OMB Control No. 1024-0018
expiration date 03/31/2026

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NRHP
FEB 19 2025
LISTED

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: J.W. Randolph School
Other names/site number: Pass Christian Middle School, Pass Christian Colored School, Harrison County Training School, Randolph High School, Randolph Center
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number: 315 Clark Avenue
City or town: Pass Christian State: Mississippi County: Harrison
Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

**___national ___statewide X local**
Applicable National Register Criteria:

**X A ___B X C ___D**

Katie Blount 2-10-25

**Signature of certifying official/Title:** **Date**

**State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

**Signature of commenting official:** **Date**

**Title :** **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

_x_ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

_____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Private: | ☐ |
| Public – Local | x |
| Public – State | ☐ |
| Public – Federal | ☐ |

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Building(s) | x |
| District | ☐ |
| Site | ☐ |
| Structure | ☐ |
| Object | ☐ |

**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| 1 | | objects |
| 2 | 0 | Total |

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**
**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
EDUCATION: school

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
SOCIAL: civic
OTHER: senior center

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
_Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival_____

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: __Stucco, brick, fiberglass shingles_____

**Narrative Description**
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

**Summary Paragraph**

Built in 1927, the Randolph School is located at 315 Clark Avenue in Pass Christian, Harrison County, Mississippi. Its parcel is several long blocks north of the Mississippi Sound and is situated on the north side of the former L&N Railroad line, which runs east-west across the Mississippi Coast. While in many other communities on the Coast, the raised bed of the railroad stopped the force of Hurricane Katrina's record-setting storm surge, in Pass Christian, the surge easily washed over the railroad and damaged buildings on the north side, including Randolph School.

The former school is a one-story, masonry building with a U-shaped footprint. The stucco clad structure incorporates elements of the Colonial Revival architecture style. Defining features of the school are the central courtyard surrounded by classrooms and an auditorium, and the large banks of windows typical of schools in the 20th century, especially of Rosenwald schools. The building sits off-centered to the east side of the property. Mature live oak trees and crape myrtle bushes dot the campus. Areas to the south and north that are now open space and two parking lots were previously occupied by secondary campus buildings that were badly damaged in Hurricane Katrina in August 2005 and later demolished.

## Narrative Description

Located at 315 Clark Avenue in Pass Christian (pas kruhs·chee·an), Harrison County, Mississippi, at the northwest corner of the intersection of Clark Avenue and West Railroad Street, just north of the former Louisville & Nashville Railroad line,[1] this former school is located northwest of Pass Christian's historic downtown. The area is flat with a mature tree canopy. The school property is just shy of a half mile from the beach, and is approximately 560 feet deep, bound by streets on three sides: Clark Avenue to the east, West Railroad Street to the south, and Hunter Avenue to the west. To the north of the property is a parcel containing the Pass Christian fire department training building constructed c.2008. Another institution directly across the street is the St. Paul United Methodist Church.[2] The surrounding neighborhood was previously residential, single family, one-story, wood frame homes, until 2005 when Hurricane Katrina devastated Pass Christian and the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast, destroying every home in the surrounding residential area.

Site

A large square parcel, the property has several mature Live Oak trees, but is otherwise an open grass lawn. The historic school building is located to the east side of the property fronting Clark Street with an off centered entrance. To the north of the school is a modern parking area made of concrete with curbs, installed c.2009. North of the parking area are the foundation slabs of the demolished band hall and shop building and a separate classroom building. To the north of these slabs are a small overgrown area that contains a football goal post, a contributing object to the nomination. Constructed c.1963 of approximately 3" diameter iron pipe, the goal posts are an H-configuration, with the crossbar located approximately 10' off the ground. As the field was oriented north/south this goal post is likely the southern end of the field, which otherwise does not survive. On the west side of the property is an asphalt parking area.

Exterior

Constructed in 1927, the school was finished in the Colonial Revival Style, which was popular for school buildings in Mississippi during the era. The modified H-plan for the school is one that was frequently employed beginning in the 1920s for rural and small-town schools and is characterized by an H or sometimes U-shaped footprint with exterior circulation rather than interior hallways. The school is entered through a portal of a shallow projecting gable, offset to the right side of the east elevation. A covered walkway rings an interior courtyard that opens to the south. To the north is an auditorium with a stage on the west end, while the east and west wings contain classrooms accessed by raised porches. Opposite the entry portal is the entrance to the mechanical room. The mechanical room extends beyond the plane of the west elevation, covered by an unbroken shed roof. The mechanical room is entered by a five-panel double door and is illuminated by two six-light wooden casement windows.

[1] Currently in operation by CSX.
[2] Constructed in 1973, the church purchased and built on this location following the destruction of their previous building by Hurricane Camille in 1969. Randolph school's namesake, J.W. Randolph was a church trustee.

The brick masonry building is clad in smooth stucco, painted a beige color, with buff trim and porch ceilings, and olive-green paint for the windows and doors. It has a shallow hip roof with a solid roof deck clad in architectural shingles, with closed, vented eaves. Ganged banks of 9/9 double hung aluminum-clad windows that replicate the original light pattern are spaced rhythmically across the walls. While a few original windows remain in the transoms and on the south wall of the auditorium, these windows installed after Hurricane Katrina replaced mid-century aluminum awning casement windows. The classroom portion of the school is on a chain wall foundation with a crawl space, while the auditorium is slab-on-grade. Entryways to the primary spaces (circulation walkways, and auditorium) are arched, with the north and south entries to the auditorium topped with 10-light fanlights. The covered walkways are supported by paired, wooden, box columns, with a simple handrail on the raised porches with wood decking along the classroom wings. The porch ceilings are beaded board, while the porch deck is wood tongue and groove.

Interiors

These porches provide access to three rooms on each side: two classrooms, and a bathroom. The classrooms have clerestory six-light windows (often called breeze windows) on the courtyard side, while the opposite side have windows ganged in banks no fewer than three allowing light to fill the former classrooms. The doors are nine-light-over-2-panel wooden doors, topped with six-light transoms. The doors to the bathrooms are five-panel wood. The interior walls and ceiling of the building are plaster, while the window, door, and baseboard trim are simple 1” by 4” dimensional lumber. The classroom floors are oak wood. The auditorium at the north end of the courtyard features a stage area at the west end and a kitchen and bathrooms on the east end. Both the stage and the kitchen/bathroom area are located in former classroom spaces that were converted to these uses to allow the auditorium to be expanded and to host community events. The auditorium can be accessed via doors from the interior courtyard, or from the parking area to the north. These doors are nine-light-over-two panels and topped with an arched 10-light wooden transom window. The stage is elevated several feet above the auditorium floor and features a proscenium with a slight arch across the top. Banks of windows 9/9 light windows topped with six-light transoms on the north and three light transoms on the south side of the auditorium allow plenty of light to enter the space, with the covered walkway to the south preventing direct sunlight from heating up the interior.[3] The auditorium has a level floor of polished concrete, while the floors in the kitchen are grey 6” x 6” tile. The bathrooms also contain a 4”x4” white tile wainscot and 1”x1” white tile floors. Drop pendant lights with schoolhouse shades are the commonly encountered light fixtures throughout the building. Ceiling fans have been installed in the auditorium. A fire suppression sprinkler system was installed as part of the post-Katrina rehabilitation of the building.

[3] The windows on the south wall of the auditorium are the only surviving double hung windows from 1927. Most of the original wood transom windows remain.

Integrity

While the site was ravaged by Hurricane Katrina, the original 1927 structure survived the storm's onslaught, due in-part to mid-twentieth century additions that took the brunt of the damage. These mid-twentieth century additions had infilled the building's courtyard, and as part of the same renovation, the original groupings of nine-over-nine wood double hung sash had been replaced, in the original openings, with groupings of aluminum replacement windows, each window having six horizontally oriented lights. The brick building also received a coat of stucco, and the wooden porch decks on the interior courtyard were removed and dropped down to ground level concrete walks. During Hurricane Katrina, the building was inundated with several feet of storm surge, and portions of the west wall of the original building collapsed. Following the storm, the remainder of the mid-twentieth century additions were demolished, and a preservation project begun in 2008 reconstructed the partially collapsed west wall and rebuilt the raised porch decks for the covered walkways. Nine-over-nine double hung true divided light windows restored the appearance of the original fenestration. This restoration returned the building to its 1927 appearance on the exterior. On the interior, preservation work restored the circulation patterns and classroom spaces, but the auditorium space was expanded by removing the wall that had separated the stage from a classroom space.[4]

[4] The only significant change that was not reversed as part of the post Hurricane Katrina restoration was the stucco applied to the building c.1959 was not removed.

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria**
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

[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 values, 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**
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

[ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes

[ ] B. Removed from its original location

[ ] C. A birthplace or grave

[ ] D. A cemetery

[ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure

[ ] F. A commemorative property

[ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

**Areas of Significance**
(Enter categories from instructions.)
Ethnic Heritage Black
Education
Social History
Architecture

**Period of Significance**
1927-1969

**Significant Dates**
1927
2005
2013

**Significant Person**
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**
Shaw & Woleben, Architects

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Randolph School is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Education; Ethnic Heritage: Black; and Social History with a Period of Significance beginning when the school opened in 1927 and extending to 1969, when desegregation was implemented and it became Pass Christian Middle School. The school is also locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture with a Period of Significance of 1927 when the building was built.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The town of Pass Christian has roots dating back to the 17th century, taking its name from the channel known as Christian's Pass, supposedly discovered by Christian L'Adnier, a member of French explorer Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville's crew in 1699. By the mid 19th century, the area was firmly established as a resort community for New Orleans' moneyed elite, with the establishment of the Southern Yacht Club in 1849, following the town's incorporation by a year. Tourists first arrived to the town by steam packet or private yachts, and after 1869, by train. Despite the passage of time, the small coastal town remained a quiet retreat favored for its affluent vacation homes along the beach road known as Scenic Drive.[5] Beyond catering to the tourist trade, locals supplemented their income from the seafood industry or truck farming.

Former Randolph School principal George T. Watson described the town in the 1930s as a laid-back community with no pressure or concern in race relations. Local Whites and Blacks worked side-by-side, equally subservient to ultra rich Whites from New Orleans who did not concern themselves with provincial problems.[6] African American Civil Rights figure Lawrence Guyot described his hometown of Pass Christian as the "most non-Mississippi part of Mississippi," where growing up he stated that he was able to frequent "any store or restaurant regardless of his race", despite the racially segregated school system. He credits this to the large presence of the Catholic Church and labor unions on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.[7] Both Watson and Guyot described a feeling of change in the 1950s. Returning from WWII service in the Marines, Watson found he was denied the right to vote due to his race. In 1957, Guyot attended a presentation in Pass Christian given by Medgar Evers. Evers' description of racial violence and voter suppression taking place in Mississippi took Guyot by surprise, differing from his own experience. These encounters spurred both Watson and Guyot to make it their life's work to reverse these injustices.

While normally tranquil, Pass Christian has borne the brunt of several major hurricanes. Most notably, Hurricane Camille in 1969, and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, have significantly altered the town. Camille decimated beach front properties and killed 78 Pass Christian residents. Katrina killed 28 Pass Christian residents. Its destructive storm surge pushed further inland than Camille's, leading a Pass Christian police office to comment to then mayor Billy McDonald the day following the storm, "You're the mayor of nothing now."[8] Nearing 20 years on, Pass Christian's recovery from Hurricane Katrina has been slower than other communities along the Mississippi Coast, however what has been rebuilt has been done so with an eye towards resiliency for the next storm.

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[5] The Scenic Drive Historic District was added to the NRHP in 1979.
[6] Dan A. Ellis "Interview with George T. Watson" *History Noir – Black Heritage of Pass Christian* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. Pages 129-132.
[7] "Interview with Lawrence Guyot by Julian Bond" December 30, 2010, Civil Rights History Project, LOC. https://www.loc.gov/item/2015669104/ Accessed 1 February 2024.
[8] Joel Anderson "How Katrina Destroyed A Town – And Its Mayor" *BuzzFeed News* 17 August 2015. https://www.buzzfeed.com/joelanderson/how-katrina-destroyed-a-town-and-its-mayor Accessed 26 January 2024.

**Education; Ethnic Heritage: Black; Social History**

Construction planning for the school began in 1926, then known as the Harrison County Training School. Before WWII, Black high schools were a rarity in Jim Crow era Mississippi. In Harrison County, Black high schools were only found in cities, such as Biloxi or Gulfport. The state's alternative to high schools were Mississippi's Black training schools that offered a separate education from the state's White agricultural high schools but exercised a similar goal of vocational instruction. Vocational classes were further separated by gender, with training schools providing scientific agriculture classes to boys, and domestic sciences classes for girls.[9]

These training schools were most often supported by Northern philanthropic Funds, such as the Slater Fund, which laid out in 1923 its goals for county training schools:

1. To supply for the county a central school offering work in advance of that offered in the common rural schools.
2. To lay emphasis on thorough work in all common school studies.
3. To give industrial training, laying particular emphasis upon subjects pertaining to home and farm.
4. To prepare boys and girls to make a good living and lead a useful life by knowing how to care for the home, to utilize the land, to make home gardens, to raise their own meat, poultry products, milk products, etc.
5. To prepare young men and young women to become rural and elementary school teachers by enabling them to meet the legal requirements of the states, by giving them a close acquaintance and sympathy with rural activities, and by supplying such elementary training as will help them to secure the best results in this work.[10]

The Harrison County Training School was the recipient of funding through the Julius Rosenwald Fund, in cooperation with the State Department of Education. Rosenwald was part owner and chairman of the board of Sears, Roebuck & Company, who established the fund to expend his wealth during his lifetime. The primary recipients of Rosenwald's charity were educational, Jewish, and Black institutions. Rosenwald schools typically were financed from four sources: local Blacks, local Whites, public school funds, and the Rosenwald Fund. While the Rosenwald Fund began funding school construction in Mississippi in the 1910s, the program took off significantly following the Fund's reorganization in 1919-1920.[11] After the reorganization, more

[9] Edward E. Redcay, Ph.D., *County Training Schools and Public Secondary Education For Negroes in the South* John F. Slater Fund, Washington D.C. 1935. Page 26.
[10] *A Study of County Training Schools for Negroes in the South* John F. Slater Fund, Charlottesville, VA 1923. Page 10.
[11] Jennifer Baughn, "Rosenwald Schools in Mississippi" Mississippi History Now (website), February 2010. https://mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/issue/rosenwald-schools-in-mississippi. Accessed 18 January 2024

than 125 schools receiving Rosenwald funds were built by 1922.[12] The reorganized Rosenwald Fund focused on providing standardized plans that allowed for a broad variety of school types and sizes, with an important focus on the building's directional orientation so that classroom windows always faced east or west to allow sufficient natural lighting. In June of 1927, State Supervisor of Negro Education, Bura Hilbun stated that 54 schools had been built within the year utilizing $237,487, with the cost of these buildings ranging from $1,500 to $25,000.[13] Hilbun would later be convicted and sentenced to five years in prison in 1933 for embezzling $50,000 of the Rosenwald Fund's grants.[14] Despite this fraud and other Jim Crow-influenced setbacks, the Rosenwald Fund was very successful in bringing improvements to Black educational spaces in Mississippi.

Rosenwald Fund application number 9-G indicates that the Randolph School was built for $24,000 with $1,400 from the Rosenwald Fund, and $20,000 from Harrison County.[15] The remaining funding was provided by local citizens: $2,000 was provided by the local Black community, and $600 from the local White community.[16]

The Pass Christian school district's first call for bids announced that a bid opening would be held on September 30, 1926, for a one-story, brick school building with separate bids for electrical, plumbing, and heating all based on plans and specifications provided by the firm of Shaw & Woleben, with the right reserved to reject any and all bids.[17] It is likely that the Pass Christian board of trustees exercised that right, as in December 1926 another notice to contractors was published calling for a wood-frame building, with bids to be opened December 14, 1926.[18] Again, it is likely that the Pass Christian board of trustees rejected all bids, as in April, 1927 another notice to contractors was published, this one calling for a brick building.[19]

J.W. Randolph's obituary appears in the very same issue of the newspaper, just three pages prior.[20] The Pass Christian board of trustees likely finally hired a contractor as by June of that

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[12] 557 Schools would be constructed in Mississippi with the aid of the Rosenwald Fund before the programs ended in 1932.
[13] "Fifty Four Schools Built Within Year," The *Clarion Ledger* (Jackson, MS), 26 June 1927, Page 14.
[14] "This Week," Stone County *Enterprise* (Wiggins, MS), 13 July 1933, Page 1.
[15] Michael Newsom, "New Life for Randolph," The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 5 March 2007, Page 1.
[16] 1934 CWA Report on the status of Rosenwald Schools.
Local contributions for Rosenwald schools were often in the form of donated land, materials, or in-kind labor, however it is unclear what type the local contributions were to Randolph school's construction.
[17] "Notice to Contractors" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 9 September 1926. Page 3.
The architecture firm of Shaw & Woleben were the Coast's eminent school design firm during the 1920's and were instrumental in the development of the U plan from the H plan.
[18] "Notice to Contractors" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 3 December 1926. Page 2.
[19] "Notice to Contractors" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 6 April 1927. Page 9.
[20] "Well Known Negro Dies" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 6 April 1927. Page 6.

year, it was announced that work was "progressing on the negro school building" and that the school's construction added "much to Pass Christian and [is] in keeping with the rapid progress being made by this city."[21] The building was completed in time for the beginning of the 1927-1928 school year, opening the school year on Monday, September 12, 1927. The *Daily Herald* noted that the school had "only one change in the faculty from last year," likely implying the death of J.W. Randolph.[22]

While J. W. Randolph would not live to see the building completed, he was no doubt instrumental in securing a new school for the community. During a Negro History Week event at the school on the night of February 9, 1939, Rev. Whalen Blackman of Gulfport delivered an address rededicating the school to the memory of J.W. Randolph for the "20 years he served as principal."[23] In 1939, the institution was renamed from Harrison County Training School to Randolph High School, becoming the first and only public high school for Black students in Pass Christian. On Thursday April 6, 1939, at 2:30 p.m., a dedication ceremony recognizing the renaming took place and included the laying of a corner stone, a 100-voice choir, and an oration by Fanny C. Williams, supervisor of public instruction for New Orleans. Later in the evening at 8:30 p.m. a musical was presented by both students and adults that was described as "a climax to the colored population's endeavor to commemorate the memory of a man they regarded as benefactor."[24]

The name change was more than just an honorific to J.W. Randolph, an educator who had made a lasting impact on the community. It also signified a change in curriculum, from a training school with a vocational curriculum to a high school format offering four years of secondary education. Twelve students received their diplomas in the first graduating class from Randolph High School.[25] Training schools offered a variety of courses from elementary education to secondary school instruction, and teacher training for African Americans across the South.[26]

The Harrison County Training School first received accreditation at the probationary level from the State Accrediting Commission in 1935, as recommended by P.H. Eason, Supervisor of Negro High Schools.[27] In 1939, the school was advanced out of probationary status by the State

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[21] "Pass Christian's New City Hall is Opened With Dance" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 3 June 1927. Page 11
[22] "Adam To Make Opening Talk" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 9 September 1927. Page 10.
[23] "Negro History Week Program Tonight," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 9 February 1939, Page 3.
[24] "Will Hold School Ceremony Thursday," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 4 April 1939, Page 10.
[25] "Twelve will graduate from Randolph School," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 20 May 1939, Page 8
[26] Training Schools https://mississippiencyclopedia.org/entries/training-schools/
[27] Minutes of the Accrediting Commission, 24 April 1935, Page 1. Series 1911: Commission on School Accreditation Files. MDAH. See also Margaret J.S. Carr, "Accredited Secondary Schools in the United States" Bulletin 1939, No. 2

Accrediting Commission at the recommendation of J.A. Travis, Assistant State Agent for Negro Schools.[28] Receiving accreditation from the state commission was an important milestone that marked an institution as meeting set standards for administration and student supervision, program of studies, school schedules, educator qualifications, physical plant, and financial support. The school was only one of twenty Black institutions in the state that received accreditation or probationary accreditation that year.[29] Prior to 1952, White and Black schools had different accreditation standards. Regionally, the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools provided accreditation for White schools, while the Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools provided accreditation for Black schools. At a joint session during their annual conferences in December 1952, it was announced that the same standards of accreditation would "henceforth apply for schools in both organizations."[30] By 1961, the Randolph School received accreditation from both the Mississippi Accreditation Committee and the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.[31]

The neighboring town to the east of Pass Christian, Long Beach, Mississippi, had a small Black population (in 1956, only 43 Black students enrolled in Long Beach schools, compared to 755 white students).[32] Beginning in 1954, Black students from Long Beach were accepted to Randolph High School, with their tuition paid by the Long Beach Municipal Separate School District, which also contributed to Randolph School's capital projects. [33]

During the 1950s, Mississippi Gulf Coast schools were recipients of money from the federal government to help meet the increased demand on school facilities from children of military personnel and civilian workers at installations such as the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport and Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi.[34] Stipulations regarding this funding required that the schools meet state standards and be accredited.

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United States Department of Interior, United States Government Printing Office (Washington D.C.) 1939. Page 87.

[28] Minutes of the Accrediting Commission, 22 March 1939, Page 1. Series 1911: Commission on School Accreditation Files. MDAH.

[29] This accreditation list included both High Schools and Colleges. Probationary designation indicates that the school had not been officially inspected before receiving accreditation, however graduates of the school will be accepted by colleges without additional examination necessary.

[30] "Mixed meeting" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 3 December 1952. Page 4.

[31] "Lang Reelected Head Of Pass School District" The Daily Herald (Biloxi, MS) 19 April 1961. Page 1.

[32] "Harrison County School Proposal Is Turned Down," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 28 December 1956, Pages 1,2.

[33] Dorothy Antoine, Laura Cappie, Betty Jean Moffett, Victoria Webb, "The History of Randolph High School" re-printed in *Heritage Noir – "Black Heritage of Pass Christian,"* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. Page 111. See also "School Bond Election At Pass Christian To Be Conducted On May 19," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 19 April 1962, Page 2.

[34] "Harrison Board Discusses Negro School Facilities" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 5 August 1952, Pages 1,4.

During this same period, several additions and renovations were carried out on the Randolph School campus aided by Equalization funds from the State Educational Finance Commission. The state's Equalization Plan, spanning from 1946-1961, was an attempt at improving conditions at the state's Black schools to maintain a system of racially segregated schools, while also meeting the demands of the booming student population after WWII. The State Department of Education's Educational Finance Commission offered matching grants, where black schools could receive two-thirds of the cost of construction.[35] During this time several building campaigns added to the campus an auditorium/gymnasium, a cafeteria, and a vocational shop and classrooms. These buildings were all demolished following hurricane Katrina in 2005. The only notable changes to the campus that remain from the Equalization era is the stucco finish applied to the building in a c.1959 renovation, and the football goal post, constructed c.1963.

In November 1951, the District awarded contracts for two projects at the Randolph School, the first of which included repairs, replacement and refinishing of the existing school building.[36] The lowest bid was $9,288.50 by the Pass Christian construction firm of Whittman and Whittman.[37] The second contract was for the construction of a classroom addition to the south end of the building, which enclosed the U-shaped courtyard. This three-classroom addition was designed by the Gulfport architecture firm of Smith & Dawson. This addition was typical of school buildings during the era: masonry construction with a flat roof and deep eaves sheltering windows and doors. The lowest bid for the addition was $29,302 by the New Orleans based Pittman Construction Co.

In 1959, the footprint of the Randolph School would be expanded again when the Municipal School Board initiated nearly $170,000 for repairs, renovations, and additions to the school.[38] Designed by the Gulfport architecture firm of Kuyrkendall and Proffer, the project consisted of a classroom building and a combination gymnasium-auditorium with a kitchen, all to be constructed to the north of the historic schoolhouse. Work to the existing buildings included new lighting and heating systems, construction of a science room, a home economics department, and library shelving. This is likely when stucco was applied to the original building.[39] Former Randolph High School Principal George Watson identified the two classrooms in the west wing of the school as the science and home economics rooms.[40]

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[35] Jennifer Baughn "Education, Segregation, and Modernization: Mississippi's School Equalization Building Program, 1946-1961. *Arris*, vol. 16, 2005, Pages 37-55.
[36] "Let Contracts For School Work At Pass Christian," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 30 November 1951, Page 1.
[37] Lowest bids for additional work to project one: $1,016.94 Robert R. Allen Electric Co., Pass Christian; $740.34 DeMetz Plumbing Co., Pass Christian; $3,350 (Painting) Reid Hardware Co., Long Beach, MS
[38] "Ground-Breaking Held For Pass School Addition," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 28 May 1959, Page 18.
[39] This determination is based on photographs of the building from 1957 that show the brick still exposed. The *Louisiana Weekly* (New Orleans, LA), 11 May 1957, Page 16.
[40] MDAHVideo, "Randolph School Rehabilitation" YouTube Video, 7:31, 6 March 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LY7engkSzT0

Just four years later, the campus expanded again with the construction of a building containing 10 classrooms, a science laboratory, and a football field. These improvements came as a result of accreditation requirements. At the end of the 1962 school year, the Pass Christian Municipal School District announced that it had been notified by the accrediting commission of the Mississippi Department of Education that the current shop instruction was deficient, and the science laboratory was inadequate; in order to maintain accreditation, adequate accommodations and equipment would have to be provided.[41] These improvements were designed by Gulfport architects Charles Proffer & Associates and completed in time for the 1963-1964 school year.[42] In 1966, a library, band hall, and trade shop classrooms were constructed north and west of the original building by contractor L.A. Easterling, designed by Charles Proffer & Associates.[43] These buildings were demolished in late 2006 after receiving damage during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Only their concrete slabs remain.

For the 1965-1966 school year the Pass Christian Municipal Separate School District proceeded with a "freedom of choice" desegregation plan, calling for integration of grades 1st – 3rd, and 12th. While 22 Black students registered for three grades in two elementary schools, it was reported that no White students applied to attend 12th grade at Randolph, nor did any Black students apply for 12th grade at Pass Christian High School.[44] The following school year, grades 1st – 4th, 7th, 10th, and 12th were opened to integrated registration.[45] For the 1967-1968 school year the Pass Christian schools allowed 1st - 12th students of any race to register at their choice of school.[46] The Pass Christian school district planned to completely integrate Black and White schools for the 1969-1970 school year.[47] Before the beginning of the school year, on August 17,

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41 "Proposed Pass School Program Deemed Essential" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 4 May 1962. Pages 1, 2.
"Pass Christian Report Covers Discrepancies" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 24 April 1962. Pages 24.

42 "Pass Trustees… Building Project Plans Approved," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 13 October 1962, Page 10.
"Randolph Tigers Appreciation Dinner Staged," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 14 December 1962, Page 29.
The H-plan of goal posts is one that began being phased out after the NFL adoption of the Y, or "slingshot" goal post in 1967. See Jimmy Stamp "How the Football Field Was Designed, from Hash Marks to Goal Posts," *Smithsonian Magazine*, 24 September, 2012. Online https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/how-the-football-field-was-designed-from-hash-marks-to-goal-posts-48192086/ Accessed 21 November 2023.

43 "Pass Trustees… Inspect New Facilities," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 16 February 1966, Page 18.

44 "School Opens… Registration At Pass Christian" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 3 September 1965, Page 10.

45 "Pass Christian Schools State Classes Tuesday" The *Clarion Ledger* (Jackson, MS), 3 September 1966, Page 4.

46 "Opening Of Schools At Pass Set" The Daily Herald (Biloxi, MS), 19 August 1967, Page 11

47 "This is now a unitary school district, 53 per cent white, 47 per cent black. Before the storm the district was segregated." See also Julian Prince

1969, Hurricane Camille significantly damaged every school building in Pass Christian, and desegregation took place with very little public reaction. The momentousness of desegregation was surely lessened by the devastating storm. A few months later, a federal mandate desegregated schools statewide in January 1970. With integration, Randolph High School was converted to Pass Christian Middle School at the beginning of the 1969-1970 school year, and it continued in that role until the end of the 1998-1999 school year. In 2000, the school district closed the school, and the city of Pass Christian acquired the building for use as a senior center and community center, renaming the building the Randolph Center, paying tribute to the educator, and restoring the building's historic eponym.

This conversion of the school to community use continued a long-standing practice of the building being the center of social activities for Pass Christian's Black community. George T. Watson, a 1943 graduate of Randolph High School who would later serve as Principal of Randolph High School from 1961-1969 said this of Randolph School in a 2012 interview*: "This building became the heart and soul of extracurricular activities for Blacks in this community.*"[48]

"Randolph High Celebrates May Day" The *Louisiana Weekly* (New Orleans, LA) 11 May 1957. Page 16.

"Problems Are Great on Coast" *Enterprise-Journal* (McComb, MS), 26 November 1969, Page 2.

[48] MDAHVideo, "Randolph School Rehabilitation" YouTube Video, 7:31, 6 March 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LY7engkSzT0

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Randolph school had been used as a meeting location for civilian defense planning by the Black citizenry of Pass Christian, as well as war bond rallies during the Second World War.[52] In 1950 it became home to the city's newly formed Black garden club, known as the Azalea Garden Club. The stated purpose of the club was to "beautify the gardens of the members and the Randolph High School grounds."[53] The school was also used by the Pass Christian Civic Club for programs on the importance of voting, by the Home Demonstration Club, and by Boy Scout troops.[54]

Community activities at the school also revolved around music as the school was used frequently as a place for concerts open to both the Black and White citizens, and dances open to the public were often held at the school. One such example is the 1957 Randolph High May Day Festival that included a parade with more than 50 cars, the crowning of a "May Day Queen," an ice cream social, field events contest between the Black schools of Gulfport and Bay St. Louis alongside Randolph High participants; a "queen's ball" that evening in the auditorium capped off the day.[55] In 1958, the Randolph High School Association was organized to "perpetuate the life and spirit of the late Professor John W. Randolph."[56]

*Portraits of J.W. Randolph. Left c.1874, Right c.1920*

J.W. Randolph School's Namesake

John William Randolph (c.1853-1927) was born in Virginia and was brought to Mississippi during his childhood, likely in enslavement.[57] In 1873, Mary J. Berry (born c.1860) and Randolph were wed in Leflore County, MS, and beginning the following

[52] "Colored People Organize," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 5 March 1942, Page 10.
[53] Myrtle S. McDermott, "Slides Shown of Camellia Collection," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 21 November 1950, Page 5.
[54] Rita Brown, "Pass Christian," The *Louisiana Weekley* (New Orleans, LA), 8 February 1958, Page 12. See also Rita Brown, "Pass Christian," The *Louisiana Weekley* (New Orleans, LA), 10 May 1958, Page 16.
[55] "Randolph High Celebrates May Day," The *Louisiana Weekley* (New Orleans, LA), 11 May 1957, Page 16.
[56] Rita Brown, "Pass Christian," The *Louisiana Weekley* (New Orleans, LA), 1 February 1958, Page 15.
[57] Sources differ as to Randolph's place of birth, which is cited as being in Roanoke (in his obituary), and Rockingham County (the findagrave.com entry for his resting place). His birth date also varies between censuses: the 1880, and 1900 censuses list his birth year as 1853, while the 1910, and 1920 censuses list his birth year as 1855. The 1900 census shows his birth date as Feb. 1853.

year he would serve two terms in the Mississippi House of Representatives, a portion of this time as president pro tem. [58] The Randolphs would have two children live to adulthood, Joseph (born c.1876), and Oliver (born Oct. 31, 1877).[59] During the 1870s, Randolph served as Sunflower County Clerk and Chief Deputy Sheriff of Leflore County. [60] The 1880 census records the family living in Leflore County with Randolph's occupation listed as schoolteacher. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed to the federal position of Deputy Collector of Customs in Biloxi, MS. In December of 1888, both J.W. and Mary Randolph were identified as Harrison County public school teachers who attended the Colored Teachers Institute, a continuing education program for educators that was held at the Black school in Pass Christian during Saturdays in January and February of 1889.[61] In September 1891, Randolph was hired to teach in the Black school in Pass Christian.[62] In the 1900 census, the family is living in Handsboro, MS with Mary's mother Clementine Burns, and J.W.'s occupation is listed as a schoolteacher. By the 1910 census, J.W. and Mary had relocated to Pass Christian, where his occupation is listed as teacher in city school. In 1920, the census lists him as employed as a principal in the public school system. Throughout his life, Randolph remained active in Republican politics. He was involved as a trustee of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church in Pass Christian and taught Sunday school. In addition to teaching school, he practiced law on nights and weekends. Alberta Sinclair Butler, a former student of J.W. Randolph and later principal of Randolph Elementary School during the 1960s, recalled her mentor:

> "Professor Randolph taught five days a week in the public school and practiced law after school hours and on Saturdays. Every Sunday he was in church, performing his official duties and teaching Sunday school. He taught us home, church, school, and street decorum. He was our newspaper, radio, and television."[63]

J.W. Randolph passed away at home on April 6, 1927, and was buried in Pass Christian's Live Oak Cemetery. His family issued a statement of thanks for the public outpouring of sympathy on Randolph's passing, noting that he "was principal of the Pass Christian Colored Public School

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[58] Ancestry.com. Mississippi, U.S., Compiled Marriage Index, 1776-1935 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Accessed 14 November 2023.
[59] The 1910 census lists Mary as having given birth to three children, with only two still living, suggesting that she gave birth to a child after 1900 that died before 1910.
[60] Randolph was appointed as Circuit and Chancery Clerk of Sunflower County in June 1875 by Lt. Gov. Davis following the death of G.W. Bowles. *The Weekly Mississippi Pilot* (Jackson, MS) 26 June 1875. Page 2. The exact dates for Randolph's service as sheriff have not been determined, but an obituary implies he served around the time he was Sunflower County clerk.
[61] "Teachers Institute," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 08 December 1888, Page 8.
[62] https://school.passchristian.net/randolph_school.htm Accessed 30 October 2023
[63] Metric Dockins, "Echoes in the hall," The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 10 October 1993, Page E-2.

for almost 25 years."[64] Eighty years after his death, on September 9, 2007, members of the Randolph Alumni Committee placed a headstone on the gravesite of their school's namesake.[65]

[64] "Card of thanks," The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS), 20 May 1927, Page 6.
[65] Dan A. Ellis "(John) William Randolph Headstone Placed at Live Oak Cemetery" *Heritage Noir – "Black Heritage of Pass Christian"* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2017.

## Architecture

The Randolph School is locally significant in the area of Architecture as an example of an architect-designed Rosenwald school that modifies the standardized H-plan of Community School Plan #6-A to create a more coherent corridor and incorporates the features that the Rosenwald Fund required, such as large, grouped classroom windows facing east and west. Only a handful of Mississippi's Rosenwald schools were custom designed by an architect—the vast majority (which were typically four classrooms and smaller) followed the published standardized plans.

Architectural plans for Rosenwald funded schools were typically provided by the Rosenwald Fund, headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, as a cost-saving measure. In the late 1910s and early 1920s, the Fund developed a set of standardized plans for schools ranging in size from one to seven teachers. These plans were in response to the poorly planned one-room schools that were little better than shacks scattered throughout the rural areas of the South.[66] The plans were published in 1924 as *Community School Plans,* a booklet that included floorplans for school buildings and outbuildings, and landscape planning for instructional agricultural plots.[67] For training schools, the Rosenwald Fund recommended a large parcel to allow for demonstration gardens.

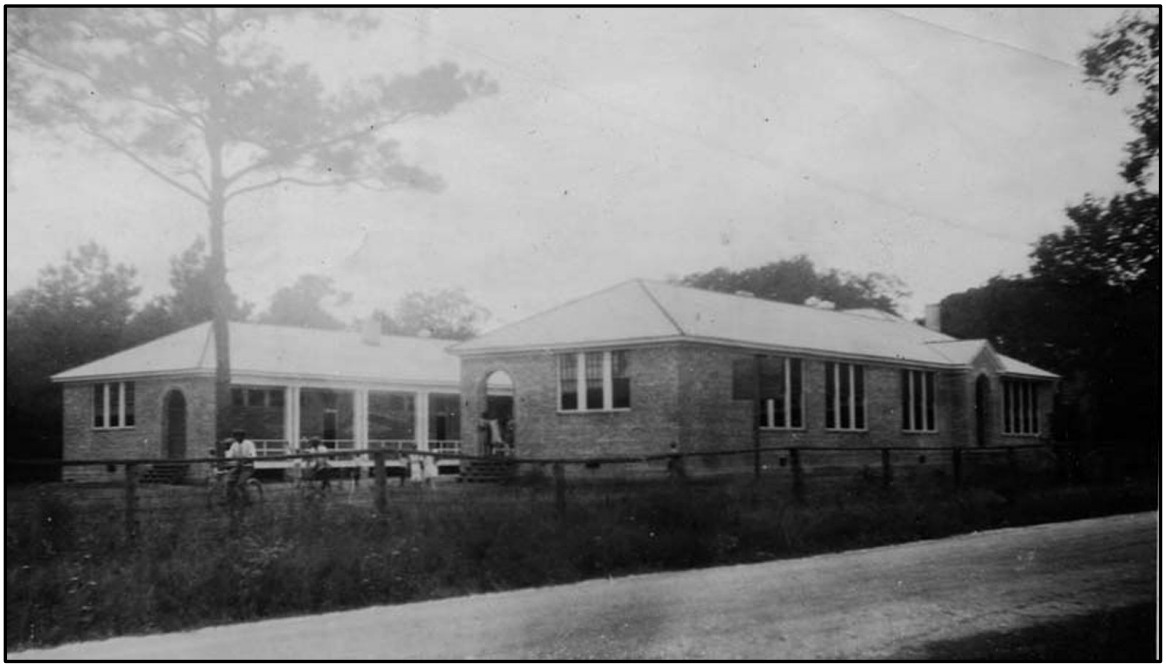
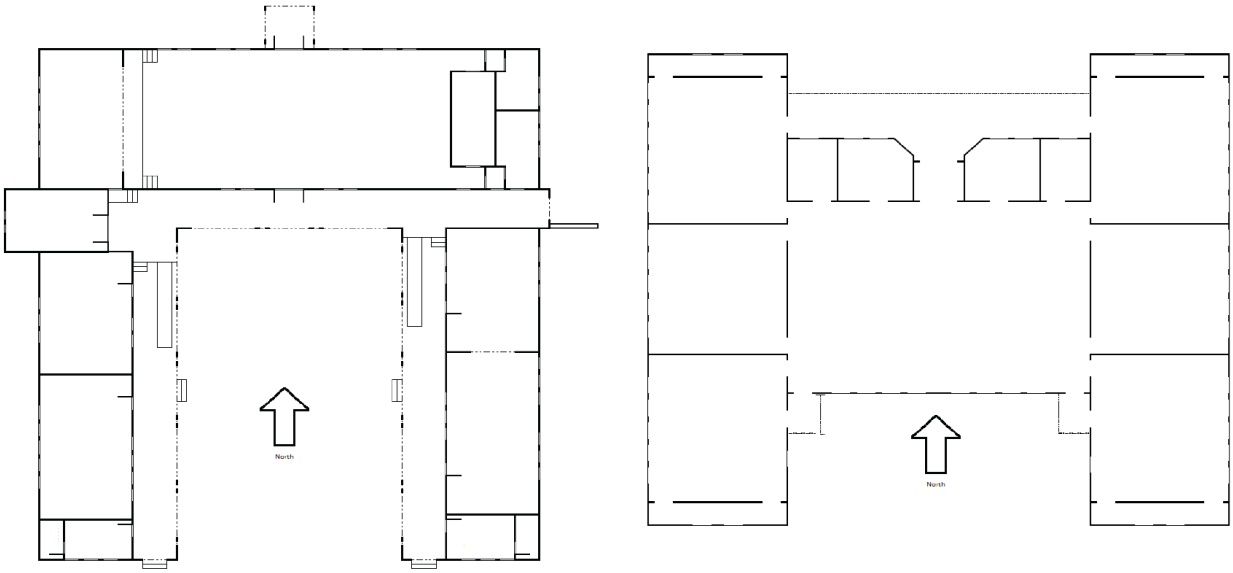


*Image of the Harrison County Training School, later Randolph School photographed c.1928, photo courtesy Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database.*[68]

[66] Baughn, Page 46.
[67] *Community School Plans, Bulletin No.3* Issued by THE JULIUS ROSENWALD FUND Nashville, Tennessee, 1924.
[68] Photographer Unknown. Photo of Harrison County Training School, looking northeast. Pass Christian, Mississippi. Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card

In the mid-1920s Mississippi was nearing the end of its first era of school consolidation. The so-called "alphabet floorplans" for new schools had been introduced in 1921 in the state's standardized plan book titled *"Rural School Houses and Grounds,"* J.T. Calhoun, the Mississippi Department of Education's Rural School Supervisor, oversaw the creation of the instructional booklet and openly admitted that the standardized plans in the publication were based on those produced by the Rosenwald Foundation office in Nashville, Tennessee.[69] The primary improvements to school designs laid out in these guiding documents were the development of the H and T floorplans, consisting of only one story, and including large banks of windows for full sun from the east or west in all classrooms.

In September 1926, it was reported that the architecture firm of Shaw & Woleben had placed out to bid plans for a "one-story, brick school building for negros at Pass Christian… . This building is to have six classrooms and an auditorium."[70] The plan for the Randolph School is inspired by the Rosenwald *Community School Plans* Plan No. 6-A for a six-teacher community school that faced north or south.[71]



*Left: Randolph School Existing Floor Plan. Right: 6-A Six-Teacher Community School Floor Plan (typical.) Dimensions for both floor plans are approximate and not to scale.*

File Database. https://web.archive.org/web/20200617214520/http://rosenwald.fisk.edu/?module=search.details&set_v=aWQ9MTg2Mw==&school_historic_name=pass%20christian&school_state=MS&button=Search&o=0. Accessed Date: 5 December, 2023.

[69] Jennifer Baughn "A Modern School Plant: Rural Consolidated Schools in Mississippi, 1910-1955" Buildings & Landscapes; Journal of the Vernacular Architecture Forum, Vol. 19, No. 1. Page 51.

[70] "Construction Program for Mississippi Coast Large" The *Daily Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 16 September 1926. Page 1.

[71] *Community School Plans*, Bulletin No.3 Issued by THE JULIUS ROSENWALD FUND Nashville, Tennessee, 1924.

This proposed building stood out from those included in the *Community School Plans* booklet. While the footprint of the Randolph School is a U shape, the placement of spaces aligns with that of the H-plan because of its outdoor, single-loaded corridors. U plan schools were a later and larger (8 classrooms and above) evolution of the H-plan in that they also featured an auditorium at the center of two wings with classroom windows facing east and west, but the U-plan featured a larger auditorium shifted inside the bottom of the U and with interior, double-loaded corridors in the classroom wings. The smaller H-plan typically had four to six classrooms and featured a central auditorium flanked on each side by classrooms that opened onto the auditorium, eliminating the need for corridors in 4-classroom buildings and creating a small rear courtyard with outdoor walkways in 6-classroom buildings. Randolph School, originally a 6-classroom building that could have been a standard H-plan, features the auditorium at the top of the U-shape like a U-plan, but it does not contain the double loaded corridor of the U-plan.[72] A further modification is that the main street entrance to the building is into the east classroom wing, rather than directly into the auditorium as in a typical H-plan form. While not all Rosenwald-funded schools were based on plans in the Rosenwald publication, almost all of the Rosenwald-funded schools in rural areas were. Regardless of whether the plan came from the Rosenwald Fund or not, school districts could only receive a Rosenwald grant if they could show that their building met the Fund's guidelines for natural lighting, ventilation, and other construction standards.

*Clockwise from upper left: Prentiss Institute (Black), Wade School (White), Pass Christian Public School (White) Walthall County Training School (Black). Photos courtesy of MDAH.*

[72] Jennifer V. Opager Baughn, "A Modern School Plant: Rural Consolidated Schools in Mississippi, 1910-1955." *Buildings & Landscapes*, Vol 19, No 1 (Spring 2012. Pages 43-73.

Examples of other contemporary schools in the region for comparison include a typical Rosenwald school, a training school, and two typical white schools both pre-and-post school consolidation. The Prentiss Institute (NR 2016) in Jefferson Davis County, MS built in 1926 is a Rosenwald 6-teacher Community School (Nashville) Plan, similar in size to the Randolph School. This is a typical plan provided by the Rosenwald fund, however the school was constructed with rusticated concrete blocks, rather than the more-common wood frame. The Walthall County Training School (NR 2017) in the Ginntown Community of Tylertown, MS was built in 1920. It is an example of a Community School Plan 400 and is wood-frame. The Wade School in the Wade community of Jackson County, MS, is a White school built post-consolidation following an Alphabet plan influenced by the Community Plans prepared for the Rosenwald Fund. Built 1926, Wade School has the same architects (Shaw & Woleben) as Randolph School, and was designed and constructed at a concurrent time (note how similar this is to the Prentiss Institute's H-plan). Lastly, as a comparative early example to show how the Rosenwald plans influenced school architecture is a White School of the pre-consolidation era, the former Pass Christian Public School built 1908. Demolished c. 1970, this two-story building was typical of school construction in Mississippi towns in the late 19th and early 20th century: multiple stories (which could become a fire hazard because the auditorium was typically on the top floor), compact plan, and single windows on all sides, rather than the large groupings on Rosenwald schools that faced only east and west. These example buildings represent the end in dominance of the multi-story model adopted from urban centers (Pass Christian Public School) and the transition to one-story "open plan" types of school construction in the 1920s and 1930s.

## Conservation

West elevation of Randolph School showing damage from Hurricane Katrina. Unknown photographer, September 14, 2005. Retrieved 18 January 2024, from Mississippi Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) Database. http://www.apps.mdah.ms.gov/Public.

Hurricane Katrina, on August 29, 2005, decimated the historic city of Pass Christian, with winds between 130-156 mph and a storm surge recorded at 27.8 feet above sea level.[73] Due to its location several blocks inland and partially protected by the raised railroad line on the south side of the property, Randolph School was Pass Christian's oldest public building to survive both Hurricane Katrina's onslaught and the post-storm cleanup efforts, and it has since been restored to a near historic appearance.[74] During the storm, a 15-foot-high storm surge on the property rose to the roof and nearly destroyed the Randolph School and the several mid-20th century additions to the building. Portions of the west wall collapsed, allowing water to rush in damaging every aspect of the interior. Surveying the damage following the storm, many beleaguered residents and professionals alike assumed the Randolph School would join other beloved landmarks in a landfill. Instead, at the urging of Randolph School alumni, Pass Christian residents, and historic

[73] Tropical Cyclone Report Hurricane Katrina 23-30 August 2005 https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/data/tcr/AL122005_Katrina.pdf Accessed 26 January 2024.

[74] The only visually obvious difference between the Randolph School from 1927, vs current day is the presence of the c.1959 stucco on the building's exterior.

preservationists, a significant restoration of the 1927 building was planned by the City. Efforts began in 2006 to stabilize the building and raise funds for the restoration, which would ultimately cost close to $2 million dollars and take nearly 7 years to complete.[75] In addition to the insurance payment for the building's damage, funding for this restoration came from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), South Mississippi Planning & Development District (SMPDD), and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP). The MDAH Hurricane Relief Grant for Historic Preservation funding came out of a $26 million grant from the National Park Service. Administered by the MDAH Gulf Coast Office, these funds were for the rehabilitation of historic properties in Mississippi damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.[76] The SMPDD funding came from a Housing & Urban Development Community Development Block Grant administered by SMPDD. Additional $50,000 of funding came from a Lowe's Preservation Fund and Katrina Recovery Grant. Administered by the NTHP, these donated $4.5 million to the National Trust for Historic Preservation to preserve significant historic properties across the country, with a special interest in properties originally associated with the Rosenwald Fund.[77] Local organizations also contributed financially to the restoration of the building. The Sun Herald Preservation Fund awarded 11 grants to historic properties on the Mississippi Gulf Coast that had received significant storm damage, with the Randolph School receiving a $10,000 grant.[78]

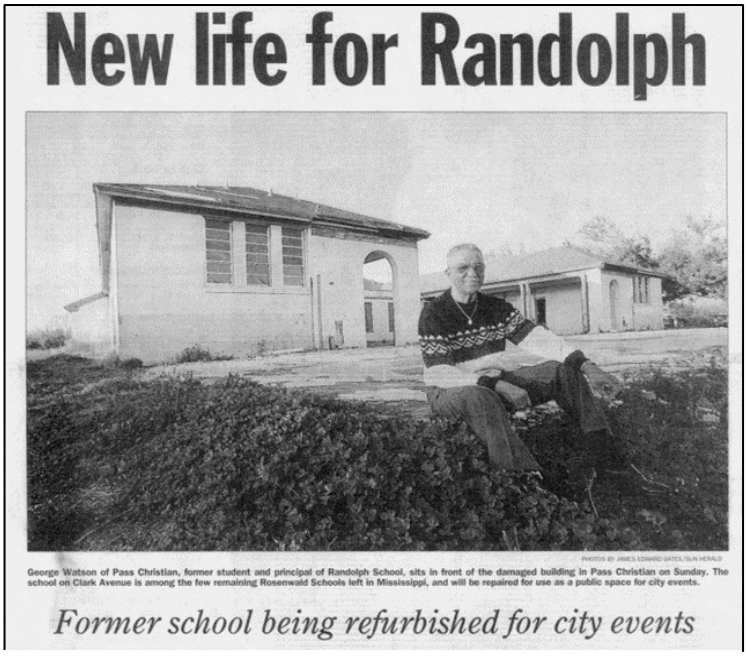
The restoration work began in 2009 with Larry Jaubert as the architect, and J.O. Collins Contractor Inc. as the general contractor. Trevor Brown with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) served as the project's preservation specialist. Work consisted of repairing the collapsed exterior and interior walls, a new roof, and new windows that replicate the appearance of the original windows. As part of the restoration, measures were also taken to ensure the building's resiliency, such as the addition of hurricane strapping to certain framing members, and accessibility, and the integration of handicap accessible ramps to the building's raised walkways. These exemplary efforts led Randolph School to be featured in the National Park Service *Guidelines On Flood Adaptation For Rehabilitating Historic Buildings* as a recommended example for access.[79] The restoration of the building was completed in 2012 with a dedication ceremony on January 22, 2013, attended by such dignitaries as Victoria Tate Webb, a student of J.W. Randolph who graduated in 1923 and later became a teacher at Randolph

[75] "Advertisement For Bids" (for emergency protective work - Randolph School Building) The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 16 August 2006. Page D4
[76] "Katrina Recovery Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund" https://www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservationfund/upload/Katrina-Final-Report-WEB-version-2015-08-30.pdf Accessed 21 March 2024.
[77] "Randolph School Pass Christian, MS" https://web.archive.org/web/20110401095207/http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/southern-region/rosenwald-schools/schools/lowes-grant-recipients/randolph-shcool.html Accessed 21 March 2024.
[78] Leigh Coleman, "$98,000 in Grants given to help rebuild historic places" Sun Herald (Biloxi, MS) 14 February 2007. Page 8.
[79] Jenifer Eggleston, Jennifer Parker, Jennifer Wellock, "The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Guideline on Flood Adaptation for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings." U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service Technical Preservation Services. Washington, DC. 2021. Page 94

School, and George T. Watson, a Randolph School graduate and later principal. Also in attendance were Pass Christian public officials, MDAH Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Ken P'Pool, and MDAH Gulf Coast Office Director Ron W. Miller.[80]

In 2014, National Trust for Historic Preservation President Stephanie Meeks wrote Pass Christian Mayor Leo "Chipper" McDermott, congratulating him on the project's completion and on receiving the Mississippi Heritage Trust's *Heritage Award for Restoration*:

> *In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, photographs coming out of Pass Christian and other Gulf Coast communities were devastating, and those of Randolph school were no exception. … The City's efforts to restore this landmark African American school as a senior citizens center speaks [of] a strong commitment to historic preservation at a time when so much in the community had been lost.*[81]


New life for Randolph

George Watson of Pass Christian, former student and principal of Randolph School, sits in front of the damaged building in Pass Christian on Sunday. The school on Clark Avenue is among the few remaining Rosenwald Schools left in Mississippi, and will be repaired for use as a public space for city events.

Former school being refurbished for city events

*The rehabilitation of the Randolph School makes front page news in the March 5, 2007, edition of the Sun Herald. Page 1.*

The letter also noted that the Randolph School is one of only fourteen Rosenwald School buildings remaining in Mississippi (of an estimated 557 constructed).[82] Mayor McDermott said the city undertook the project at the requests of the citizens.[83] The restored Randolph School stands as a beacon of accomplishment for those who suffered under segregation and those who overcame it. Its restoration is reflective of both local efforts, and scores of volunteers from across the nation who came to the building's aid at its greatest moment of need.

While Randolph School is a restoration success story, it could have easily ended up in a landfill,

[80] Lindsay Knowles, "A Historical Reunion" The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 23 January 2013. Page A2
[81] Stephanie K. Meeks, Letter to Chipper McDermott. 3 June 2014. Collection of the Randolph Center.
[82] Jennifer Baughn, "Rosenwald Schools in Mississippi," *Mississippi History Now* (website) February 2010. https://mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/issue/rosenwald-schools-in-mississippi Accessed 18 January 2024
[83] Michael Newsom, "New Life for Randolph" The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 5 March 2007. Pages 1, 5.

along with many other Mississippi Gulf Coast landmarks that were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. A newspaper article published one year on from the storm simply stated "It seems easier to list what remains than what disappeared."[84] This same article goes on to list the Randolph School as one of the surviving places in "need of salvation." Publicly owned historic places such as the East Ward School, a 1921 Craftsman-style school in Gulfport, MS, is also mentioned in the 2006 article. The two-story beachfront building received a similar level of damage to the Randolph School and stood until February 2008, but was demolished by the City of Gulfport with the support of FEMA.[85] Privately owned historic landmark structures, such as the 1926 Classical Revival-style Tivoli Hotel in Biloxi, MS (NR 1984, Delisted 2008) faced similar pressures to be quickly demolished in 2006 as an effort to make way for new development. Yet nearly two decades later, these two sites remain vacant scars of not just damage caused by Katrina's wrath, but also the destruction caused in the efforts to "clean up" storm damage. Some historic properties owned by various levels of government became victims of neglect for many years, neither repaired nor demolished. Thirty-Third Avenue School in Gulfport was built c.1953 as the city's Black high school. Operating as a job training center by the Department of Labor in 2005 when Katrina hit, the site languished until the historic school was demolished in 2021.

The Randolph School was not alone however, in remaining standing as an artifact of a time prior to Hurricane Katrina on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The former elementary school in Waveland, MS (NR 2014) was used as a civic center in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina demolished nearly every other structure south of the railroad line in the town. This Tudor Revival-style one-story brick school completed in 1930 received greater damage than the Randolph School, with a classroom wing collapsing. However, its restoration became a touchpoint to the community's history and a symbol of recovery when the restoration was completed in 2009.[86] In Pascagoula, the long empty Art Moderne-style Pascagoula High School (NR 2000) received flooding damage. By 2011, the former school had been converted into senior housing with assistance from the MDAH Hurricane Relief Grant program, along with state and federal historic tax credits.

In Pass Christian itself, many homes to the east side of the community where land elevations are higher survived to be rehabilitated. The Schaeffer House in the Scenic Drive Historic District (NR 1979) is one such instance. This two-story Craftsman Style house built in 1910 had most of its first floor obliterated by Katrina's storm surge, causing the second story to threaten collapse. Post-storm survey teams led by MDAH suggested to then owners Philip & Mary Hellen Schaeffer that the damaged building was repairable, and later teams of volunteer preservation architects, engineers, and architectural historians assisted them (and many other homeowners) in putting together scopes of work to get their project underway. This encouragement along with financial assistance from the MDAH Hurricane Relief Grant program, resulted in the restoration

[84] Kat Bergeron, "Katrina spared no city's hallowed landmarks" The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 25 August 2006. Page 8.
[85] Melissa M. Scallan, "School may be historic: demolition hinges on state agency's analysis" The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 2 March 2006. Page 4.
[86] Associated Press, "5 Properties added to National Register" The *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 15 July 2014. Page 5A.

of this landmark.[87] The rehabilitation of the Randolph School along with these other historic places highlights the importance of historic preservation in rebuilding and resiliency in disaster recovery that help to restore a community's sense of place.

SunHerald
SOUTH MISSISSIPPI'S NEWSPAPER
50¢ VOL. 123, NO. 17 FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2006 www.sunherald.com

HISTORIC GRANT

*$26 million available to restore old properties*

Mary Helen Schaeffer celebrates getting a grant application form Tuesday from the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, which will oversee distribution of $26 million in Katrina-relief grants for battered historic properties. At left is Jennifer Baughn, architectural historian for the MDAH.

*Aid for historic properties damaged by Hurricanes Katrina & Rita make front page news in the October 20, 2006, edition of the Sun Herald.*

[87] Kat Bergeron, "Historic Grant: $26 million available to restore old properties," *Sun Herald* (Biloxi, MS) 20 October 2006. Pages 1, 8.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

____ 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 # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

**Primary location of additional data:**

_X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
_X__ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _Fisk University Rosenwald Fund Card File Database. _____

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 047-PSC-0473.1-ML_____**

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** ___4_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 30.318452 Longitude: -89.249612

2. Latitude: 30.319896 Longitude: -89.250320

3. Latitude: 30.319679 Longitude: -89.251077

4. Latitude: 30.318967 Longitude: -89.250735

5. Latitude: 30.318913 Longitude: -89.250958

6. Latitude: 30.318069 Longitude: -89.250559

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is roughly 575' along Clark Avenue to an existing fence line to the north, which runs approximately 255' to the west, before turning south running about 280' before jogging west roughly 70' to Hunter Avenue, turning south again running approximately 400' to W. Railroad St. before turning east and running around 330'. This boundary contains an approximately four-acre site.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries contain the original school site. Most of the football field, to the north of the school has been excluded, as the field itself is no longer extant and the site has been built over, now separated by a fence line.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Jeff R. Rosenberg / Historic Preservation Coordinator
organization: MS Dept. of Marine Resources / MS Coast National Heritage Area
street & number: 1141 Bayview Avenue
city or town: Biloxi state: MS zip code: 39530
e-mail jeff.rosenberg@dmr.ms.gov
telephone: 228-523-4029
date: March 21, 2024

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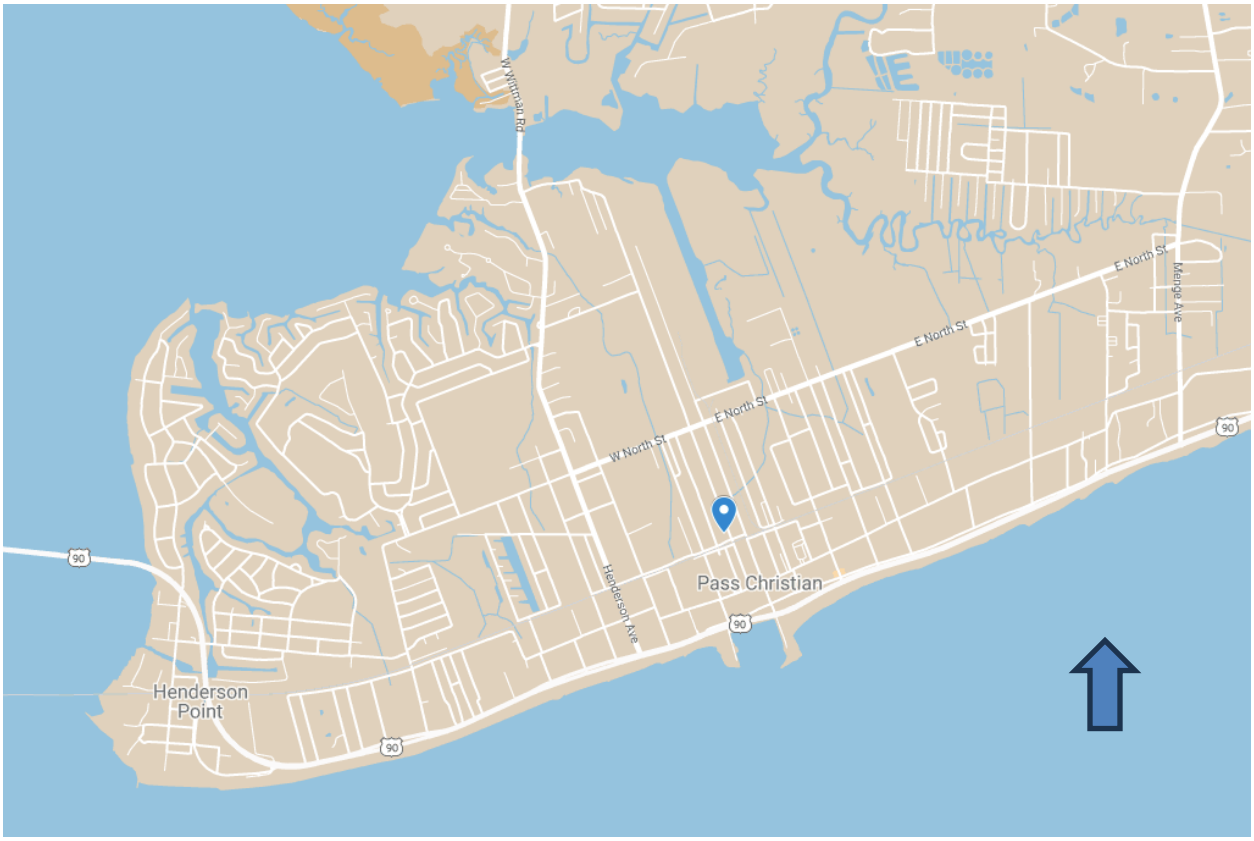
**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

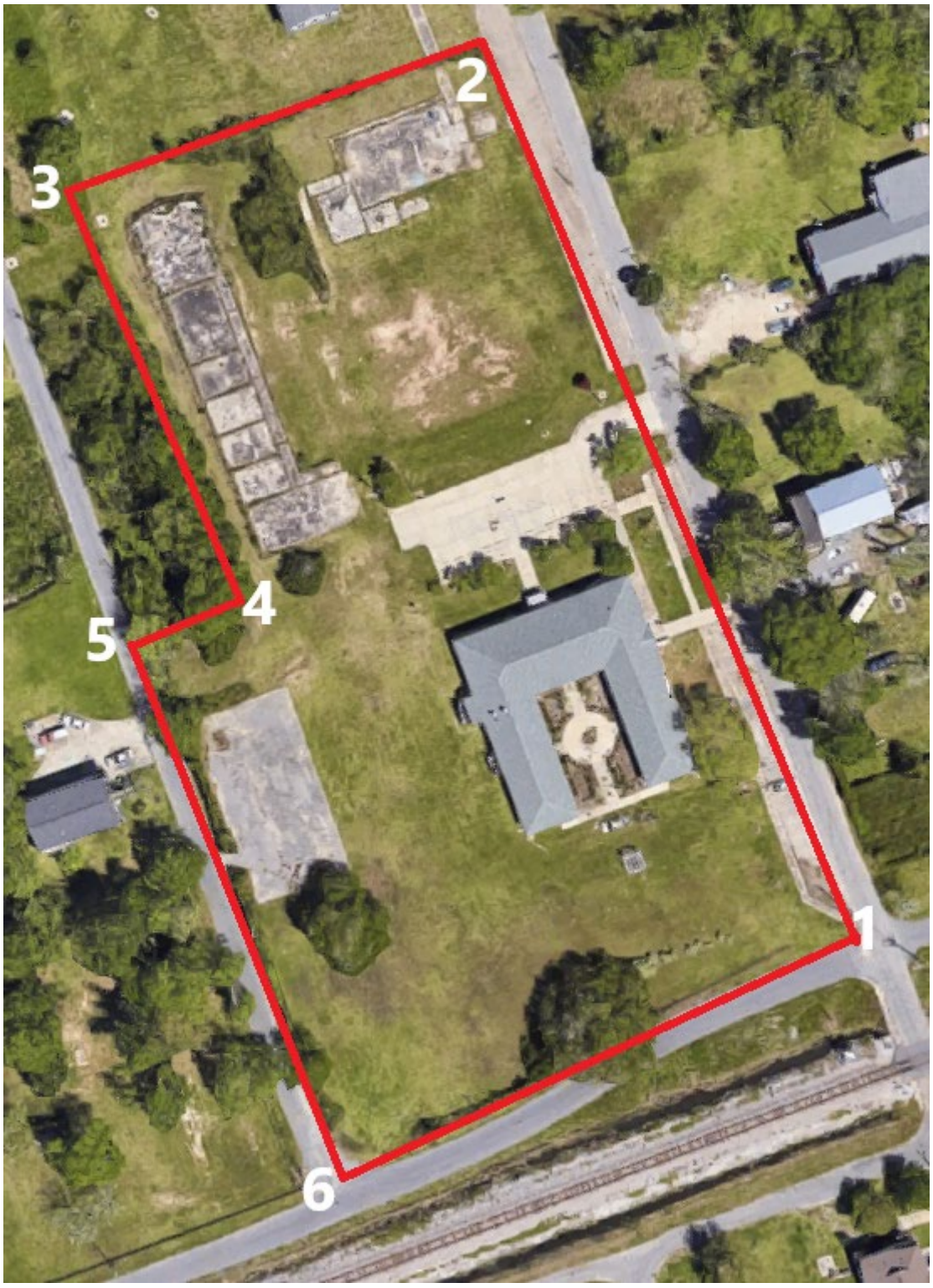
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

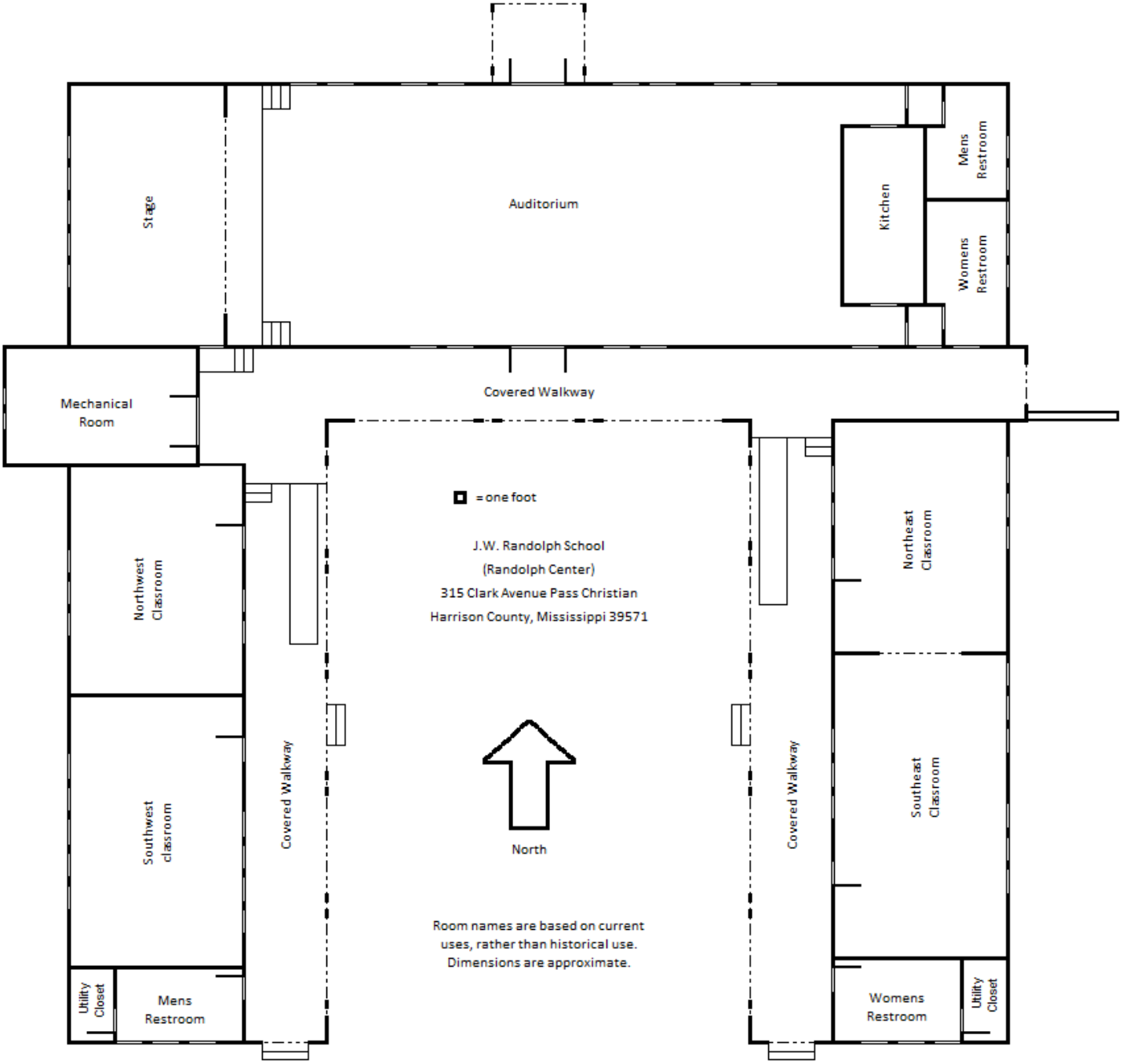



Location of J.W. Randolph School, 315 Clark Avenue Pass Christian, Harrison County MS.

J.W. Randolph School
Name of Property

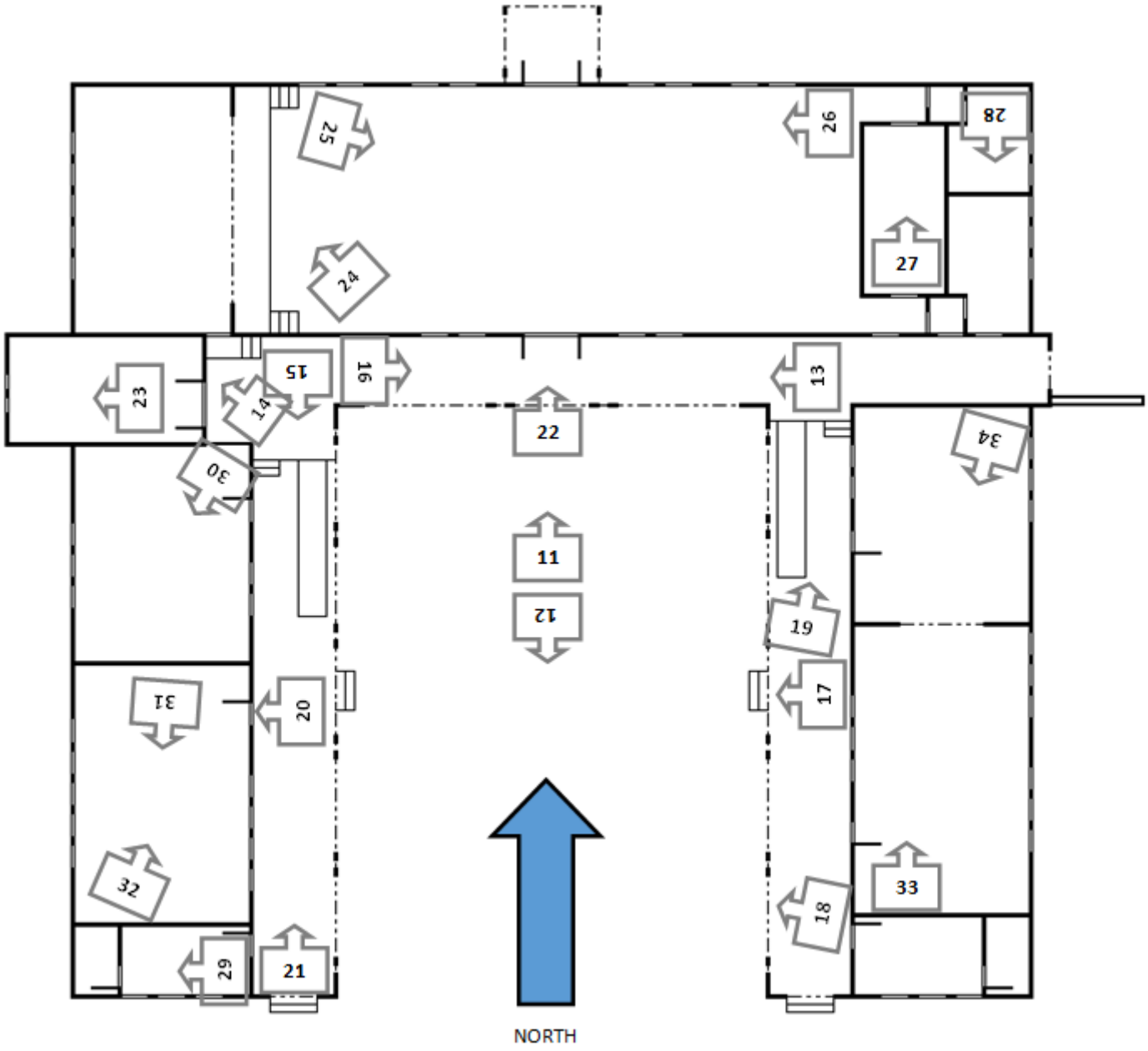
Harrison, Mississippi
County and State






2023 Floor plan of J.W. Randolph School. Pass Christian, Harrison County MS.

Exterior Photograph key of J.W. Randolph School. Pass Christian, Harrison County MS.




Interior Photograph key of J.W. Randolph School. Pass Christian, Harrison County MS.

**Photographs**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: J.W. Randolph School

City or Vicinity: Pass Christian

County: Harrison County State: Mississippi

Photographer: Jeff R. Rosenberg

Date Photographed: 15 November 2023.

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 34. North and east façades, view to the southwest.
2 of 34. View of JW Randolph School from railroad tracks, view to the northwest.
3 of 34. South façade, view to the north.
4 of 34. South and west façades, view to the northeast.
5 of 34. West façade, view to the east.
6 of 34. North and west façades, view to the southeast.
7 of 34. Football goalpost in tree line, view to the north.
8 of 34. North façade, view to the south.
9 of 34. Detail, north façade, view to the south.
10 of 34. East façade, view to the west.
11 of 34. Courtyard, view to the north.
12 of 34. Courtyard, view to the south.
13 of 34. North walkway, view to the west.
14 of 34. Doorway to mechanical room, view to the west.
15 of 34. West walkway, view to the south.
16 of 34. North walkway, view to the east.
17 of 34. Courtyard, view to the west.
18 of 34. Courtyard, view to the northwest.
19 of 34. East walkway, view to the north.
20 of 34. Doorway to southwest classroom, view to the west.

21 of 34. West walkway, view to the north.
22 of 34. Doorway to auditorium from north walkway, view to the north.
23 of 34. Mechanical room, view to the west.
24 of 34. Stage at the west end of auditorium, view to the northwest.
25 of 34. Auditorium, view to the southeast.
26 of 34. Auditorium, view to the west.
27 of 34. Kitchen, view to the north.
28 of 34. Auditorium men's restroom, view to the south.
29 of 34. West wing men's restroom, view to the west.
30 of 34. Northwest classroom, view to the south.
31 of 34. Southwest classroom, view to the south.
32 of 34. Southwest classroom, view to the northeast.
33 of 34. Southeast classroom, view to north.
34 of 34. Northeast classroom, view to southeast.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.
**Estimated Burden Statement**: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
Tier 2 – 120 hours
Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.

SENIOR
CENTER
PARKING
ONLY

CLARK AVE
WEST RR ST

NO
PARKING
CITY VEHICLE
ONLY

MECHANICAL ROOM

GEORGE T. WATSON WING

LANG Ave
SEAL Ave

MENGE AVE

FIRE
GLASS CONTAINERS
ORNAMENTS

PCFD

Brio

CECEIL DEDE X ROOM

EXIT