville, Sharp & Simon	Modern Movement

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Historic Name	Address	School Type	Date	Architect	Style
Marlborough School	1300 E 75th St	06	1927; 1952	Charles A. Smith; Shaughnessy & Bower	Romanesque Revival
Martin School	716 N Garland Ave	07	1954	Hardy & Schumacher	Modern Movement
McCoy School	1524 White Ave	03	1914	Charles A. Smith	Sullivan-esque
Melcher, George Elementary School	3958 Chelsea Ave	07	1959-60	Hardy & Schumacher	Modern Movement
Meservey, Edwin C. School	4210 E 45th St	04	1927; 1955	Charles A. Smith	Classical Revival
Moore, Milton School	4510 E Linwood Blvd	03	1914-15	Charles A. Smith	Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival
Nelson, W.R. School	5228 Charlotte St	U	1923; 1930	Charles A. Smith	Classical Revival
Nichols, J.C. School	6903 Oak St	04	1926; 1930; 1935	Charles A. Smith	Gothic Revival
Norman School	3521 Summit St	02	1906; 1911	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Northeast High School	415 Van Brunt Blvd	HS	1913-14	Smith, Rea & Lovitt	Neoclassical
Northeast Junior High School	523 Chelsea Ave	JHS	1925	Charles A. Smith	Classical Revival
Pershing, John J. School	5915 Park Ave	U	1924; 1927; 1930	Charles A. Smith	Mediterranean
Pinkerton, D.M. School	6409 Agnes Ave	06	1930; 1952-53	Charles A. Smith; Neville, Sharp & Simon	Mixed
Richardson Elementary School	3515 Park Ave	U	1963; 1990	Monroe & Lefebvre	Modern Movement
Robeson Elementary School	8201 Holmes St	U	1960	Manuel Morris & Robert Sixta	Modern Movement
Ruhl School	8030 Ward Parkway Plz	U	1948; 1950; 1955)	Peterson & Scharhag	Classical Revival
Scarritt Elementary School	3509 Anderson Ave.	U	1927; 1960	Charles A. Smith; Swanson, Terney, Brey	Romanesque Revival/ Modern Movement
Seven Oaks School	3711 Jackson Ave	04	1927	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Southeast High School	3500 E Meyer Blvd	HS	1937; 1953	Wight & Wight	Art Deco/Gothic Revival
Southeast Junior High School	6410 Swope Pkwy	JHS	1962-1963	Keene, Simpson & Murphy; Mackey & Assoc	Modern Movement

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Historic Name	Address			School Type	Date	Architect	Style
Southwest High School	6512	Wornall	Rd	HS	1925-26	Charles A. Smith	Neo-Classical
Stark, John K School	1700	Stark	Ave	06	1930	Charles A. Smith	Art Deco
Swinney School	1106	W 47th	St	03	1914; 1927; 1982	Charles A. Smith	Sullivan-esque
Switzer Primary Unit	1810	Madison	Ave	07	1957-58	Peterson & Mantel	Modern Movement
Switzer School	1936	Summit	St	01	1889; 1926; 1939	William F. Hackney, Charles A. Smith	Italian Renaissance Revival
Switzer School; West Junior High	1829	Madison	Ave	JHS	1926; 1956	Charles Smith	Classical Revival
Thacher School	4904	Independence	Ave	01	1898; 1914	William F. Hackney, Charles A. Smith	Italian Renaissance Revival
Troost Elementary School	5917	Forest	Ave	05	1922	Charles A. Smith	Sullivan-esque
Van Horn School (William Volker)	3715	Wyoming	St	02	1912	Charles A. Smith	Gothic Revival
Webster School	1644	Wyandotte	St	01	1885	Manuel A. Diaz	High Victorian Gothic
West Rock Creek Elementary School	8820	E 27th	St	07	1961; 1967	Folger & Pearson	Modern Movement
Westport High School	315	E 39th	St	02	1908; 1964; 1992	Charles A. Smith	Jacobethan
Westport Jr. High School	3845	McGee	St	JHS	1923; 1992	Charles A. Smith	English Renaissance
Wheatley Schoolhouse	5332	S Benton	Ave	U	1913	Kansas City Board of Education	Two-room Schoolhouse
Wheatley, Phillis Elementary School	2415	Agnes	Ave	07	1955	Gentry & Voskamp	Modern Movement
Whittier Elementary School	1012	Bales	Ave	07	1959	Curtis & Cowling	Modern Movement
Willard, Frances Elementary School	5015	Garfield	Ave	05	1923	Charles A. Smith	Romanesque Revival
Woodland Elementary School	711	Woodland	Ave	U	1921	Charles A. Smith	Romanesque Revival

KEY TO SCHOOL TYPES

01 = Ward schools
 02 = 5-part, symmetrical, early Progressive Era school 1900-10
 03 = Incorporate features of the fresh air program
 04 = 1920s schools with long, relatively flat front façade
 05 = One-story school with skylights and exterior entrances to classrooms

06 = Schools with monolithic front façade
 07 = Modern elementary school – simplified finger plan
 08 = Open plan Modern Movement Era school
 HS = High School
 JHS = Junior High School
 U = Unique design