(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

140



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. NAME OF PROPERTY				NATIONALITA	
HISTORIC NAME: Waco High School OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: Old Waco High	h School; Alterr	native High Sc	chool, Met	ropolitan Learr	ning Center
2. LOCATION					
STREET & NUMBER: 815 Columbus CITY OR TOWN: Waco STATE: Texas CODE: TX COUNTY: McLennan CODE: 309			NOT FOR PUBLICATION: N/A VICINITY: N/A ZIP CODE: 76701-1238		
3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATIO	ON				
As the designated authority under the National Historic Predetermination of eligibility) meets the documentation stand procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CF Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered additional comments.) Signature of certifying official State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Comments of Federal agency and bureau	lards for registering p FR Part 60. In my opi ered significant (_ na	roperties in the Na inion, the property	tional Registe (\underline{x} meets) (vide) (\underline{x} loc	r of Historic Places does not meet) the	and meets the National
in my opinion, the propertymeetsdoes not meet the	e National Register cr	riteria. (See co	ntinuation she	et for additional con	mments.)
Signature of commenting or other official			Date		_
State or Federal agency and bureau					
4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION	N 1				
hereby certify that this property is: entered in the National Register See continuation sheet determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register	Signature Labour	of the Keeper	Beall	Date of Act	ion , 89
other (explain):					

TOTAL

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Private

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: Building

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:

CONTRIBUTING	Noncontributing	
3	0	BUILDINGS
0	0	SITES
0	0	STRUCTURES
1	0	OBJECTS

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: EDUCATION/school

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION:LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival, Late Gothic Revival; NO STYLE

4

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION METAL; CONCRETE

CONCRETE, CAST STONE; BRICK, Other: CLAY TILE WALLS **ASPHALT**

ROOF

OTHER

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-8).

NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 5

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Narrative Description

The Waco High School complex includes three buildings: the main school building, an auditorium, and a music building, all of which contribute to the property's significance. The high school complex is located at 815 Columbus Avenue in Waco's Central Business District. Constructed in 1910-1912, with a major addition completed in 1929, the three-story, high style Classical Revival building sits on a raised basement. Designed by architect Milton W. Scott, stylistic features include the monumental fluted Ionic columns supporting a large pediment, the triangular arched pediments at the secondary entrances and segmental arches over the windows behind the columns. The building is clad in buff-colored brick and the cornice, window sills and belt courses are cast stone. The windows are regularly-spaced 1/1 double hung wood windows with single light transoms. The building faces onto Columbus Avenue in what was once a residential neighborhood that slowly turned commercial in the early twentieth century. The 1924 Gothic Revival style gymnasium is a rectangular plan, steel framed structure with masonry back up. The original steel trusses are extant and support a slightly barrel arched wooden ceiling and roof. The 1955 music building is a one-story, mid-century modern structure clad in buff brick. Occupying an entire city block, the complex as a whole has undergone few changes, and retains a high degree of integrity.

The site of the Waco High School is bounded by Columbus and Jefferson Avenues and North 8th and 9th Streets. The full block site is urban and consists of three buildings: the high school, gymnasium and music building; one object: a flag pole; and a surface parking lot. The street grid shifts approximately 45 degrees off of a true north-south alignment a result of the town plat conforming to a bend in the Brazos River, located five blocks to the northeast. The building faces southeast onto Columbus Avenue in Waco's Central Business District, the center of commercial, civic and entertainment activity until 1953 when deadly tornado struck downtown killing 114 people and seriously injured 145. The tornado demolished 196 buildings and an additional 396 were subsequently torn down due to extensive damage. The tornado, coupled with the rise of suburban shopping centers, lured businesses and shoppers away from the downtown. Today, the area is populated with a good representation of early-to-mid-century commercial buildings interspersed with swaths of open land, the scar of the tornado and Urban Renewal. A comprehensive architectural survey was conducted of the downtown area in 1988 and although there are only a handful of National Register listed buildings in the area, many have been determined eligible as a result of the survey including the twenty-story Amicable Insurance Company (ALICO), designed by Sanguinet and Staats and completed in 1911. It was briefly the tallest building in the Southwest and a testament to Waco's importance and prosperity in the first decades of the twentieth century.

Commercial and/or public buildings in the business district that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places include the 1902 McLennan County courthouse (NR 1978) designed by J. Reily Gordon and W. C. Dodson; the 1915 Praetorian Building at 601 Franklin (NR 1984); the 1913/1929 Hippodrome, popularly known as the Waco Theater, at 724 Austin (NR 1983); the 1928 McDermott Motors building at 1125 Washington Ave (NR 2004); and the Artesian Manufacturing and Bottling Company building at 300 S. 5th (NR 1983). The McDermott Motors building and the Artesian Manufacturing and Bottling Company building (now the home of the Dr. Pepper Museum) were both designed by Milton W. Scott, the same architect as the Waco High School.

¹ Handbook of Texas Online, s.v. "WACO, TX" http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/hdw1.html (accessed February 16, 2008).

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Architectural Description

The 1912 Waco High School is a three-story, Classical Revival building on a raised basement. The building faces southeast at 815 Columbus Avenue and is a symmetrical five-by-five bay building constructed of reinforced concrete with a buff brick exterior and classical cast stone detailing. Built in phases, the original footprint included only the front rectangular portion of the building: the central block and wings. This original building opened for classes in 1912 a year behind schedule, and was later expanded to an E-plan building. The North 8th Street ell was added in 1915 and the central and North 9th Street arms were added in 1921 transforming the rectangular shaped building into an E-plan. The final 1929 addition along the Jefferson Avenue (rear) façade enclosed the arms of the "E" shape and maintained the two interior light courts.

The main façade is composed of five bays with an A-B-C-B-A pattern with the outer and central bays projecting from the building plane. Buff colored brick is the dominant exterior material with the exception of the raised basement that has a stucco finish. Brick detailing include a horizontal raised brick course each eighth row on the first floor and blind panels and spandrels defined by raised brickwork on the second and third floors. A projecting cast stone belt course divides the basement and first floor and the first and second floors. The windows are regularly spaced 1/1 wooden double hung sash with single light transoms with the exception of the basement level windows which have no transoms. A full entablature runs the perimeter of the primary and two secondary facades with the architrave and cornice in cast stone and the frieze in buff colored brick. Behind the cornice is a low buff-colored brick blocking course with a cast stone cap. The window sills are also cast stone.

The central entry bay (C), the most decorative aspect and the focal point of the building, is three bays wide. The entry is via a set of stairs to the first floor; there is no basement entry. A staircase leads up to the recessed, paired doors topped with three, nine-light fixed wooden transoms. There is a cast stone flat arched pediment marking the entry. Above on the second floor is a monumental temple front composed of four monumental fluted Ionic columns extending the full height of the second and third floors and supporting a full entablature and tympanum. Behind the columns are recessed wooden 1/1 sash windows with single light transoms – one window per bay and three per floor corresponding to the bay divisions defined by the columns. These windows are similar to those found on the rest of the building with the addition of three-part sidelights corresponding to the upper and lower sashes and transoms. The second floor windows have a pressed copper segmental arch supported by decorative consoles in line with the brick spandrels that define the space between the second and third floors. In the frieze are raised metal letters spelling "High School." Behind the temple front is a raised brick blocking course or parapet with cast stone cap.

The two flanking bays (B) are comprised of five regularly spaced windows at each level. The window pattern is repeated on the other facades of the building and has a 1/1 wooden sash window at basement level, with 1/1 wooden sash with transom on the first, second and third floors. The first floor has a projecting horizontal brick course every eighth course. Spandrels, created by a raised brick frame, define the space between the second and third floors. The two outer bays (A) have a three bay composition formed by two windows with transoms per floor divided by a central, blind, flat arch.

The secondary North 8th and North 9th Street facades are mirror images of each other and are composed of an A-B-C-B-A pattern and continue the brick and cast stone detailing of the primary facade. At the first floor level of the second and fourth bays are pedimented entries with fluted Ionic columns *in antis* flanked by brick pilasters that reference the temple front on the main facade. The paired, multi-light entry doors are topped with wooden decorative star-patterned transoms.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

The windows along this façade are the same 1/1 wooden sash with single light transoms as seen on the primary facade. On close inspection, it is possible to see the slight differentiation in the brick color indicating the various construction phases along these two secondary facades of the building.

The first and fifth bays (A) of the secondary facades are each four bays wide as defined by regularly spaced windows. The second and fourth bays (B) project slightly from the building plane and include the pedimented entries. The reference to the main façade continues above the entrances with the repetition of the pressed copper cladding with segmental arches and the addition of the three-part sidelights. The central bay (C) is the largest and is composed of four bays with a symmetrical appearance. However, detailed analysis of this bay reveals that it is slightly irregular and reflects the expansion programs. The first, second and fourth bays are defined by four equally spaced windows; third bay has five equally spaced windows. Between the second and third bays are single windows that correspond to the interior staircase and are slightly off the regular rhythm of this otherwise symmetrical façade.

The rear façade faces northwest to Jefferson Avenue and was completed in 1929. This three bay façade has an A-B-A pattern with no openings in the two outer bays. The central bay has six equally spaced bays with large steel multi-light casement windows.

Interior

The interior corridors, one per façade, connect to form a continuous square with no noticeable change from one construction phase to the next. All of the corridors are wide with classrooms on either side; each room has access to natural light and ventilation. The most noticeable change from one building phase to another is the use of the steel multilight casement windows on the rear façade and some later alterations of classrooms on the first floor below the auditorium.

The "E" plan of the school is typical of early twentieth-century multi-story buildings whose access to natural light and ventilation resulted in ever-changing building foot prints. The modified E-plan has morphed into a square "O" plan and the corridors connect throughout the entire building.

The measurements of the corridor widths correspond to the different building campaigns. The oldest portion of the building, the front portion parallel to Columbus Avenue, has a corridor width of 15 feet. The secondary facades (North 8th and North 9th Streets) have a 7'-4" corridor width and the corridor in the rear (parallel to Jefferson Avenue) is 9' wide. The basement ceiling height is 8' and the first through third floors have a ceiling height of 13 feet. The majority of the floors are covered with 6-by--inch linoleum tiles over concrete. The interior walls are plastered. The ceilings show the structural concrete beams and over the years acoustical tiles have been added-yet, the majority have since fallen. In a few of the classrooms, acoustical drop ceilings have been added. Most of the original doors and transoms are extant as are the radiators and the classroom chalkboards with chalk rails supported by decorative consoles. The baseboards and window sills are wooden with a simple molding. The classroom doors are typically wooden paneled-type with three lower panels and a large upper light. Secondary doors to utility rooms are five-paneled wooden doors. There are a few classrooms with wooden tongue and groove floors and some later additions include parquet flooring.

The auditorium and its balcony are located in the central arm of the "E" are accessible from the main front corridor from the second and the balcony from the third floor.

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Gymnasium (contributing building)

The gymnasium was built in 1924 and is a five-by-six bay, rectangular plan, steel framed structure with masonry back up. The original steel trusses are extant and support a slightly barrel arched wooden ceiling and roof. The Gothic Revival style building is ornamented with cast stone decorative elements including gothic arched doorways, a crenellated parapet, brick buttresses on the side elevations and elaborate cast stone detailing on the front façade.

The interior of the gym is full height with exposed steel trusses. The ceiling is wooden. On the opposite end from the front entry doors is an elevated stage. Along the two sidewalls is a viewing balcony with access stairs on each end. The balcony is wooden and has wooden bleachers. The perimeter walls of the building are brick and the interior walls are plastered. There are decorative plaster capitals below the anchor point of each of the metal trusses. The windows are steel, multilight casement windows. Behind the stage in each corner is a metal staircase that leads to small offices on the second floor.

Music Building (contributing building)

The 1955 Music Building was designed by Easterwood and Easterwood architects and is a one-story, mid-century modern structure clad in buff brick. There is a breezeway along the façade closest to the gymnasium supported by slender metal columns. Some of the windows have been sealed along the North 9th Street façade and several of the planter boxes on this façade are deteriorated. On the interior, the walls have been covered with paneling and a drop ceiling has been installed. Built during the period of significance, this building is a contributing element in the complex, despite unsympathetic (albeit reversible) changes.

Flagpole (contributing object)

When the Waco High School opened, a flagpole was donated by Texas Christian University. The flagpole is extant and came from the TCU campus on North 18th Street between Kyle and Alexander Streets. The flagpole is considered a contributing object to this nomination.

Change in use

Two new suburban high schools, the new Waco High School and Jefferson Moore High School, opened in time for the start of the 1971-1972 school year and rendered this building obsolete for use as a high school. WISD maintained the building in its inventory as the Metropolitan Learning Center from 1981 to 1987 and then as an Alternative High School from 1988 to 1991. WISD struggled to find a use for the building and unfortunately a joint venture with a private firm to turn the building into an educational center in the early 2000s was short lived and failed. The building has stood vacant ever since and was purchased by the current owners in October of 2007. The current owner is developing plans to rehabilitate the building in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation as part of the Investment Tax Credit program. The school building and gymnasium will be rehabilitated into residential rental units. A new use for the Music Building has not yet been determined.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

APPLICABLE NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA

- X A PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE BROAD PATTERNS OF OUR HISTORY.
 - B PROPERTY IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVES OF PERSONS SIGNIFICANT IN OUR PAST.
- X C PROPERTY EMBODIES THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE, PERIOD, OR METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION OR REPRESENTS THE WORK OF A MASTER, OR POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUE, OR REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT AND DISTINGUISHABLE ENTITY WHOSE COMPONENTS LACK INDIVIDUAL DISTINCTION.
- **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

CRITERIA CONSIDERATIONS: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Education; Architecture

Period of Significance: 1912-1959

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1912, 1924, 1955

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: N/A

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Scott, Milton W.; Easterwood and Easterwood

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-9 through 8-16).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheet 9-17).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

x preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- _ designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

PRIMARY LOCATION OF ADDITIONAL DATA:

- x State historic preservation office (Texas Historical Commission)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

The Waco High School complex is a landmark in Waco's Central Business District, and includes the 1912 Beaux-arts school building, the 1924 Gothic Revival auditorium, and the 1955 mid-century modern music building. It served as the city's primary high school from 1912 through 1971, with an all-white student body until integration of the Waco school district in the late 1960s. The complex is nominated to the National Register at the local level of significance under Criterion A, in the area of Education for its central role in the public education of Waco's youth, and Criterion C in the area of Architecture, and an excellent example of high style institutional design in the heart of Waco. The completion of the Waco High School was a high point in the public school district's plan to modernize the school system in the first half of the 20th century. Its monumental presence recalls an era when local school districts constructed educational buildings that symbolized the importance of education to the community. The school building is the oldest extant public school building in Waco, and the period of significance spans the period 1912 to 1959.

History of the Waco Independent School District (WISD)

Free education in the State of Texas began with the passage of an act in 1854 to provide funding for county public schools. McLennan County created fourteen school districts, which were increased to thirty-three districts in later years. The City of Waco and environs was designated as District Number 1. In 1875, the Texas Legislature authorized city governments to assume control of public schools within their established city limits, and the Waco city council decided to exercise their new rights. The city needed income to fund the schools, but in 1875 voters decided not to institute a school tax. Nevertheless, the city council appointed an education committee and the mayor served as the superintendent of schools. To acquire money to run the free public schools, three leagues of land (about 13,285 acres) in Eastland County that the state gave to the school system in 1854 were sold, beginning in 1876, netting an average of \$2.86 per acre, totaling \$57,376.74 by 1919.

In the late nineteenth century, education in the Waco area was dominated by private and denominational schools, which received tuition from their students. Although the city council had assumed responsibility for free public education in their city, their ability to organize schools and hire teachers was limited until 1882. At the beginning of the school year, only 342 students attended the free public schools, and only one principal was on the payroll, Captain J. T. Strain of the East Waco School. The education of these students was paid for by state appropriations. However, in the fall of 1882, the city council hired J. N. Gallagher as the principal of the Central School, and a local school tax was passed on December 11, 1882. The school system was now ready to offer graded free public education. Gallagher was subsequently appointed to be supervisor of schools.⁴

J. N. Gallagher was quick to implement a new school system. By the end of December 1882, the Waco free public school system had an established school term of nine months, eight grades were offered, and all schools had a uniform study program and set of textbooks. The scholastic census of 1882 completed by the county assessor counted one "white" and one "colored" school in East Waco, and one "white" and two "colored" schools west of the Brazos River. All told, there

² Newman, ed.; p. 14.

³ Newman, ed.; p. 15.

⁴ Newman, ed.; p. 16-17.

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

were 948 white students (479 male and 451 female) and 403 black students (231 male and 172 female) enrolled, a jump of almost 400 percent from the beginning of the school year.⁵

The city council arranged for the construction of several new buildings in the school year of 1884-1885 to accommodate the 1,320 students (716 white and 604 black) and 18 teachers. Previously, the public school system had slowly absorbed the facilities and staff from some of the smaller private schools in Waco. Now, however, the city was able to build facilities, including three new buildings for white students, and two for black students. Ninth and tenth grades were added in 1884-1885, and eleventh grade was offered shortly thereafter. Five students graduated from eleventh grade in 1887.

By the late 1880s, there were finally enough students completing the higher grades to warrant a new high school. Central High School was located on the corner of South 4th Street and Webster; it was completed on October 10, 1887 by John H. Neil for \$24,999. It was a brick two-story building with a tower trimmed in white stone, housing seventh through eleventh grades. Eighty-eight feet of the building fronted South 4th Street and 81 feet faced Webster. Entrances were located on both sides. Toilets were located outside until the building was connected to the sewer system in 1897, and the boys and girls playgrounds were separated by a high wooden fence. The superintendent of school's office was also located in the building. Central High School operated in the school system for 65 years and served as the only high school for the City of Waco for 25 years until it was replaced by the building on Columbus Avenue and North 8th Street.⁷

Mr. Gallagher resigned at the end of the 1887-1888 school year to pursue a career as a lawyer. Mr. A. McGregor replaced him as superintendent of schools, but was quickly replaced by Mrs. Willie D. House, the first female superintendent of schools in the region, who was hired for the 1889-1890 school year. During her tenure the Central High School was repaired and updated. In 1883, control of the day-to-day operations of the public school system was transferred from the city council to a board of trustees. However, the finances were still managed by the city council. Apparently, the board of trustees was more conservative than the city council, as Mrs. House was not reappointed as superintendent for the 1893-1894 school year. She was replaced by Charles V. Alexander. Six years later, in 1899, Alexander was replaced by John L. Lattimore, who served for 15 years. As another sign of the social attitude of the board of trustees, in 1898 they implemented a policy that no married female teachers were allowed employment in the school system. Once a female teacher married, the event was considered an automatic resignation. The policy was suspended temporarily due to the lack of male or single female teachers during World war I, but it was not fully suspended until the 1960s.

Through most of the 1890s, the agricultural economy, particularly cotton, was hit by both falling prices and a low yield. At the time, Waco was the hub of the transportation network linking area cotton farmers, and the town was poised to feel the effects of the downturn of the economy. Although the national economy began to recover in the late 1890s, the Waco area struggled to acquire sufficient funds for the public school system. In 1898, the Central High School at 4th and Webster was no longer adequate for the school district's needs, and the principal wanted to make additions to the building, but the board of trustees and the superintendent decided that the public would not accept a tax increase at the time and plans for additions to the school were postponed. In addition, the school system had to obtain yet another loan of \$10,000

⁵ Newman, ed.; p. 18-19.

⁶ Newman, ed.; p. 27-32.

⁷ Newman, ed.; p. 33-35.

⁸ Newman, ed.; p. 37-43.

⁹ Newman, ed.; p. 47-48.

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

from the city council just to keep operating. Between 1893 and 1900, the school system had to borrow thousands of dollars from local banks and the city council to meet operating expenses.¹⁰

By the turn of the century the situation was increasingly dire. Between 1899 and 1909, Waco's population had increased by 18 percent from 24,084 to 29,360. The scholastic population had experienced a 19 percent growth from 3,912 to 4,834, and enrollment jumped 22 percent from 3,726 to 4,757. The need for building space almost doubled. To meet the increasing need, the city council was asked for a school bond election in February 1901, but by May 1902 they had not responded. The school had to rent rooms to alleviate overcrowding. In September 1902, the city council was again asked to implement a special school tax, and again they did not respond. Finally, by May 1903, the city council approved a school bond election for \$60,000 for new buildings and improvements. The voters also approved the school bond, but the continuing economic depression resulted in no bond sales. Instead, the school system was forced to use the bonds as collateral to local banks for additional loans. Subsequently, Central High School received four new rooms. Finally, the school tax was raised to 45¢ for every \$100 in October 1905.

In the 1909-1910 school year, an assessment of the school systems assets counted 10 white schools and three black schools, with a combined value of \$282,440. The breakdown is as follows:¹²

School	# of Rooms	Value
White Schools		
North 4 th Street	6	17,050
Columbus Street	10	31,710
South 8 th Street (Sul Ross)	12	32,020
South 3 rd Street (Jean Sherwood)	8	26,280
East Waco, Turner Street	9	16,425
Bell's Hall	8	24,780
Brook Ave.	8	24,780
Sanger Ave.	10	30,563
North Waco	3	2,020
High School (4 th and Webster)	19	57,300
Black Schools		
North 7 th Street	4	5,140
Clay and 1st Street	10	11,185
East Waco	3	3,187

By 1909, the time had come to build a new high school, and the school district requested a bond election totaling \$40,000 for the construction of the building. The city council was about to agree, but a few prominent citizens hinted that 1910 would be a better year for an election. Voters approved the measure on March 23, 1910. By April, several properties on Columbus Ave. between North 8th and North 9th Streets were chosen for the site of the new high school. At the time, the property on the corner of North 9th Street and Columbus Ave. (823 Columbus Ave.) was owned by George Clark, an

¹⁰ Newman, ed.; p. 47-49, Steeples and Whitten 1998.

¹¹ Newman, ed.; p. 50-52.

¹² Newman, ed.; p. 53-54.

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

attorney and judge, who lived there with another family member (perhaps a brother), Edwin (or Erwin) J. Clark. Up until 1910, George Clark had been a partner in the firm Clark and Bolinger, with an office in the Clark Building on Franklin Street. However, by 1910 he and Edwin partnered with James E. Yantis in the firm Clark, Yantis, and Clark, with an office in the Clark Building at 314½ Franklin Street. The property adjacent to the Clark residence, 809 Columbus Ave., appeared to be a boarding house with three residents in 1910, and the property on the corner of North 8th Street and Columbus Ave., 803 Columbus Ave., was owned by Herman L. Quinius who retained two boarders on the property. An alley separated these properties from the single large parcel surrounded by North 8th Street, Jefferson Ave., and North 9th Street. Several buildings with different addresses were located on this parcel, the largest of which appeared to be another boarding house at 318 8th Street. The property was owned by the Barnard Estate, and the large house was most likely the former residence of the Barnard family. A peach orchard was located on the site in the 1880s and early 1890s. The school system bought the lots facing Columbus Ave. (803, 809, and 823) and about half of the Barnard Estate. A portion of the estate facing Jefferson Ave. was not purchased until the 1920s and the 1940s, when the gymnasium (1924) and music building (1955) were built.

Construction of the new school began immediately, but by August 1911, the board of trustees was informed that the building would not be ready by September 18th as planned. Due to the delay, the high school grades were taught for one-half day at the Central High School until the new building was complete. Concerns that the building was not structurally sound led the board to hire a professor from Texas A&M University to test the building. He concluded that the building was indeed perfectly sound, and the school opened on April 8, 1912. The 9th through 11th grades were moved from the old Central High School to the new Waco High School, marked by a ceremony where the students walked from the old building on 4th and Webster to the new building on 815 Columbus Ave. The old high school essentially became a junior high school, continuing to teach the 7th and 8th grades.¹⁴ The building has since been demolished.

The Waco High School included the extant flagpole donated by Texas Christian University, who had erected the flagpole at their campus on 18th Street between Kyle and Alexander Streets prior to moving to a new location. In the beginning, the high school grounds were separated into a girls section and a boys section, but by 1918 those distinctions were dissolved. The superintendent's office, previously located in a wood frame building at the Central High School at 4th Street and Webster, was moved to the Waco High School grounds in 1912. In 1919, the office was relocated to the Amicable Insurance Company (ALICO) Building. Mr. Lattimore, the superintendent of schools since 1899 and through the construction and opening of the new high school, was tragically killed in a traffic accident as he was bicycling home from his office at the Waco High School on March 17, 1915, and was replaced by Bruce Cobb.¹⁵

World War I erupted a few years after the new high school opened, and one room was set aside for French lessons for local recruits and soldiers from Camp MacArthur. The students and faculty were carefully watched for "unpatriotic" opinions, and one faculty member was dismissed for his questionable loyalty to the United States. Coursework in German, added to the curriculum in 1908, was discontinued. All school-age boys were to take military training if fit, and received one half credit for their efforts. They were allowed to wear their uniforms at school. At one point during the war Principal Genheimer was accused of disloyalty, but the board of trustees utterly discounted the accusation and the complainant

¹³ Newman, ed.; p. 105; Waco City Directories 1906-07, 1907-08, 1910; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1889, 1893, 1898.

¹⁴ Newman, ed.; p 102, 106.

¹⁵ Newman, ed.; p. 58, 106.

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Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

apologized for making the accusation. Several students in 1917 and 1918 served in the war and died in combat, and were memorialized at the school.¹⁶

Between the world wars, the population of Waco, as well as the student population, increased. Racial segregation policy required the operation Waco High School for white students, and a separate "colored" high school. Until 1961, these served as the only high schools in Waco, although the location of the black high school changed in 1925 when Moore High School was constructed. Waco High School expanded its northern wing along North 8th Street in 1915, the south wing along North 9th Street and the auditorium was added in 1921, and a large block parallel to Jefferson Avenue linking the two wings in 1929. A separate gymnasium was completed behind the main building in 1924.¹⁷

Just prior to World War II and throughout the war, student enrollment at first increased, then decreased sharply as the older students went to war. As the school population decreased, the strain on the school infrastructure lessened, and the improvements made in the 1920s to the Waco High School were more than adequate for the current population. Although some of the pressure from a growing school system was somewhat alleviated during these years, the board of trustees' and the superintendent of schools' anxiety over the future was likely placed elsewhere. The school years between 1938 and 1948 showed the following enrollment in the Waco public schools:

1938-1939: 2,535 students

1939-1940: 2,565 students, an all time record

1940-1941: 2,431 students, drop of 134 students from pervious year likely due to the Depression Era generation moving into the school system

1941-1942: 2,162 students

1942-1943: 1,545 students, a drop of 30 percent due to the draw of personnel to World War II as the United States entered the conflict, as well as the continuation of the Depression Era generation moving through the lower grades

1944-1945: 1,575 students, a slight increase of school attendees from families of war workers, air bases, and even students from Fort Hood

1945-1946: 1.738 students, an increase of 9 percent

1947-1948: 1,740 students, another slight increase, but numbers have not returned to pre-war levels¹⁸

It would take another four or five years for the beginning of the "Baby Boom" generation to reach school age, and another decade for the school population to increase to the point where new schools were urgently needed. Anticipating this need, the board of trustees decided to build another high school near Cobb Drive and 41st Street. They also decided that a change in organization was desired. Until 1948, the superintendent of schools and the board of trustees handled the day-to-day operations of the Waco public school system, but the city council still held the purse strings and their permission was required for an increase in school tax or for a bond election. On January 10, 1948, the board of trustees wanted to make Waco an independent school district (ISD), to which the voters agreed. From that point on, the Waco ISD operated independently of any municipal or county government, with the power to control its own finances.¹⁹

¹⁶ Newman, ed.; p. 107.

¹⁷ Newman, ed.; p. 58, 64; Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1926, 1950.

¹⁸ Newman, ed.; p. 109.

¹⁹ Newman, ed.; p. 60, 109.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 14

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

In the fall of 1955, the apartment building at the corner of Jefferson and North 9th Street was replaced with the music building. The devastating 1953 tornado which decimated much of the downtown appeared to have no significant impact on the high school or other schools in the area. The new suburban high school, Richfield, was built on property that was originally used as an airfield in World War I (Rich Field), which was then used as a municipal airport and then as the Heart of Texas Coliseum grounds. The board of trustees and the Heart of Texas management conducted a land swap for the property at 2020 N. 42nd Street, on which the 1961 school was built. The University High School on 2600 Bagby Ave., near the southern end of town, was completed in 1963.²⁰

The process of integration of the Waco ISD began soon after the landmark case of Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education in May 1954. Until that point, the education of white and black students followed the "separate but equal" mandate of Plessy vs. Ferguson in 1896. The board of trustees watched the 1954 case carefully, and once a decision was handed down, the board decided in June 1955 to begin the process of integrating the Waco public schools. However, they were extremely concerned that a significant portion of their funding from the State of Texas would be cut off if they integrated prior to being mandated by the state, so the board postponed the process for over a decade. Two court orders in 1963 and 1965 prompted action, and in the 1966-1967 school year grades, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 10 were integrated. The following school year grades 5, 8, and 11 were added. By the 1967-1968 school year all 12 grades were integrated. The faculty was integrated at the beginning of the process, in the school year 1965-1966. Largely, the process of integration completed without controversy or violence. The last court order relating to integration was in 1971, when the students from the Carver High School in the LaVega School District were ordered to attend schools in Waco. This was the only incident of long-distance bussing of black students in the process of Waco ISD's desegregation. ²¹

By 1970, the Waco High School was showing its age, and the cost of improvements was beyond the reach of the Waco ISD. As such, board decided to build two new schools, one at on 4601 North 19th Street near McLennan Community College as a replacement for Waco High School, and the other at 500 North 2nd Street as a replacement for Moore High School. The new schools were eventually named the Waco High School and the Jefferson-Moore High School, respectively, and both were completed by August 30, 1971 at a total cost of \$1,400,000 each. The new Waco High School utilized an innovative design with five separate buildings, while the Jefferson-Moore High School was constructed as one large building but with modernized facilities. The entire student population was realigned in the move from the old schools to the new.²²

As with the opening of the Waco High School at 815 Columbus Ave., the opening of the two new high schools was marked by a student march to the new location. The march was led by Major Robert Evans, age 80, who also led the march to the old Waco High School in 1912.²³ As the replacement high school for Waco High School was about four miles west on the outskirts of town (at 4601 N. 19th Street), it is more likely that the students hiked to the new Jefferson-Moore High School, only about 12 blocks (roughly 1 mile) from the Columbus Avenue school.

²⁰ Newman, ed.; p. 68, 114, Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps 1950.

²¹ Newman, ed.; p. 79-80.

²² Waco Times-Herald, August 12, 1970.

²³ Newman, ed.; p. 109.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 15

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

The Waco High School campus at Columbus Ave. was officially decommissioned as a high school in 1971. The property was used by the Waco ISD from 1981 to 1987 as Metropolitan Learning Center, and from 1988 to 1991 as the Alternative High School, with Jack Henderson serving as principal. During the 1991-1992 school year, Mr. Henderson moved the alternative high school to 500 N. University Parks Ave., and the Waco ISD closed the building. In 2003, an announcement was made of a partnership with the Waco ISD to rehabilitate the old high school building into an educational center, with the Keating Group selected as the architects. A study commissioned by Waco ISD called for a plan to use 40,000 square feet of he high school building as an educational center, while the remaining 40,000 square feet would be leased to area non-profits, alumni groups, and a community center. The plan was not completed, and the building stands vacant. The property is privately-owned, and will be rehabilitated for residential use using federal preservation tax credits.

Architectural Significance of Waco High School

The Waco High School complex is nominated to the National Register at the local level under Criterion C as an excellent example of the Classical Revival and Late Gothic revival styles as applied to educational buildings. The high school building bears such hallmarks of the style as the classical Ionic columns supporting a large pediment and cornice on the north and south facades, a similar treatment to secondary entrances on the east and west facades, and continuous stringcourses throughout. The 1924 gymnasium reflects the influence of Gothic Revival design on school buildings across the United States, a trend so prevalent that its application to educational buildings is known as "Collegiate Gothic." Numerous American colleges and universities – among them Princeton University and the University of Chicago – relied heavy on the style, borrowed from prominent British universities at Oxford and Cambridge. In the early 20th century, the style became ubiquitous on U.S. public school campuses as well, although as in the case of the Waco High gymnasium, elements of the style were applied to primary building facades, and to a lesser degree on secondary facades, while not being reflected at all on the interiors. The 1955 music building, while much smaller than the school and gym, also reflects its period of construction, as a modest mid-century modern utilitarian building, whose primary characteristics are its plain brick wall and modular massing.

The design of monumental high school buildings in urban areas was common prior to World War II. Such buildings reflected the importance communities placed on education, and public school buildings quickly became neighborhood landmarks. This pattern started to change by the early 1940s, and according to a 1941 study published by Texas A&M University, six out of seven schools in Texas had inadequate sites and recommended that high schools be situated on at least twenty acres. This report also called for the construction of less "monumental" types of schools and more adaptable and economical schools. Recommendations such as these fueled the construction of post-World War II schools in the suburbs, which tended to be located on larger sites, had fewer stories, and were less ornate than their early 20th-century counterparts. Buildings such as the Waco High School, which retained a very urban and monumental presence, were no longer considered to meet the new ideal. The building nevertheless functioned as originally intended into the 1970s.

²⁴ Downtown Waco, Inc., 2003.

²⁵ Jay C. Henry, *Architecture in Texas*, 1895-1945, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 94-97.

²⁶ William Wayne Caudill, *Space for Teaching: An Approach to the Design of Elementary Schools for Texas*, Bulletin of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, Fourth Series, No. 9 (College Station, Texas, August 1, 1941), 3, 9.

NPS Form 10-900-a

OMB Approval No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8 Page 16

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Architect Milton W. Scott was born on August 23, 1872 in New Orleans. His father, George Creighton Scott, was a master shipbuilder and furniture manufacturer from a long line of Scottish trades/craftsmen including inventors and engineers. ²⁷ In 1883 after the death of his father, young Milton moved to Waco with his mother and three sisters to be close to his mother's family.

Scott was self-taught and received no formal architectural education. He worked state-wide and designed buildings for Baylor University in Waco; Texas A&M in College Station; San Marcos Baptist Academy in San Marcos; Daniel Baker College in Brownwood and the College of Industrial Arts (now North Texas State) in Denton. He began his career in Waco as a draftsman and worked for local architects S. P. Herbert, W. W. Larmour and Glenn Allen. It is assumed his partnership with Glenn Allen began in around 1906 and the two designed the Artesian Manufacturing and Bottling Plant, now the home of the Dr. Pepper Museum, a local landmark and Recorded Texas Historic Landmark. At the time of the design and construction of the old Waco High School, Scott had entered into a partnership with T. Brooks Pearson. This partnership added a third partner, Dean, yet by 1913 Scott had opened his own architectural office known as Milton W. Scott and Co. He died in Waco on June 21, 1933 having designed many large and prominent buildings in Waco, including the First Baptist Church, the Clifton House, Hilton Hotel, the McDermott Motors building, and the Palm Court apartment building.

Conclusion

The Waco High School complex is an important local landmark both architecturally and for its reflection of the development of public education in Waco. The Classical Revival school and 1924 Collegiate Gothic gymnasium were designed by Milton W. Scott and follow the national preference for high-style civic and institutional buildings built through World War II, while the more modest 1955 music building also represents the modern aesthetic preferred in the postwar period. It is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C with significance at the local level in the areas of Architecture and Education.

²⁸ Greaves, page 5

²⁷ Greaves, B. J., et al. *Milton W. Scott's Waco*. Waco: Dr. Pepper Museum & Free Enterprise Institute, 1998, page 4

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 9 Page 17

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

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Waco Independent School District, Superintendent's report, 1910 – 1911, Waco, Texas.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: 4.22 acres

UTM REFERENCES

Zone Easting

Northing

1.

4 676762

3492740

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION: Farm Lot 43 Block 43 B Lot A B All Farm Lot 17 TID1; the property encompasses one city block bounded by North 8th Street, Columbus Avenue, North 9th Street, and Jefferson Avenue

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION: The boundary includes all property historically associated with the buildings.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: Anna Mod and Mindy Bonine

ORGANIZATION: SWCA Environmental Consultants

DATE: 19 February 2008

STREET & NUMBER: 7255 Langtry, Suite 100

TELEPHONE: 713-934-9900

CITY OR TOWN: Houston

STATE: Texas

ZIP CODE: 77040

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheets Photo-34 through Photo-35)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS (see continuation sheets Figure-18 through Figure-33)

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Historic Lofts of Waco High, LLC

STREET & NUMBER: 406 E. Fourth Street

TELEPHONE: 336-714-8920

CITY OR TOWN: Winston-Salem

STATE: NC

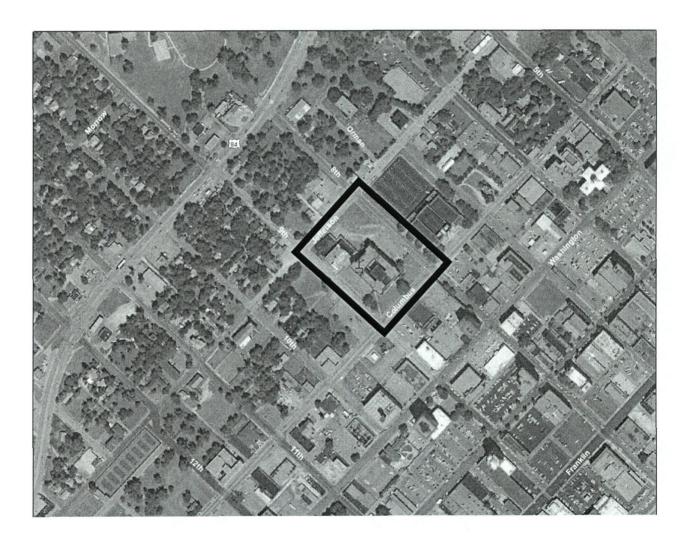
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 18

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Aerial photo of site location

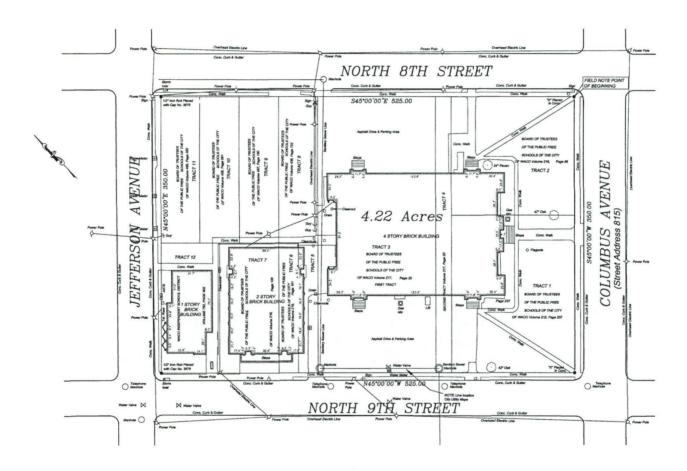


National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 19

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Survey Map - no scale

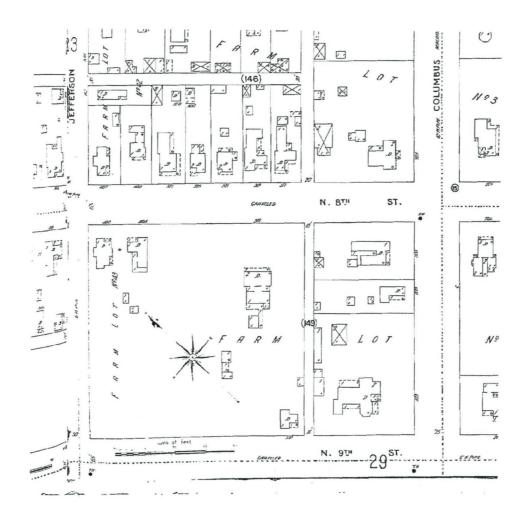


National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 20

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Sanborn Map, 1899



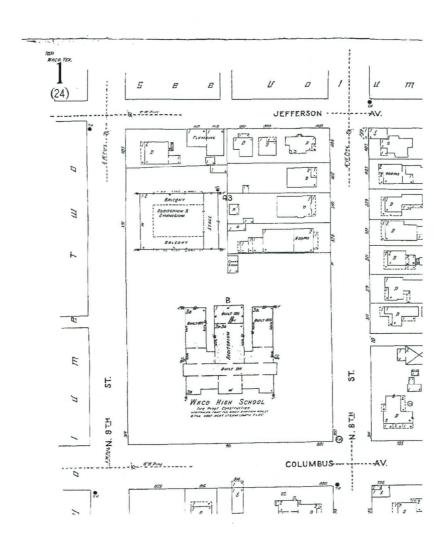
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 21

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Sanborn Map, 1926



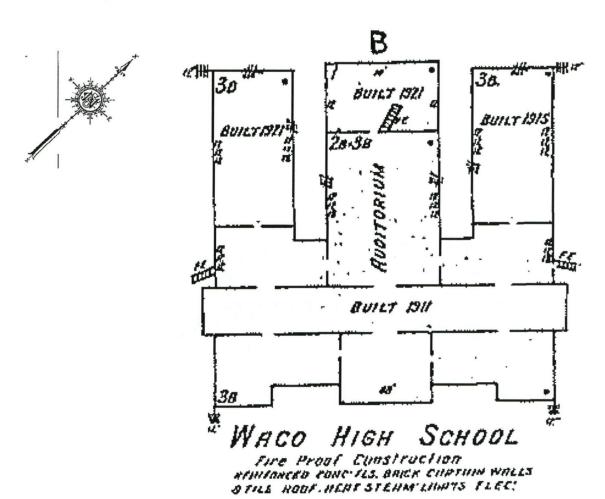


National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 22

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Sanborn Map, 1926, detail



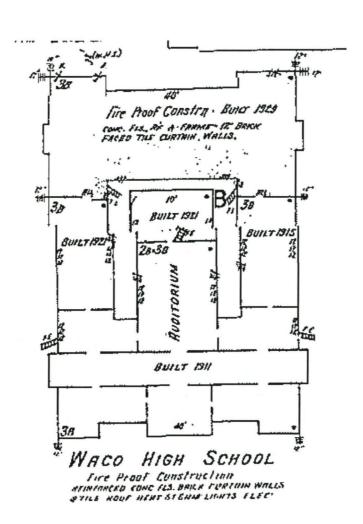
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 23

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Sanborn Map, 1926-1950





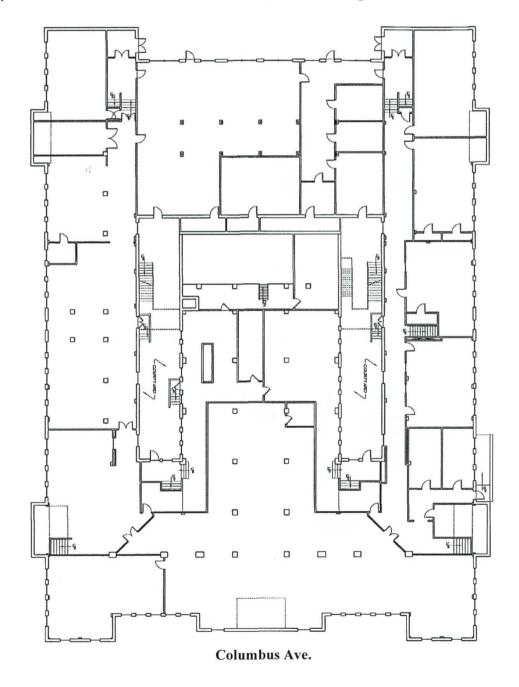
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 24

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School, basement

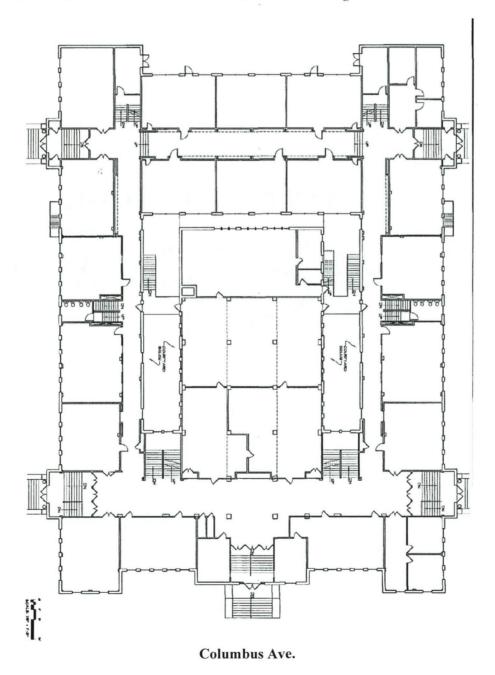


National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 25

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School, first floor



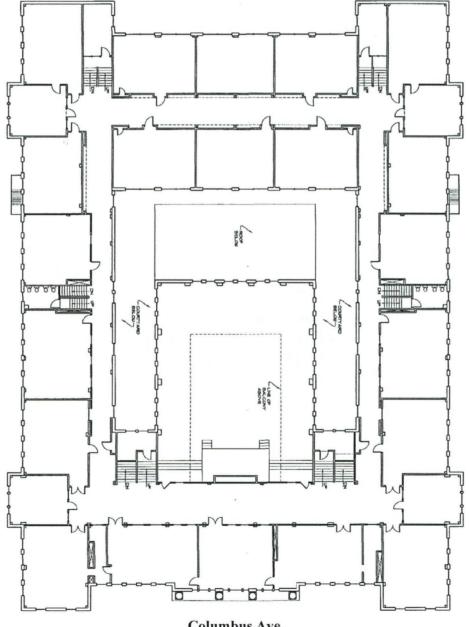
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 26

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School, second floor



Columbus Ave.

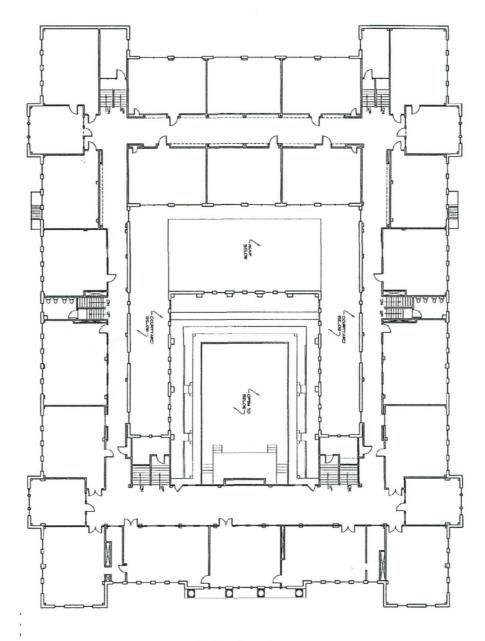
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 27

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School, third floor



Columbus Ave.

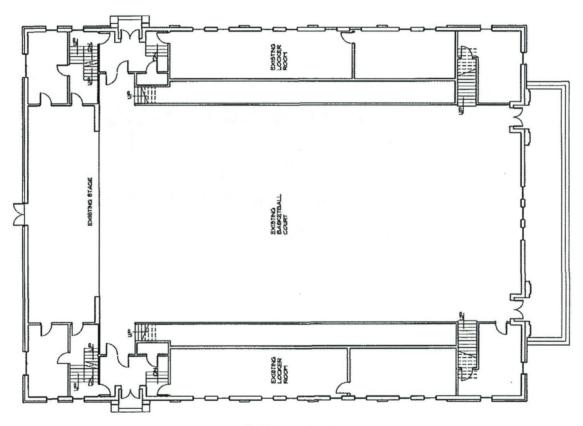
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 28

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Gymnasium, ground floor plan



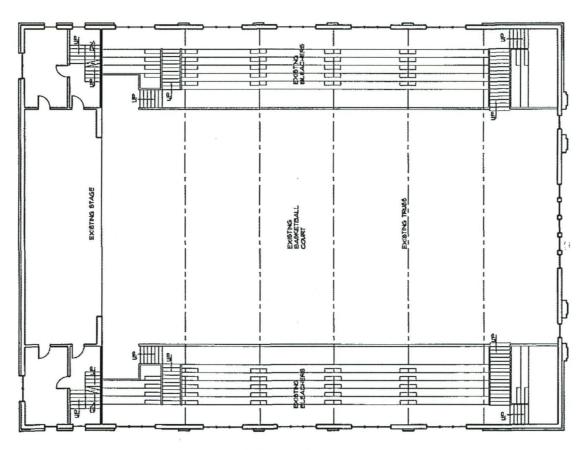
Jefferson Ave.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 29

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Gymnasium, bleachers



Jefferson Ave.

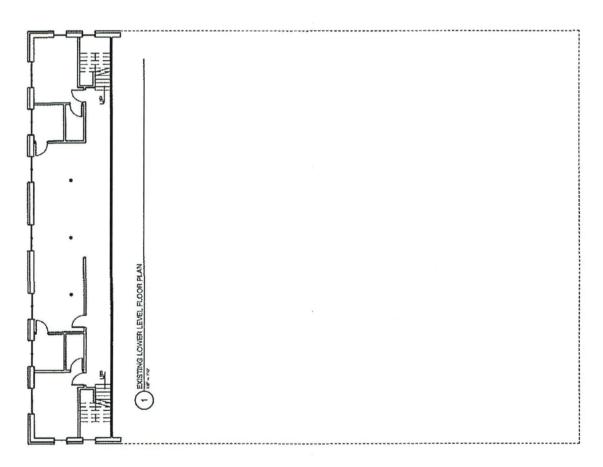
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 30

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Gymnasium, upper floor



Jefferson Ave.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

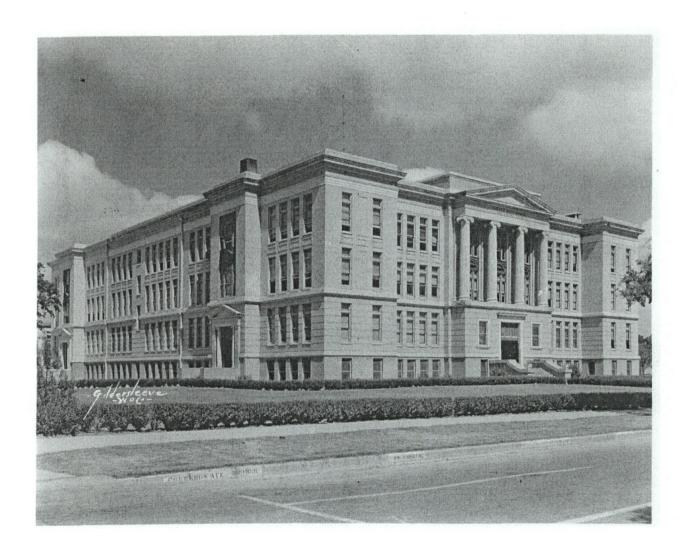
Section Figure Page 31

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School

1911 by Fred Gildersleeve

Photo courtesy: The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas



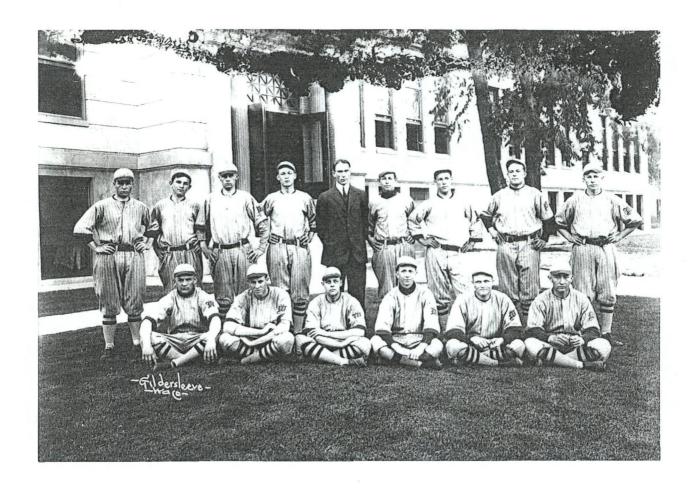
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Figure Page 32

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School North 9th Street facade n.d. by Fred Gildersleeve

Photo courtesy: The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

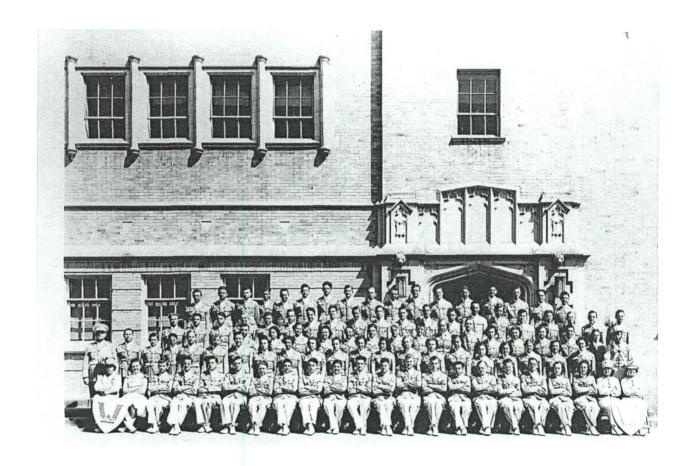
Section Figure Page 33

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Waco High School

Gymnasium exterior C, 1925 by Fred Gildersleeve

Photo courtesy: The Texas Collection, Baylor University, Waco, Texas



National Park Service

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Section Photo Page 34

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo Log

Waco High School
Waco, McLennan County, Texas
November 2008
Negatives and/or digital files at Texas Historical Commission, except as noted

Photo 1

Oblique view of Columbus Ave. and North 9th Street facades Camera facing north Photograph courtesy: Anna Mod for SWCA Environmental Consultants

Photo 2

North 9th Street façade Camera facing east Photograph courtesy: Anna Mod for SWCA Environmental Consultants

Photo 3

Gymnasium Camera facing northeast Photograph courtesy: Anna Mod for SWCA Environmental Consultants

Photo 4

Gymnasium, detail of front entry Camera facing east Photograph courtesy: Anna Mod for SWCA Environmental Consultants

DIGITAL IMAGES

Photo 5

Gymnasium, interior
Camera facing east
Photograph courtesy: Jay Hrivnatz for SWCA Environmental Consultants
Digital file: TX_McLennanCounty_WacoHighSchool_001

Photo 6

High School, second floor auditorium
Camera facing west
Photograph courtesy: Jay Hrivnatz for SWCA Environmental Consultants
Digital file: TX_McLennanCounty_WacoHighSchool_002

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section Photo Page 35

Waco High School Waco, McLennan County, Texas

Photo 7

High School, second floor south corridor

Camera facing east

Photograph courtesy: Jay Hrivnatz for SWCA Environmental Consultants

Digital file: TX McLennanCounty WacoHighSchool 003

Photo 8

High School, third floor south corridor

Camera facing east

Photograph courtesy: Jay Hrivnatz for SWCA Environmental Consultants

Digital file: TX McLennanCounty WacoHighSchool_004

Photo 9

Music Building

Camera facing northeast

Photograph courtesy: Jay Hrivnatz for SWCA Environmental Consultants

Digital file: TX McLennanCounty WacoHighSchool_005

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION
PROPERTY Waco High School NAME:
MULTIPLE NAME:
STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, McLennan
DATE RECEIVED: 2/03/09 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 2/20/09 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/07/09 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST: 3/19/09
REFERENCE NUMBER: 09000140
REASONS FOR REVIEW:
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N
COMMENT WAIVER: N
$\sqrt{\text{ACCEPT}}$ RETURN REJECT 3.17.09 DATE
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:
Entered in The National Register of Historic Places
RECOM./CRITERIA
REVIEWERDISCIPLINE
TELEPHONEDATE
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N
If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



WACO, McLENNAN Co., TEXAS Photo 1



WACO HIGH SCHOOL WACO, McLENNAN CO, TX Photo 2



WACO, Melevuan Co., TX PHOTO 3



WACO, McLENNAN CO, TK PHOTO 4



WACO, McLennan Co., TX PHOTO 5



WACO, McLENNAN CO., TX photo 6



WACO, MCLENNAN Co., TX PHOTO 7



WACO, McLennan Co, TX PHOTO 8



WACO, McLennan Co., TX Photo 9



Rick Perry • Governor

John L. Nau, III . Chairman

F. Lawerence Oaks • Executive Director

The State Agency for Historic Preservation

		lini Lini		REECEIVED 2
го:	Linda M Nationa		lelland egister of Historic Places	NAT. REGISTER OF HISTOR NAT. NATIONAL PARK SEP
FROM:	Gregory W. Smith, National Register Coordinator Texas Historical Commission			
RE:	Waco High School, Waco, McLennan County, Texas			
DATE:	January 29, 2009			
• Th	ne followi	ng r	naterials are submitted:	
		X	National Register of Historic Places form	
	f- 1 77		Resubmitted nomination	
	1		Multiple Property nomination form	
		<u>X</u>	Photographs	
		<u>X</u>	USGS map	
			Correspondence	
			Other:	
COMMEN	NTS:			
			substantive review	
		d ov	wner objections (do) (do not) constitute a ma	njority of property owners
Ot	her:			