

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM**  
 BUREAU FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION Box 1026  
 PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION Harrisburg, PA 17120

7. Local survey organization

8. property owners name and address  
 School District of Philadelphia  
 21st & Winter Streets  
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

9. tax parcel number / other number  
 11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)

10. U.T.M. zone **18** easting **4831050**  
 northing **44210360**  
 usgs sheet:

12. classification  
 site ( ) structure ( ) object ( )  
 building ( ) Thematic  
 in N.R. district yes ( ) no ( )

13. date(s) (how determined)  
**1931-1932**  
 14. period **1921-1940**

15. style, design or folk type  
**Academic Gothic**

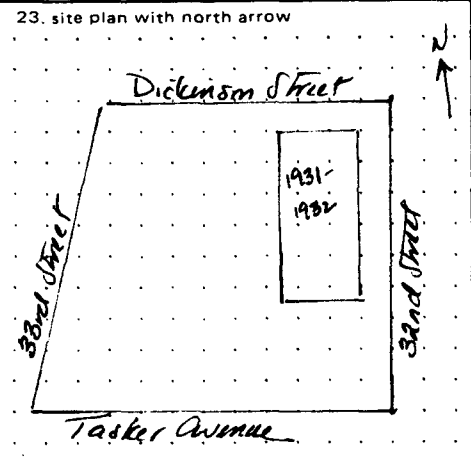
19. original use **School**  
 20. present use **School**

16. architect or engineer  
**Irwin T. Catharine**

17. contractor or builder  
*unknown*

18. primary building mat./construction  
**Brick with stone trimmings**

21. condition **Excellent**  
 22. integrity **Excellent**



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)  
**See reverse side**

(continue on back if necessary)

27. history, significance and/or background  
**See reverse side**

(continue on back if necessary)

28. sources of information  
**See reverse side**

29. prepared by:  
**Jefferson M. Moak**  
 30. date **5-29-87** revision(s)

(continue on back if necessary)

1. County **Philadelphia**  
 2. municipality **Philadelphia**  
 3. street address or specific location **1500 S. 32nd Street a.k.a. 3200 Dickinson Street**  
 4. survey code  
 5. present name **James Alcorn School**  
 6. other name (historic name if any) **N/A**

3. ADDRESS: South 32nd Street, 1500  
4. NAME: Alcorn, James, School  
6. FORMER NAME:

13: DATES: 1931-1932 ADDITIONS:

DESCRIPTION: A 3-story, 9-register, yellow brick building set upon a raised basement. The end registers project with three openings set within stone surrounds with carved decorative panels underneath each opening. The recessed main facade contains two wide registers flanking a single narrow register on either side of the main entrance. The wide registers have a window arrangement of 1-3-1. The narrow registers have two single openings. The central register contains an arched door opening within a stone surround, a 2-story stone bay fronting the second and third floors with three rectangular openings on the second floor and three arched openings on the third floor, and a crenellated top. Carved stone highlights the parapet over the central register. A stone dripcourse runs above the basement. A crenellated parapet tops the building.

HISTORY/SIGN.: The James Alcorn School reflects the subtle variety Irwin T. Catharine utilized to differentiate and individualise schools that followed essentially the same model. It also reveals a progression over time of the detailing of basic forms and plans. In his Morrison School of 1922-1924 which also appears in this nomination, Catharine applied a Jacobethan motif in red brick with stone trim to the basic 3-story, 9-register elementary school with projecting end registers. His George Wolf School, now the Bartram High School Annex and also included in this nomination, of 1926-1927 employed yellow brick with stone trim with rather spare collegiate gothic embellishment. In the James Alcorn School (1931-1932), he provided a richer collegiate gothic or academic gothic treatment to essentially the same form. In this, and in his abandonment of the earlier Georgian and Regency Revivals inherited from Richards, he seems to have sought a more pronounced association of an ancient and traditional academic architecture with the new schools of the expansive period of construction after World War I in Philadelphia.

EVALUATION: This building should be included on the National Register as a part of the Philadelphia Public Schools Multiple Resource nomination.

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 #886225500.

EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

3. ADDRESS: 32nd Street, 1500 S.

5. NAME: Alcorn, James, School

6. FORMER NAME:

13. DATES: 1931-1932

ADDITIONS:

DESCRIPTION: A 3-story, 9-register, yellow brick building set upon a raised brick basement. The end registers project with three openings set within stone surrounds with carved decorative panels underneath each opening. The recessed main facade contains two wide registers flanking a single narrow register on either side of the main entrance. The wide registers have a window arrangement of 1-3-1. The narrow registers have two single openings. The central register contains an arched door opening within a stone surround, a 2-story stone bay fronting the second and third floors with three rectangular openings on the second floor and three arched openings on the third floor, and a crenallated top. Carved stone highlights the parapet over the central register. A stone dripcourse runs above the basement. A crenallated parapet tops the building.

HISTORY/SIGN.: The James Alcorn School uses many of the same elements originally devised by Catharine for the John Story Jenks and Andrew Morrison Schools. He used this design, Type Number 150, for the George Wolf School at 81st and Lyons Avenue in Eastwick in 1926-1927. The Wolf School did not have many of the same embellishments, such as the stone surrounds, which Catharine applied to the Alcorn School. Thus, the Alcorn School bears the design Type Number of 150-A.

28. SOURCES: Edmunds, Chronological List of Public School Buildings, 1818-1934 School Board, "New Buildings Under Contract"

EVALUATION: This building should be included onto the National Register as part of the Philadelphia Public Schools Thematic District.

EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

Philadelphia  
Zuad

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Thematic Nomination  
Anna Shaw School  
Philadelphia County  
Zone 18  
UTM 18/480600/4421080

Philadelphia Public Schools

James Alcorn School  
Philadelphia County  
Zone 18  
UTM 18/483050/4420360

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Thematic Nomination  
Joseph Catherine School  
Philadelphia County  
Zone 18  
UTM 18/479480/4419520

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Thematic Nomination  
Charles Audenried School  
Philadelphia County  
Zone 18  
UTM 18/482960/4420210

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Thematic Nomination  
Patterson/Tilden School  
Philadelphia County  
Zone 18  
UTM 18/479730/4418260

Philadelphia Public Schools  
Thematic Nomination  
Edwin Vare School  
Philadelphia County

