GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC LANDMARK OR HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

New Designation X
Amendment of a previous designation _____
Please summarize any amendment(s) _____

Property name Blanche Kelso Bruce School
*If any part of the **interior** is being nominated, it must be specifically identified and described in the narrative statements.*

Address 770 Kenyon Street, NW

Square and lot number(s) Square 2891, Lot 823

Affected Advisory Neighborhood Commission ANC 1A

Date of construction 1898 Date of major alteration(s) 1927

Architect(s) Poindexter, William M; Harris, Albert L. Architectural style(s) Italian Renaissance; Colonial Revival

Original use School Present use School

Property owner District of Columbia

Legal address of property owner 1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 307; WDC 20004-3003

NAME OF APPLICANT(S) Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A

***If the applicant is an organization**, it must submit evidence that among its purposes is the promotion of historic preservation in the District of Columbia. A copy of its charter, articles of incorporation, or by-laws, setting forth such purpose, will satisfy this requirement.*

Address/Telephone of applicant(s) 1380 Monroe Street, NW, #103; WDC 20010

(202) 904-8111

Name and title of authorized representative Kent Boese, Chairman

Signature of representative Kent A Boese Date Sept. 11, 2013

Name and telephone of author of application Kent Boese (202) 904-8111

Date received 9/16/13
H.P.O. staff TD
13-21

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Blanche Kelso Bruce School

other names/site number Bruce Elementary School / Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy

2. Location

street & number 770 Kenyon Street, N.W. ☐ not for publication

city or town Washington ☐ vicinity

state District of Columbia code DC county N/A code 001 zip code 20010

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this ___ 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 ___ 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 ___local

Signature of certifying official Date

Title 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:

___ 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)

X	building(s)
	district
	site
	structure
	building(s)
	object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
		buildings
2		**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH-20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Italian Renaissance

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: BRICK
walls: RED BRICK
roof: ASPHPALT AND METAL
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Description Summary:

The Bruce School is an Italian Renaissance style building of red brick with stone and pressed metal trim designed by architect William M. Poindexter and constructed in 1898. The eight-room school was designed with a conventional floor plan with four rooms on each floor arranged around a central hallway. In 1927, the overcrowded conditions of the school were relieved by the construction of an eight-room extensible annex to the west designed in the Colonial Revival style by municipal architect Albert L. Harris. The school is prominently located on a site on the southeast corner of Kenyon Street and Sherman Avenue facing Kenyon Street and surrounded by a generous lawn. Parking space is largely to the west and rear of the building.

General Description:

Site:

The Bruce Shool is prominently located on the southeast corner of Sherman Avenue and Kenyon Place, NW, facing Kenyon (Lot 823 in Square 2891). The property is bounded on the east and south by private residences.

The entrance is marked by a central projecting pavilion which incorporates two large Ionic columns on either side.

A parking lot is located to the east and rear of the property between the building and the private residences.

Exterior Description:

The building's footprint is a square and was designed with each elevation being symmetrical. A three-story addition was built in 1927 and is located to the west of the original structure. The two are connected by a hyphen. The addition differs from the original building both stylistically and in its use of a lighter colored brick.

The Bruce School is a solid, red-brick structure executed in a Renaissance Revival style. The building's brick walls are laid in American bond, the basement level is set off by a water table, and the building is surrounded by a pressed metal cornice. The fenestration of the building is sash windows made up of a wide pane of glass surrounded by narrow panes with wood mullions (since replaced with new wood sash windows but keeping the overall design) or pairs of casement windows.

The Kenyon Street (front) elevation is divided into three parts: a central projecting pavilion of three bays flanked on either side by a two bay recessed pavilion. The central pavilion is articulated by a smooth column supporting an ionic capital on either side of the entrance way. The colums support a stone cornice inscribed "BRUCE SCHOOL." Above the stone cornice are three small casement windows and a bold cornice with pressed metal triglyphs that extends to the line of the second story sills. The three windows are repeated at the second floor level above the bold cornice. This is surmounted by a Doric frieze consisting of pressed metal triglyphs supporting a triangular pediment terminating in an acroterion, also formed of pressed metal. The side pavilions are composed of equally spaced windows with pressed brick or terracotta surrounds. Between the windows and the cornice is an area of recessed brick. The entire red brick composition is tied together by a brick strip at the water table, pressed metal cornice with mutules, and pressed metal coping at the parapet with pressed metal acroteria angularia at each corner.

The east and west elevations, facing neighboring row dwellings and Sherman Avenue respectively, are divided into three parts: a central projecting pavilion of two bays flanked on either side by a two bay recessed pavilion. Each pavilion is composed of equally spaced windows with pressed brick or terracotta surrounds. Between the second level windows and the cornice is an area of recessed brick. The entire red brick composition is tied together by a brick strip at the water table, pressed metal cornice with mutules, and pressed metal coping at the parapet with pressed metal acroteria angularia at each corner.

The south (rear) elevation is divided into three parts: a central projecting pavilion of three bays flanked on either side by a two bay recessed pavilion. The central pavilion is articulated by entrance way surmounted by three small casement windows. The entrance way terminates at the second level with a simple cornice. To the left and right of the entrance way are two small casement windows. This is mirrored on the second level by a row of five casement windows grouped 1-3-1 in symmetry with those on the first level. The side pavilions are composed of equally spaced windows with pressed brick or

terracotta surrounds. Between the windows and the cornice is an area of recessed brick. The entire red brick composition is tied together by a brick strip at the water table, pressed metal cornice with mutules, and pressed metal coping at the parapet with pressed metal acroteria angularia at each corner. There is a slight pediment rising above the parapet on the central pavilion.

The building is covered by a low sloping roof which is concealed by parapet walls.

The three-level addition, connected to the earlier structure via a hyphen, was built in 1927 and designed in the Colonial Revival style. It is on the west side of the original block. The north (front) and south (rear) elevations are divided into two parts: a projecting pavilion of three bays on the west (Sherman Avenue) end and a recessed pavilion of four bays on the east end. The eastern recessed pavilions are composed of equally spaced 12/12 double-hung wood replacement windows, made to match the original ones. The western protruding pavilions are dominated by a central Palladian window connecting the central second- and third-level fenestration. To the left and right of the Palladian window, on each level, is one 12/12 double-hung sash window. The pavilion terminates in a gable. At the base of each Palladian window is a decorative ironwork balcony. The entire brick composition is tied together with the use of concrete keystones above the windows on the first-floor level as well as above the Palladian windows, and the use of a classical cornice below the coping.

The west elevation (Sherman Avenue) is a solid brick symmetrical mass. The mass is punctuated by a central projecting entry pavilion on the ground floor with one large central window rising above it, terminating just benerth the cornice. To the left and right of the entry way are evenly spaced 12/12 double-hung sash windows on the ground-level, each capped with a concrete keystone. The remainder of the elevation is uninterrupted by fenestration.

The addition is covered by a pressed tin gable hip roof.[1]

Interior Description:

As originally constructed, the Bruce School included eight classrooms with four classrooms on the first and second level in additio to a lower level. The principal entry leads into a vestibule and then to stairs leading up to the first and second floor or down to the lower level. At the top of each run is a corridor leading to the classrooms to the east and west. A similar configuration of stairs is found on the south side of the corridor leading down to the rear entrance.

The addition has a corridor down the center of each floor along the east/west access. The corridor divides the four classrooms on each level into two on the north side and two on the south side. Stairwells are found at the east and west end of each corridor. The eastern end of each corridor also connects to the original structure through a hyphen.

[1] DCPS “Public School Buildings – Past and Present” (unpublished ms)

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)

Property is:

- [ ] A owed 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)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1898-1927

Significant Dates

1898; 1927

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Poindexter, William M.

Harris, Albert L.

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Consideratons (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of signficance and applicable criteria)

The Bruce School was constructed in 1898 to provide a school for the growing African American community north of Florida Avenue. The school was designed in the Italian Renaissance style by Washington architect William M. Poindexter. It is one of the earliest schools designed under the policy initiated in 1896-97 to engage private architects in the design of public school buildings. It is also among the first group of purpose-built schools built to serve students in the new suburbs north of the original city boundary.

Bruce School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under the Multiple Property Document: Public School Buildings of Washington, D. C., 1862-1960. The Bruce School is a purpose-built public school building ; it is more than 50 years old ; it is in its original location ; it retains integrity; and it retains original fabric and its character-defining features. Further, the building, designed by Washington architect William M. Poindexter is perfectly representative of the school building sub-type, "The Architects in Private Practice, 1897-1910." As described in the Multiple Property document, the schools from this period were primarily designed in the Renaissance, Italian Renaissance, Colonial Revival, Elizabethan Gothic, and Collegiate Gothic styles. They were built of brick in a variety of hues, from red to yellow and were trimmed in terra cotta and limestone. They also tended to be located farther back from the front of the building lot.

Bruce School meets Criterion C as an outstanding example of a public school building designed by an architect in private practice at the end of the 19th century. The period of significance is 1898 to 1927, taking in the original construction and the later Colonial Revival addition.

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

Summary Paragraph:

The Bruce School is eligible for listing in the National Register with Architecture and Community Planning and Development as its Areas of Significance. The Bruce School, located on Kenyon Street between Sherman and Georgia Avenues, NW, is designed in the Italian Renaissance style by prominent Washington architect William M. Poindexter. The main elevation facing Kenyon Street is dominated by a central projecting pavilion which incorporates two large Ionic columns on either side of the entrance supporting an entablature with the name of the school. This feature is fitted in a larger entrance pavilion made up of two brick pilasters supporting a red brick entablature with pressed metal brackets. To the west of the building, connected via a corridor, is the 1927 extensible annex designed in the Colonial Revival style by Municipal architect Albert L. Harris. The annex was designed to be the future western wing of a rebuilt Bruce School, a plan that was never executed.

Resource history and Historic Context:

Narrative Description

The Bruce School occupies a 43,081 sq. ft. site (Lot 823 in Square 2891) bounded by Kenyon Street to the north, Sherman Avenue to the west, and rowhouse dwellings to the south and east. The school was built to serve the educational needs of the growing African American community to the west and north of Howard University. Built in 1898, it is one of the oldest surviving schools built north of Florida Avenue – the original northern boundary of Washington City proper – constructed specifically for the black community. As such, it not only documents the architectural development of Washington's public school buildings, but is also a monument to the history of the growing African American community north of Florida Avenue and the education of their children in Washington's segregated school system. Whereas many schools in the immediate vicinity of the Bruce School were originally built to education white children prior to their use to educate black children – resulting in them being named after U.S. Presidents or notable local white leaders – the Bruce School was named after black educator, former U.S. Senator from Mississippi, and trustee of Howard University Blanche Kelso Bruce specifically because it was conceived from the beginning to serve the needs of the black community.

In Washington's segregated school system, black schools developed in1807 under the sponsorship of private citizens and religious groups. The schools were quartered in churches and in other buildings that had been built for non-education purposes. The post-Civil Ware era was marked by the construction of a distinctive group of major school buildings, unlike

anything that had been built previosly in Washington. The Congressional provision for black students of 1862 was followed by additional legislation that provided for a fairer distribution of funds. The first public school house for black students was a frame structure built in 1865 at Second and C Street, S.E. This was followed by the construction of several substantial school buildings for black students, all in Washington proper.

In the county of Washington, small one-room and two-room frame buildings were constructed along major thoroughfares that cut through the rural landscape. These schools served the many freedmen who were employed on small trucking and dairy farms who lived close to work. Typically, an acre or half-acre of land was sufficient for each school.

Against this backdrop, the Bruce School is particularly notable for its early date of construction with respect to its location outside the boundaries of the original city of Washington. The area north of Florida Avenue to the west of Howard University and the United States Soldiers' Home was slowly developing into Washington, D.C.'s first suburbs. These included Mt. Pleasant (ca. 1860s), LeDroit Park (1873), Columbia Heights (1881-2), and Whitney Close (1886, now known as Park View). In addition to these subdivisions – originally populated by white families – there was a growing black population in the area north of Florida Avenue, predominantly between Georgia and Sherman Avenues. The growth in population quickly overtaxed rural Washington's educational facilities necessatating the construction of new school buildings.

Among the first of the new school buildings constructed in the area was the Monroe School, built in 1889. It was named after President James Monroe and located on Columbia Road between Georgia and Sherman Avenues. The next school to be built was the Bruce School, constructed in 1889 one square north of the Monroe School and closer to Sherman Avenue. Other known purpose built school buildings in the Columbia Heights, Park View, Pleasant Plains, and Petworth area include Hubbard (1899/1900 - razed), Petworth (1902), Johnson (1895 - razed), Powell (1909 -razed), Park View (1916), and Raymond (1924). Other nearby purpose-built black school buildings of the period located north of Florida Avenue include Wilson Public School (1891), Thomas P. Morgan School (1902 – razed) and the Military Road School (1912).

The need for new school buildings was not isolated to Washington's developing suburbs. By 1894, a report of the board of school trustees to the District Commissioners identified both the need for new school buildings and the question of free text books as paramount. The question of school buildings was considered the more important as the schools both in the city and county were reported as being in a deplorably crowded condition, and in the lower grades there were over 150 half-day schools as a result. The need for new buildings impacted the black community particularly hard. According to the report, two-thirds of Washington's black children of school fage attended school, predominantly at the half-day schools. In one section of the city with a large African American population within a square mile there was no school building at all. Several other sections were reportedly slightly better off. With few black children advancing beyond the eighth grade and, even then only attending half-day schools, the school board recognized that the lack of adequate school buildings was critical.[2]

By July 1897, the Superintendent of Schools decided that a new school was needed in the vicinity of Sherman Avenue, between Harvard (Irving) and Marshall (Kenyon) streets for the Columbia Heights area. In surveying the area, the available corner lots were considered unsuitable as the majority were either below or above the grade of the street necessitating a large expenditure to grade them property before a building could be erected. Due to this, the Superintendent preferred the lots on the south side of Marshall (Kenyon) Street which were upon the grade.A water main already had been extended as far east on Kenyon Street as Sherman Avenue allowing for an extension to Seventh (Georgia) Street without extra cost to the District. These favorable factors led the Commissioners to order the purchase of the Kenyon property on July 27, 1897, at a cost of $7,650. This left a sum sufficient for the extension of the sewer, approximately $650, for a total of less than $10,000, which permitted the erection of a $30,000 school building, out of the $40,000 appropriation.[3]

The school on Marshall Street was one of a handful of schools being planned at this time. In addition to the Bruce School, the eight-room Turner School located on the southeast corner of 24th and F Streets, NW, was being designed for white pupils of the fifth division; an eight-room building on sixth street between B and C streets northeast, adjoining the old Peabody annex, was being planned for white pupils of the third division, an eight-room building at Eckington was planned for white pupils of the sixth division, and the Lovejoy school at 12th and B streets northeast was being remodeled for black pupils of the tenth division. The decision to build schools in more remote locations rather than in more densely populated parts of the city was a result, in part, of the Congressional appropriation law that set a standard amount for school buildings without regard to the value of land, which was necessarily greater in the business and residential sections of the

[2] "New Buildings Needed: Washington's Public Schools Are Sadley Overcrowded." *The Washington Post,* Dec. 8, 1894, p. 7.
[3] "Purchase of a School Site." *The Washington Post,* July 28, 1897, p. 10.

District. This frustrating situation was noted by the Commissioners who vowed to take it up with Congress during future appropriation requests.[4]

The architect chosen to design the new school on Marshall, in accordance with the policy recently inaugurated by the District Commissioners of having the designs and plans of local public buildings made by architects of the city and not the employees in the office of the inspector of buildings, was William M. Poindexter. The change in policy was considered to not only create structures of superior design, but also to relieve the building inspector from a great deal of work that had consumed a good deal of time and also taken the employees away from their "legitimate duties; namely, to see that the building regulations [were] carried out." The new building was of the regulation eight-room size, but Poindexter had reportedly introduced a number of features which added to the building's convenience and improved the health conditions of the structure. By July 7, 1898, the Commissioners had also decided to name it the Bruce School in honor of the late ex-Senator Blanche K. Bruce, who was for a number of years a member of the board of public school trustees. Construction of the building lasted into the fall of 1898.[5]

In early 1899, the District Commissioner purchased the land owned by Thomas J. Fisher & Co. adjacent to the Bruce School for 34 cents per square foot to provide a playground for the new school. The purchase was paid for out of the available balance left from the appropriations for the site and building.[6]

By the end of 1920, the Bruce School – along with most of the schools in the district's Tenth division – was suffering from a lack of classroom space. Forty-eight classes of the Tenth division had an enrollment in excess of the maximum of 40 pupils to a class. According to the report of the superintendent, the division was unusually crowded. There was a total enrollment of 4,749 puplis and a total of 104 classrooms. The school with the largest enrollment was Garrison, which also was using on portable schoolhouse. Bruce School was using two portable schoolhouses to ease its crowded conditions.[7]

Plans to expand the Bruce School began in 1925. It was part of a larger plan to construct eight new school buildings, with a total of 72 classrooms, to be completed by September 1, 1926, in time for opening of the next school year. To help rush completion of this ambitious building program assigned to Municipal architect Albert L. Harris, nine architects and three engineers were appointed by the District Commissioners to assist Harris. Architect F. H. Brooke was assigned to assist with the eight-room addition to the Bruce School. However, by September 1926, plans for all the school buildings had been completed with the notable exception of the Bruce School – construction of which Congress made appropriation for in the 1926-1927 budget. Upon completion of the addition, it was officially dedicated on February 8, 1928. The date of the dedication exercises was intentionally chosen to coincide with "Negro History Week."[8]

By December 1928, the Board of Education announced a new five-year building program with a recommended appropriation of $5,750,000. The plan included the purchase of land for school sites and school playgrounds, and for the construction of buildings for elementary, junior and senior high schools. Bruce School was among the many schools identified in the plan. Even with the new addition completed just months before, the Board planned to purchase additional land adjoining Bruce and sought to erect an eight-room addition to replace the 1898 Poindexter building.[9] This plan was never carried out.

The nearby Monroe School, educating white pupils, continued to see decreasing school enrollment. An attempt in 1929 to redraw school boundaries to relieve overcrowding at nearby Park View School and sustain enrollment at Monroe School was met with stringent opposition. Fifty-seven Park View students went on strike refusing to attend Monroe. Among the causes of the diminishing enrollment and students' refusal to attend Monroe was "the gradual encroachment of the colored

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[4] "Will Soon Be Over: Little Ones Regretfully See the Coming End of Vacation, Schools Open in Three Weeks; Busy Secretary Falck Preparing for the Important Event; Additional Facilities." *The Evening Star,* Aug. 26, 1897, p. 1. "Real Estate Market: Architects Prepare Plans for New School-houses, Hampered by Law About Sites." *The Washington Post,* Aug. 29, 1897, p. 12.
[5] "District Building Notes." *The Washington Post,* July 8, 1898, p. 10. "A New School Building." *The Evening Star,* July 9, 1898, Pt. 2, p. 13.
[6] "A Bruce School Playground." *The Times,* May 5, 1899, p. 10.
[7] "Classes Crowded in Tenth Division." *The Washington Post,* Dec. 14, 1920, p. 9.
[8] "12 Named to Aid Harris with Plans for New Schools." *The Wahington Post,* Mar. 18, 1925, p. 2.; "Architect's Report Urgers Beautifying of School Grounds." *The Washington Post,* Sept. 5, 1926, p. M4.; "Dedication Days Set for 3 Schools." *The Baltimore Afro-American,* Oct. 29, 1927, p. 2.
[9] "City's Schools Get $5,700,000 in 5-Year Plan." *The Washington Post,* Dec. 20, 1928, p. 1.

population on the Monroe School area. With the Bruce School one square north, growing year by year, and with colored people in every square about Monroe, west of Georgia avenue" sustaining Monroe School as a white elementary school was impractical. "The key to the falling memberships at Monroe [was] shown by the necessary extension of the Bruce School from eight to sixteen rooms" in 1927.[10] This led to the transfer of Monroe School from the white to the colored division in 1931, alleviating crowding at Bruce School and ending plans to replace the original Poindexter structure.

Bruce School continued to serve the community until the new Bruce-Monroe School – located on Georgia Avenue between Columbia Road and Irving Street, NW – was completed and opened in the fall of 1972. The Bruce building was next used for school system administration offices and later housed a City-wide Learning Center. Since 2009, the building has housed the Cesar Chavez Bruce Prep Middle School.

Architects of the School Building

William M. Poindexter

William M. Poindexter was born in Richmond, Virginia in 1846. He served in the telegraphic corps of Confederate Army during the Civil War prior to his capture by the Union Army in 1865. Nothing is known of his education or training, but he arrived in Washington circa 1867 to work as a clerk and draftsman in the Office of the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury. Working under A. B. Mullet, he designed several marine hospitals across the nation. In the Office of the Supervising Architect, he joined a group of men who would later become Washington's most preeminent architects in the late nineteenth century. Poindexter established his own practice in 1874, although he periodically partnered with prominent architects such as Joseph Hornblower, Paul Pelz, and J. A. Henry Flemer. Most of Poindexter's work was residential; his most notable residential work was the enlargement of President Grover Cleveland's summer home in Washington in 1887, wrapping a fanciful Victorian porch with a turret around the 1868 stone farmhouse the President had purchased in Cleveland Park.

In addition to Poindexter's design for the Bruce School (1898), he also designed small-scale commercial buildings as well as several large institutional buildings including the Columbian University Building at 15th and H Streets, NW (1883; demolished) and several buildings at the U.S. Soldiers Home. He was in charge of renovations and expansion of the Sherman Building, the original 1862 hospital on the Soldiers' Home grounds which had 1870s alterations and additions. Poindexter partnered with Flemer to design the 1887 renovation and expansion, which included removal of the 1870s mansard roof, upper story additions, and the construction of a north wing. The enlarged building's appearance was transformed from a Second Empire style to a cohesive Richardson Romanesque style. Poindexter was also responsible for several institutional buildings in Virginia including the State Library in Richmond. His

Poindexter was a founding member of the Washington Chapter of the AIA, serving as its first Vice President. He later served as President in 1889 and 1890 and also served on the national board of the AIA. Poindexter died suddenly on December 20, 1908.

Albert L. Harris – 1927 Addition

Albert L. Harris was born in Abergynolwyn (?) Wales in 1869 and emigrated to America with his father Job Harris in 1873. He was in the Washington area by 1890 when he began attending the Arlington Academy for three years. In 1900 he left without graduating to work for Henry Ives Cobb in Chicago for five years on residential buildings. In 1898 Harris moved to Baltimore where he worked for Wyatt & Nolting until 1900 when he relocated to Washington. He was employed by Hornblower & Marshall from 1900 until 1917, noting that he worked on the firm's two most important public commissions, the Baltimore Custom House (1908) and the Smithsonian's Natural History Museum (1901-1911) while in that office. While employed by Hornblower & Marshall Harris began receiving his formal education at George Washington University, earning a B.S. in architecture in 1912. The same year Harris was appointed assistant professor of architecture at the university; by 1915 he was a full professor, a part-time position he held until 1930. In 1924 he prepared a quadrangular plan for the university's campus and with Arthur B. Heaton also designed Stockton and Corcoran Halls.

From 1917 to 1920 Harris worked for the Navy's Bureau of Yards and Docks where he was principally employed writing specifications. He began working for the Municipal Architect's office in 1920 and was named Snowdon Ashford's successor the following year; as members of the Washington chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the two had served on a 1911 committee with Waddy B. Wood condemning bay windows as not being "in accord with the dignity of

[10] "Park View School Rebels Fight on After Reverse." *The Washington Post*, Oct. 3, 1929, p. 1.

architecture which the Capital should maintain." In 1914 he served with the same men, as well as Glenn Brown, on the local AIA chapter's committee that first proposed licensing architects. Harris submitted the first application for architectural registration in the District and was the first to be registered on April 6, 1925.

Soon after his appointment as municipal architect in 1921, Harris testified before the House District Committee that "the municipal architect's office already is clogged with work and that it was necessary to employ outside architects and that different ones were employed so as to expedite the work." The congressional committee concluded that the "salaries paid to the municipal architect and his force of employees are measly and beggarly." ("Finds Architect's Force Underpaid," WP, 7/15/1921, p. 8) As was true with his predecessors, Washington's schools occupied a major part of the municipal architect's design output during Harris's tenure which ended with his sudden death in February 1933. Within a few months of his appointment, Harris signaled that Washington was to have "model buildings" for all of its schools with the design for the Rush School on the grounds of the Tubercular Hospital. ("Rush School for Ill," WP, 8/4/1921, p. 1) In 1921 Harris brought back plans from several schools in New York "which may be incorporated into future school structures in the District." ("Back From School Study," WP, 8/25/1921, p. 9) In 1925, at the beginning of a five-year building period for District schools, a joint congressional committee, critical of the architectural appearance of the District's schools—they "are not as 'architecturally beautiful' as they ought to be—led Harris to appoint nine consulting architects and three consulting engineers specifically to design new schools. ("Joint Committee of Congress Asks Platoon Plan Data," WP, 1/20/1925, p. 1.) The local architects he chose, both traditionalists and modernists, were all well-regarded as designers: Nathan Wyeth, Maurice F. Moore, Frederick H. Brooke, Louis Justement, Ward Brown, Waddy B. Wood, Robert F. Beresford, and the firm of Porter & Lockie. All were immediately assigned to make alterations to existing or design specific new schools, all in Northwest for which substantial appropriations had already been made.

Shortly after these appointments, Harris accompanied superintendent of schools Frank W. Ballou and Ernest Greenwood, a member of the board of education, to study schools in many other cities to reevaluate their shapes; the location of gymnasiums and auditoria within them; and the viability of classrooms in basement levels. The recently completed Macfarland Junior High School represented the District model they were using as a benchmark for Washington's up-to-date schools. Features of the proposed revised plans for junior high schools included placing the principal's office next to entrances along with libraries; widening corridors; and, if glazed bricks were used for interior walls, to paint them light colors. ("Planners to Study Shape of Buildings for Model Schools," WP, 3/22/1925, p. R10) In Rochester, the team found a model school design similar to Macfarland and noted particularly that staircases there were divided by walls to improve internal circulation. Another distinguishing feature of the Rochester schools they liked were wash basins set into hallways throughout the schools. ("School Travelers Gather New Ideas in Rochester Visit," WP, 3/24/1925, p. 4.)

Another measure of Harris's inquiring mind, concern for good municipal design, and importance within the city government was his autumn trip in 1925 to Paris as the District's representative to the International Congress of Cities. His two-month tour of France and Italy was to study architecture, particularly municipal buildings. ("City Architect to Go to Paris Convention," WP, 8/20/1925, p. 2.) Thus Harris, and the District's governing institutions, responded quickly to national and international movements in progressive reforms in school organization and design. Of the approximately thirty schools (including additions) that Harris either designed or supervised the designs of , his 1924 addition to Janney Elementary was praised as "decidedly the best as the frank expression of a modern school in a style suited for the Capital city." ("Exhibit Reviews Capital's Architectural Progress," WP, 3/17/1924, p. 17.)

As with the majority of his school designs, Harris responded to suggestions made by the Commission of Fine Arts about the appropriateness of the Colonial Revival style for Washington's neighborhood municipal buildings in his particularly fine firehouse at 13th and K Streets, NW. Engine 16 was monumental in scale befitting its architectural setting and the extent of its purview, its architectural details particularly well-proportioned.

The culmination of Harris's career was his master plan for the Municipal Center at Judiciary Square that consolidated the city's municipal functions in a large but well-ordered campus adjacent to the east end of the Federal Triangle. Harris planned two mega-structures flanking a central plaza perpendicular to Pennsylvania Avenue, this vista focused on George Hadfield's 1818 courthouse. Their massiveness of their exteriors was controlled by central and corner pavilions while internal courtyards within the blocks provided ample light and air circulation. These blocks, as wells as Harris's truncated pyramidal block on the west end of the campus, responded to local street patterns, the whole complex designed in imitation of the Federal Triangle.

While Snowdon Ashford predicted greater sophistication of the District's buildings to keep apace with developments in the city's federal architecture, Harris balanced fine-quality Colonial Revival buildings scaled and styled for Washington's neighborhoods with appropriately urban-scaled ones for the city's governing center adjacent to the heart of Washington's monumental core.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

__X__State Historic Preservation Office
__X__Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other

Name of repository: **Charles Sumner School Museum and Archives**

ML King Library Washingtoniana Division

DC Building Permits
Washington Evening Star; Washington Post

Sumner School Museum and Archives

Board of Education minutes
DCPS "Public School Buildings – Past and Present" (unpublished ms)
School vertical files

DC Department of Real Estate Services
(in the Reeves Center, 2000 14th St NW)

Blueprints, original plan (dated March 14, 1898) and later additions (ca. 1927)

Published Sources

Beauchamp, Tanya Edwards, "Public School Buildings of Washington DC, 1862-1960" (Historical Preservation Office, Dept of Planning, Washington DC)

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.000987144169 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Bruce School
Name of Property

Washington, D.C.
County and State

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1				3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Square 2891, Lot 823 in the District of Columbia.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

Original building lot in its entirety.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kent C. Boese / Commissioner, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A08 (Based on research and research reports prepared by Antionette E. Lee / historian for the District of Columbia Public Schools, and Kent C. Boese)

organization Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1A date May 2013

street & number 608 Rock Creek Church Road, NW telephone 202-904-8111

city or town Washington state D.C. zip code 20010

e-mail kent.boese@anc.dc.gov

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Bruce School

City or Vicinity: Washington

County: N/A **State: DC**
Photographer: Kent Boese

Date Photographed: May 27, 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1) General view of 1898 building looking southeast
   1 of 7

2) General view looking southwest
   2 of 7

3) Entrance detail, Kenyon Street elevation
   3 of 7

4) South elevation, detail of rear entrance
   4 of 7

5) General view of 1927 addition looking southeast, from intersection of Sherman Avenue and Kenyon Street
   5 of 7

6) General view of 1927 addition looking southwest, from Kenyon Street
   6 of 7

7) Entrance detail, west elevation, 1927 addition from Sherman Avenue
   7 of 7

Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
General view of 1898 building looking southeast
1/7

Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
General view looking southwest
2/7

Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
Entrance detail, Kenyon Street elevation
3/7

Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
South elevation, detail of rear entrance
4/7

Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
General view of 1927 addition looking southeast, from intersection of Sherman Avenue and Kenyon Street
5/7

Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
General view of 1927 addition looking southwest, from Kenyon Street
6/7

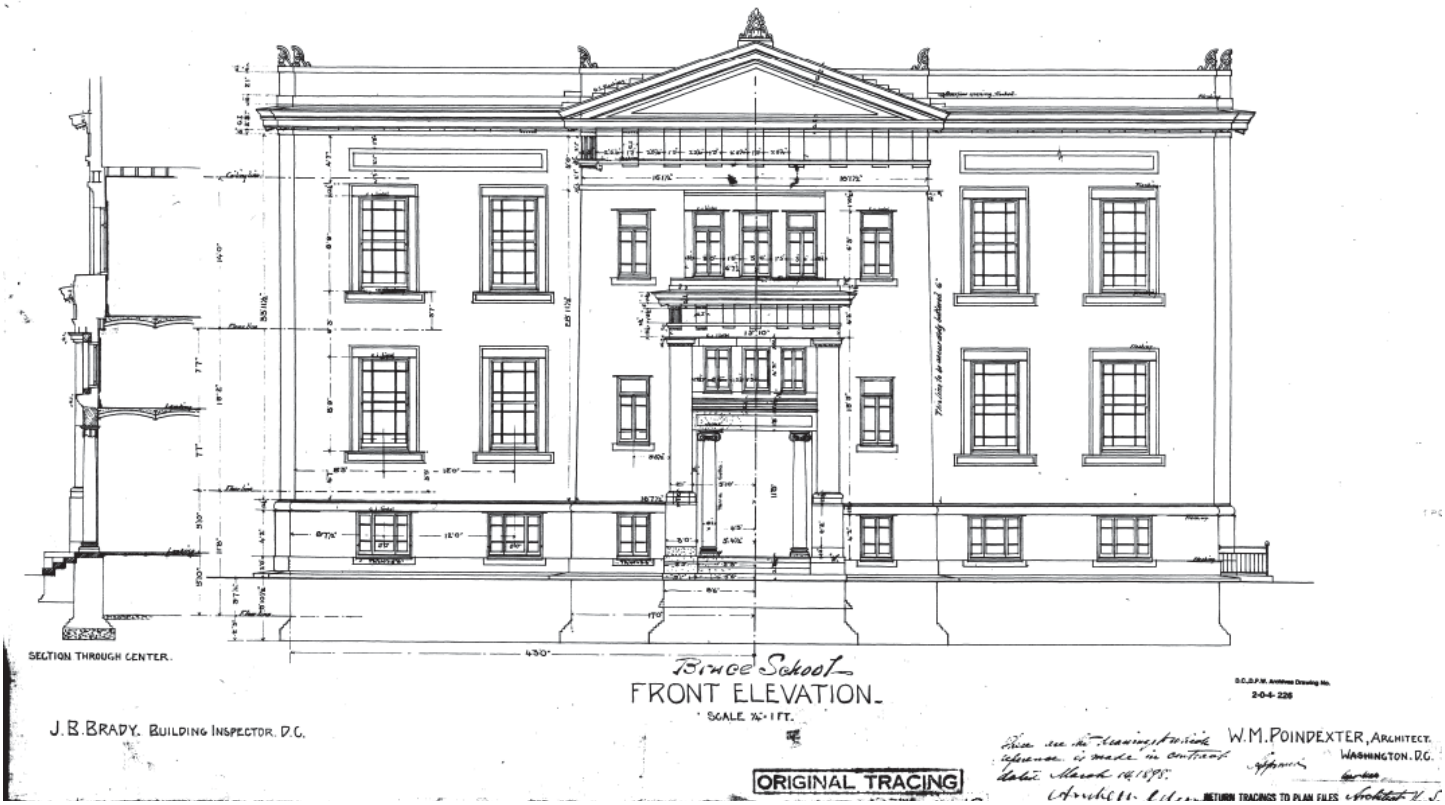
Bruce School
Washington, DC
May 27, 2013
Kent Boese
Commissioner ANC 1A08
Entrance detail, west elevation, 1927 addition from Sherman Avenue
7/7

Site Plan:

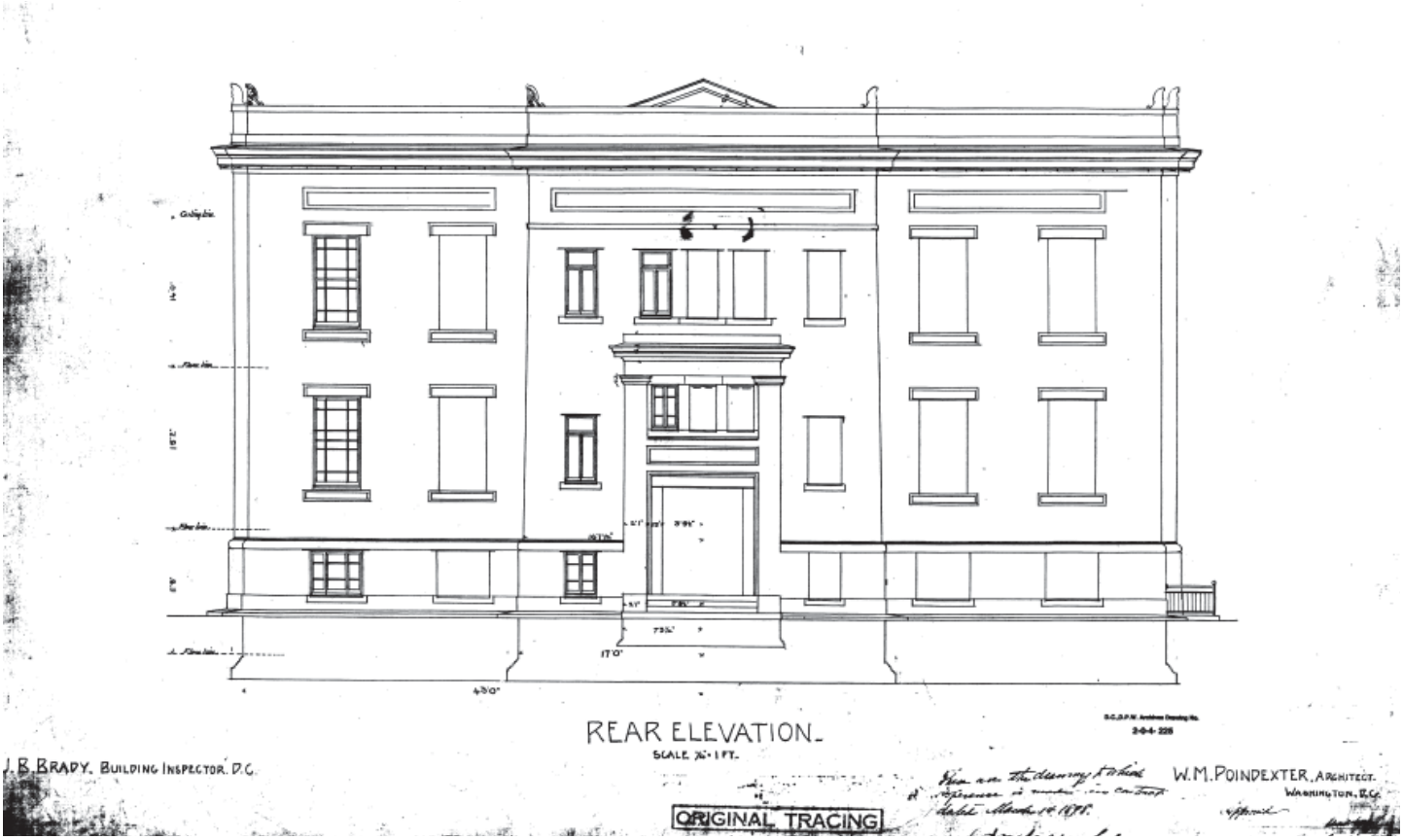
Site Plan from ArcGIS (viewed May 20, 2013)

Historic Images:

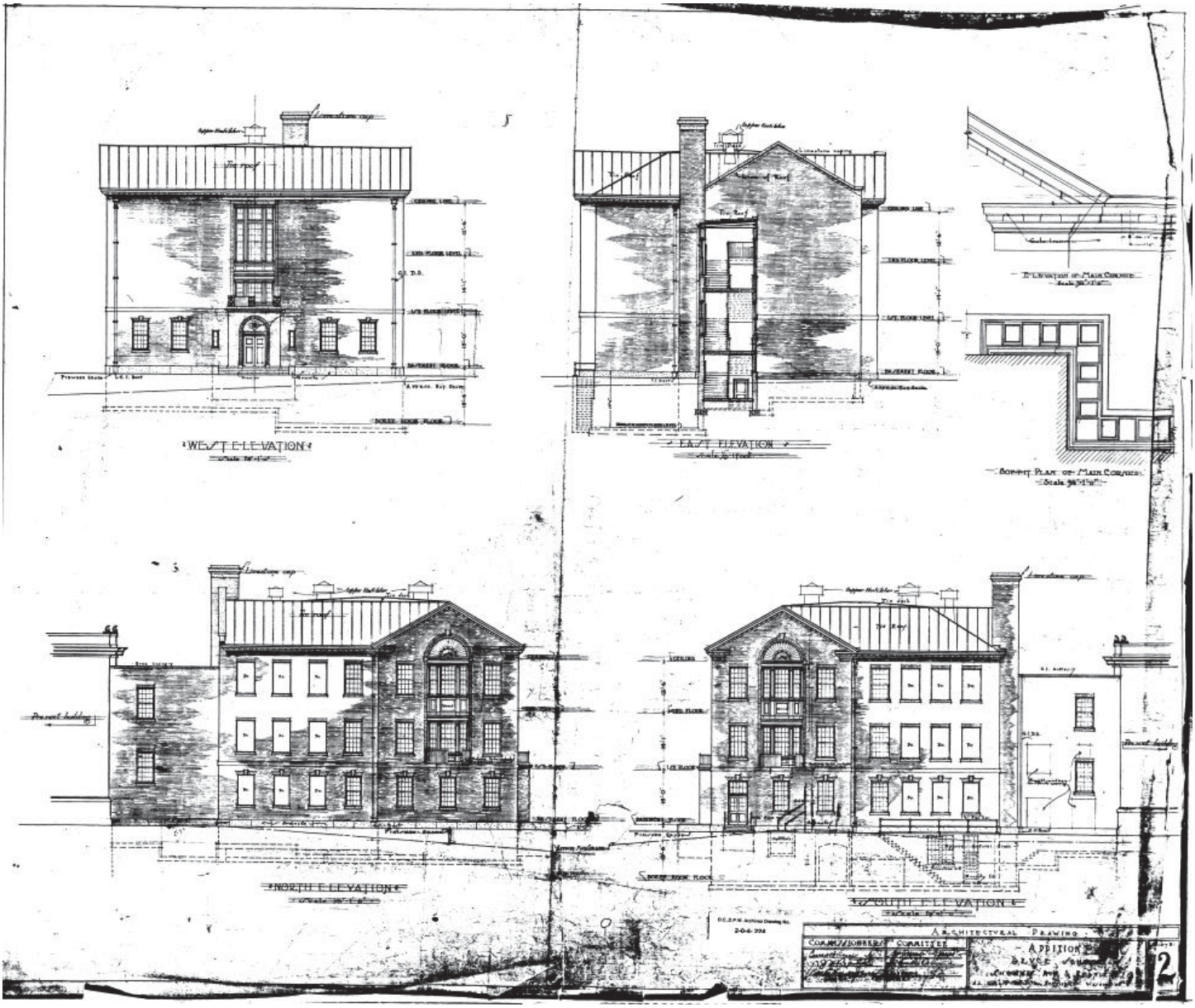
(Architectural Sketch, From *The Evening Star,* July 9, 1898, Pt. 2, p. 13.)



Kenyon Street Elevation from original drawings by architect William M. Poindexter, dated March 14, 1898.



Rear Elevation from original drawings by architect William M. Poindexter, dated March 14, 1898.



Elevations of Bruce School addition by municipal archict Albert L. Harris, ca. 1927.

Undated photograph, view from northeast, ca. 1900
(Photograph, Sumner School Archives)

Undated photograph, view from southeast, ca. 1960
(Photograph, Sumner School Archives)

Photograph, view from northeast, August 24, 1987
(Photograph by Patricia Fisher, Sumner School Archives)