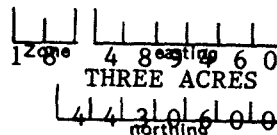


7. Local survey organization

8. property owners name and address  
 School District of Philadelphia  
 21st Street and the Parkway  
 Philadelphia, Pa.

9. tax parcel number/other number

10. U.T.M.   
 THREE ACRES  
 usgs sheet: FRANK FORD

11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)

12. classification  
 site ( ) structure ( ) object ( )  
 building ( ) district ( )  
 Thematic

13. date(s) (how determined)  
 1929-1930  
 14. per:

15. style, design or folk type  
 Acad. Gothic

19. original use School  
 20. present use School

16. architect or engineer  
 Irwin T. Catharine

17. contractor or builder

18. primary building mat./construc.  
 Brick/limestone

21. condition Good  
 22. integrity Good

23. site plan with north arrow

BLACK AND WHITE PRINT(S)  
 3 1/2" 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)  
 NPS counting purposes: one contributing building  
 (continue on back if necessary)

27. history, significance and/or background

28. sources of information  
 see bibliography for nomination  
 (continue on back if necessary)

29. prepared by:  
 B. Mintz

Computer Coding (BHP Survey Grantees Must Complete)

30. date 7/1986  
 revision(s)

31. county 101 32. style \_\_\_\_\_  
 33. construction material 02; 03; \_\_\_\_\_ 34. roof \_\_\_\_\_  
 35. design type \_\_\_\_\_  
 36. historic function 080301P \_\_\_\_\_  
 37. construction feature \_\_\_\_\_ 38. ext. walls \_\_\_\_\_ 39. plan \_\_\_\_\_  
 40. facade width \_\_\_\_\_ 41. roof material \_\_\_\_\_ 42. stories \_\_\_\_\_ 43. depth \_\_\_\_\_  
 44. ext. design \_\_\_\_\_  
 45. int. design \_\_\_\_\_

1. County PHILADELPHIA  
 2. municipality PHILADELPHIA  
 3. street address or specific location DUNCANNON AND FRONT STREETS  
 4. survey code  
 5. present name OINEY HIGH SCHOOL  
 6. other name (historic name if any) SAME

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## Olney High School

### Physical Description

Olney High School, rising four stories with a massive, five story, center entrance tower, is an impressive school structure. Designed in the Academic Gothic mode, the building represents one of the few "collegiate campuses" constructed by the School Board. The building is handsomely sited on its site surrounded by green lawns, trees and shrubs. The structure rests on a granite base and is classical in its design and detailing. The fenestration pattern dominates and defines the facade, with segmentally arched windows at the first floor level. Above the openings is a narrow band course. The second and third floors have tripartite, double hung sash while the fourth floor has tripartite, Gothic arched windows. All of the sash are enhanced by pronounced brick mullions. Between the second and third and third and fourth floor sash are decorative, limestone spandrel panels detailed with Gothic motifs. The bays, on each facade are defined by brick buttress-like members, which rise the full height of the building, culminating in limestone crockets. The Gothic arch of the fourth floor windows works in conjunction with the lower story windows creating the illusion of a four story, gothic arch. The building culminates in a plain parapet wall, cut in with subtle battlemented cuts. The main entrance tower is enhanced with a series of gothic arched windows and is enriched with a variety of limestone panels. The upper floor sash have gothic tracery in the openings. At the building ends are brick buttresses, also detailed with limestone crockets. The tower is capped with an elaborate limestone panel adorned with gothic motifs. In keeping with the concept of Gothic architecture, small turrets, cap the tower. Designed like a small college campus the building has a playing field, on an adjacent parcel of ground.

### Statement of Significance

Olney High is an excellent example of a large, urban high school, constructed in the Academic Gothic mode. This architectural style was popular, not only for primary and secondary education, for both public and private institutions, but was a design mode often adopted by collegiate institutions. 1930, the year of the building's construction, was also the year that Irwin T. Catharine rose from the position of head draftsman to the prestigious position of Superintendent of Buildings. Designed in a modified campus style, this structure exemplified Catharine's flair for the design of a vertically oriented, Gothic school building. Here Catharine displayed his talent for skillfully manipulating fenestration and wall surface to create an almost ecclesiastical verticality. The building was constructed with the double loaded corridor plan, then favored in construction of large schools. The interior plan of the building called for a variety of specialized rooms indicative of the broad curriculum offered by Philadelphia's high school program. In addition to the basic classrooms the school featured auto and electrical laboratories, and metal, machine and building construction shops; domestic sciences, bookkeeping and typing. Built to accommodate over 3000 students, the school is significant since it demonstrated that a large urban high school could fulfill the academic as well as pragmatic needs of its student population.

EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Philadelphia County  
Woodrow Wilson Jr. High  
18E494 200N4433 240

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Philadelphia County  
Ciney School  
18E489 700N4430 940

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Philadelphia County  
Ciney High School  
18E489 460N4430 600

