

<b>PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM</b> OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION Box 1026 PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION Harrisburg, PA 17120		7. Local survey organization Philadelphia Historical Commission		1. County Philadelphia	
8. property owners name and address School District of Philadelphia 21st and Winter Streets Philadelphia, PA 19103		9. tax parcel number / other number 886259000	10. U.T.M. zone Easting 18   4881150 2.5 acres 4430800 Northing usage sheet: Germantown	5. present name Gen. David B. Birney School	
12. classification site ( ) structure ( ) object ( ) building ( ) Thematic in N.R. district yes ( ) no ( )	13. date(s) (how determined) 1912-1913	14. period 1912-1913	15. style, design or folk type Tudor Revival	19. original use School	20. present use School
16. architect or engineer Henry deCourcy Richards	17. contractor or builder H. H. Wehmeyer	18. primary building mat./construction Brick with lime-stone trim	21. condition Good	22. integrity Very Good	
23. site plan with north arrow 		BLACK AND WHITE PRINT(S) 3 1/4" x 5" enlargement or medium format contact note location of negative in block 24.			
24. photo notation					
25. file/location					
26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity, environment, threats and associated buildings) A 3-story, 5-register brick-faced reinforced concrete school with limestone trim. Basement windows pierce the watertable which is capped by a limestone dripcourse. Three beltcourses run through the basement level. A limestone center entrance is topped by an entablature. The five registers of the front are stepped back from the center to the ends. Each register contains four double-hung windows with a common limestone lintel. Decorative panels appear between the first and second floors and between the third floor and the cornice. A stone beltcourse separates the second and third floors. The side elevation features a projecting entrance with a large arched opening above the entrance and an entrance surround that matches that of the main entrance.					
(continue on back if necessary)					
27. history, significance and/or background During his tenure with the School District, 1906-1918, Henry deCourcy Richards bore the primary responsibility for the design of forty-nine schools. For his several high schools, e.g., Kensington High School for Girls, he sought to impart some architectural originality and distinctiveness. For his many elementary schools, however, he worked with a limited number of basic buildings, structural systems and plans.					
28. sources of information Edmunds, School Buildings of Philadelphia, 1908-1918 School District, New Buildings Under Contract			29. prepared by: J. M. Moak		
(continue on back if necessary)			30. date 5-26-87	revision(s)	
				2. municipality Philadelphia 6. other name (historic name if any) N/A	
				3. street address or specific location 900 West Lindley Street	
				4. survey code	

27. HISTORY/SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

He introduced some variety to these basic forms through ornamentation. In 1912-1914, for example, eight schools were built on the same model, type 128, of reinforced concrete with brick walls and limestone or terra cotta trim, decorated in the Jacobethan or Classical Revival styles. One of the eight, the Edgar Allen Poe School, was entered on the National Register in 1986. Four others, including the General David B. Birney School, follow the same pattern and possess equal integrity.

The General David B. Birney School, along with the three others in this group and the Poe School, represent the developmental and architectural response to the demands of the building program implemented by the School Board from its reorganization in 1905 to World War I. This expansion, which resulted in the construction of 70 schools, in itself was a response to the continuing growth in the city which increased from a population of 1.3 million in 1900 to over 1.8 million in 1920. It also represents Richards's talent in giving some design variety to a single basic, expandable structural form and plan.

The additions of 1927 and 1968 to the rear do not detract from its integrity.

National Register Criteria: C, Architecture

Boundary Justification: The nominated property contains the contributing building and all historically associated land.

There is one contributing building on the nominated property.

Verbal boundary: the nominated property is tax parcel #886259000.

EVALUATION

This building warrants entry on the National Register for its place in the history of education and of school architecture in Philadelphia.

EVALUATOR(S)



Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 Eleanor Cope Emlen School  
 Philadelphia County  
 Zone 18  
 UTM 18/484780/4433560

Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 Julia Howe School  
 Philadelphia County  
 Zone 18  
 UTM 18/487810/4432120

Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 James Russell Lowell School  
 Philadelphia County  
 Zone 18  
 UTM 18/488960/4432050

Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 Logan School  
 Philadelphia County  
 Zone 18  
 UTM 18/487000/4430980

*Germantown Quad*

Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 Andrew Morrison School  
 Philadelphia County  
 Zone 18  
 UTM 18/488900/4430820

Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 General David Birney School  
 Philadelphia County  
 Zone 18  
 UTM 18/488150/4430800

Philadelphia Public Schools  
 Thematic Nomination  
 Jay Cooke Jr. High School  
 Philadelphia County