

FINAL

**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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Washington, Booker T., School  
other names/site number District #10 School, Washington High School 167-628-20350

**2. Location**

street & number 1201 South 13th Street N/A  not for publication  
city or town Terre Haute N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Vigo code 167 zip code 47807

**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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

8.12.02

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register  
 See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Washington, Booker T., School  
Name of Property

Vigo IN  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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**

0

Indiana's Public Common & High Schools

**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)

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof ASPHALT

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**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.)

- 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.
- 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** 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black

**Period of Significance**

1914-1952

**Significant Dates**

1914

1926

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

Miller, Warren D. & Yeager, Ralph (for addition)

**9. Major Bibliographic 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:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Vigo County Public Library

Washington, Booker T., School  
Name of Property

Vigo IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 3 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 465760 4367050  
Zone Easting Northing

3  
Zone Easting Northing

2

4

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Heather M. Wagner, Intern  
organization HLEI-WRO date 08-17-2001  
street & number 643 Wabash Ave. telephone  
city or town Terre Haute state IN zip code 47807

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### 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.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Vigo County School Corporation  
street & number 686 Wabash Ave. telephone 812/468-4011  
city or town Terre haute state IN zip code 47807

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications 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. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### Booker T. Washington School Vigo County, IN

#### Description:

The Booker T. Washington School fronts on South 13<sup>th</sup> Street between Franklin and Cruft Avenues in Terre Haute, Indiana (Photo 1). Built in 1914, it was located in what was the heart of the African-American community, concentrated at that time between 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets. The original two-story, rectangular brick structure features a flat roof, a raised concrete basement, and concrete and limestone detailing. Some of the red bricks of the masonry exterior are stamped with the name of the brick manufacturer, the Hi-tech Brick Company. Subtle elements of the Neo-classical style include the segmental arch doorway, a limestone belt course extending across the façade between the basement and first story, and use of pilasters, decorative cartouches, and swags on the exterior of the building.

The east façade of the original structure consists of three sections divided by protruding brick pilasters, which run from a limestone belt course to a brick parapet, now covered with vertical metal siding. The center bay contains the entrance, school nameplate, and the first and second story windows (Photo 2). Concrete steps lead to double doors of anodized aluminum. Above the doorway is a glass transom, which follows a segmental brick arch with a limestone keystone and details. Above this transom, sits a painted, arched wooden canopy with inset panels. Dual suspension rods connected by turnbuckles that terminate into square limestone details support the canopy. Above this entry, is the school nameplate, a limestone shield with a decorative drip cap, inscribed with "Booker \* T \* Washington \* School \* A \* D \* 1914." Decorative first story windows, above the nameplate, have been boarded over. Second story windows above the entrance remain. Flanking the entryway are single sets of two windows per floor, with the basement windows noticeably narrower in width. All of the original double-hung divided light windows have been replaced with stacked, anodized aluminum windows. First and second floor windows have three panes, the top pane of which is a type of textured, translucent Plexiglas, and contain shared limestone lintels and sills. The original poured concrete sills of the basement windows are visible; however, the window openings have been partially filled in with brick, reducing their size from three to two panes in height.

The bays on either side of the central bay have two sets of tripartite windows on the first and second floors, separated by small brick pilasters that run from sill to lintel. The basement has two sets of wider, paired windows. The building contains a flat roof of asphalt and gravel, hidden by the parapet. The two square, brick chimneys of the building are topped with concrete and are visible from the west side of the building. Window-mounted air conditioning units can be seen throughout the building. In the northeast corner of the original façade, there is a cornerstone, partially hidden by the 1926 construction, which reads, "Jam/John/And/Stel/Geo/T" (Photo3).

The west elevation shares most features with the east façade (Photo 4). It consists of three bays, separated by protruding brick pilasters that run from the belt course to the metal-sided parapet. The central bay has three sections, each containing a set of paired windows, three panes high, separated by small pilasters that run from sill to lintel. The windows at the basement level, as on the east façade, are narrower. The bays on either side of the central bay contain two sets of tripartite windows on the first and second floors and two sets of paired windows at the basement level. A small shed addition blocks several basement windows of the central bay. This wooden and brick structure with a steel door was used until 1982 to bring coal into the school for its large coal furnace. It has a single door on its west wall.

The 1926 addition created additional classrooms and new entrances on both the north and south ends of the building. These identical additions gave the original rectangular building an I-shape. The north and south elevations contain three bays each (Photo 5). The projecting central bay is divided into three sections, with the recessed middle section containing an entrance. Three concrete steps with steel handrails lead to paired steel doors matching those of the main entrance. The doorway has a three-light transom of textured Plexiglas and wide, clear glass sidelights. A flat, steel awning shelters the entryway and is supported by four suspension rods mounted to the brick wall. A rectangular brick pattern above the awning contains a diamond herringbone brick pattern within it. The center of this diamond pattern contains a light fixture, missing from the north elevation. Above this is a set of three windows, four panes in height, with the top two panes containing textured Plexiglas. The adjacent sections of the center bay contain a single, three-paned window on the first and second floors and a two-paned window at the basement level. The center bay has a limestone



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**Booker T. Washington School  
Vigo County, IN**

**Description (continued)**

stringcourse connecting the tops of the second floor windows that becomes a brick soldier course on the adjoining bays. Centered below the limestone-capped parapet of the center bay are a limestone cartouche and swag (Photo 6). The left and right bays contain decorative rectangular brickwork with limestone squares at each corner. The adjoining bays also contain three windows each at the basement level only.

The east and west elevations of both north and south segments of the 1926 addition are nearly identical in appearance. Each elevation consists of three bays divided by protruding brick pilasters that run from the belt course to the top of the second story windows (Photo 7). The central bay is composed of a single tripartite window on each floor and the flanking bays each contain a single window per floor. The first and second floor windows are three panes high, with a top pane of textured plexiglass, and have shared limestone sills. Windows at the basement level are two panes high with concrete sills. Four vents, just above the belt course, have been filled in with brick. A limestone stringcourse connects the top of the second story windows. Similar to the north and south elevations, a limestone cartouche and swag are centered below the limestone-capped parapet of the east and west elevations.

The interior of the Washington School reflects the 1926 addition as well as several minor remodeling efforts; yet, many historic elements remain. The walls of the main/original entrance to the building are clad with brick up to the first floor level and painted plaster above. Wood molding separates the brick and plaster. The stairway of the entrance features vinyl-tiled treads with metal traction plates and painted metal railings (Photo 8). A metal radiator is suspended from the south wall. Double doors at the top of the stairs open to the first floor and are made of large, single panes of glass within a wooden frame. They are topped with a divided-light transom and flanked with divided-light sidelights.

The first floor consists of a hallway running north to south off of which the main entrance and classrooms are located (Photo 9). In the original portion of the building, long, narrow cloakrooms, adjacent to the four corner classrooms, protrude into the main hallway. Between these corner classrooms lie the main stairway on the east with narrow storage rooms on each side and a staff meeting room, storage area, and narrow staff restroom on the west. Stacked stairs, with entrances on the first floor landings, make up the center portions of the 1926 additions, capping the hallway that bisects the original structure. Immediately adjacent to the stairways on each side are narrow restroom/storage areas with classrooms on the eastern and western extremes.

The second floor plan is nearly identical to the first with the exception that, above the main entrance and staff rooms, the second floor originally contained two large rooms. These rooms served as both classroom and auditorium space and contained collapsible walls that ran the length of the hallway and could be retracted when the auditorium space was needed. The collapsible walls have since been replaced and the room on the west side of the building has been divided into five smaller spaces, while the east room houses the school library.

At the basement level, the general layout of rooms mimics that of the main levels; however, hallways are narrower and many of the rooms in the original building have been divided and given new functions. The room on the southwest corner of the central section is now a kitchen/cafeteria area with storage/pantry areas against the east wall and opens to the adjacent room in the southern wing. A furnace room, the entrance of which is flanked with narrow storage spaces occupies the central section on the west side of the building. Located five steps below the rest of the basement, the furnace room contains an exterior door that opens to the shed-like addition where coal was kept. Across from the furnace room is a carpeted children's play area, flanked with storage/custodial areas. The remaining classrooms have been altered very little though they are now used primarily for child care or office space. The classroom in the southeast corner of the original structure contains an exit with an exterior handicap ramp.

The stairwells on the north and south ends of the building resemble the main entrance/stairwell in that the lower portion of the walls are covered in brick and the upper portion in plaster (Photo 10). The stacked stairs are tiled and contain metal traction strips. Wooden handrails line the stairs and suspended radiators hang from the walls on either side of the stair landings. The stairwells are

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### Booker T. Washington School Vigo County, IN

#### Description (continued)

lit by fluorescent lights fixed either to the walls or to the underside of the stairs above. Ductwork from the basement runs along the underside of the stairs on the north side of the building and vents to the outside through an opening in the Plexiglas door transom.

Nearly all rooms on the first and second floors have plaster walls and ceilings (Photo 11). However, partition walls constructed throughout the building have been paneled and two of the classrooms on the first floor now have suspended acoustic tile ceilings. Electrical wires run along the hallway ceilings and all rooms contain suspended fluorescent lights. Most floors are covered with industrial blue carpeting, although bathrooms, service areas, and some classrooms are tiled. A number of small storage and office areas retain their original wood flooring. Throughout the first and second floor, portions of the original painted wood baseboards also remain. In other areas the walls themselves have been painted to imply the presence of such baseboards. A wooden coat rail runs through the first floor hallway, approximately three feet from the floor. Wooden trim also runs along the perimeter of all first and second floor rooms, approximately 24 inches from the ceiling. Electrical and technical wiring follow this trim in many cases.

Classrooms contain their original wood chalkboard trim and chalk trays, although the slate has been replaced in most cases, sometimes with bulletin or dry erase boards. The radiators in some rooms remain exposed, while others have been encased in metal. Many rooms also contain small closets with glass paneled doors. The cloakrooms (most of which have been adapted for general storage) are lit by simple, stationary panes of glass, high on the walls of the adjacent classroom. A number of classrooms in the 1926 addition have built-in cabinets and the first floor lounge contains built-in bookshelves.

All original doors were paneled; doors leading to classrooms and/or public spaces contained upper panels of glass, while storage/private space doors were solid paneled (Photo 12). All doors also had divided light transoms. Unfortunately, the cloakroom doors on the first and second floors have been replaced with hollow core wood doors and the remaining original doors have had their locks, handles, and hinges replaced. Many of the transoms, throughout the building, have been boarded over. Additionally, the collapsible wall system on the second floor has been replaced with stationary paneled walls, the doors with hollow core doors, and the transoms covered over.

The basement level of the building differs slightly in its architectural features. While it contains the painted plaster walls in the 1926 addition of the building, the original 1914 structure has painted brick walls. This center portion of the basement has been divided and the partition walls finished with painted wood paneling. The basement has plaster ceilings below which run electrical wiring, ductwork, and various pipes. Radiators in this portion of the building are suspended from the ceiling, as are the fluorescent light fixtures. Floors are either carpeted or tiled and baseboards are present or have been painted on. Some classrooms contain wood trim at the wall/ceiling juncture.

The east grounds of the Washington School, between the school and 13<sup>th</sup> Street, consist of a large shaded lawn with a fenced in play area to the south of the school's entrance. A concrete sidewalk lines the property on 13<sup>th</sup> Street and another runs along the front of the school with a third walk spanning from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to the front door of the school. A stone sign framed in brick with the school's current name, Washington High School, is located to the right of the sidewalk leading to the building. On the north end of the lot, stands a granite stone with the historic name of the school and the names of its past employees carved into it (Photo 13). Asphalt parking lots, located on both the north and south ends of the building, are accessible from Cruft Street and Franklin Street respectively (Photo 14). A fenced in recreation area on the west side of the property contains a grassy field and basketball court. There is a small gravel-based steel and plastic pavilion, located between the recreation area and the school building.

The building has undergone few structural changes since the 1926 addition and surprisingly retains most of its interior finishes and features. Since 1914, it has been an important educational facility in Terre Haute and it continues to serve the community as such today, nearly ninety years after its construction.

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Continuation Sheet

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**Booker T. Washington School**  
**Vigo County, IN**

**Statement of Significance:**

The Booker T. Washington School is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for its significance to Indiana's educational and ethnic histories. It is one of only four African-American elementary school buildings to be constructed in Terre Haute with public funds during the period of school segregation in Vigo County, from 1869 to 1963. The school itself served the African-American population for eighty-five years, longer than any other African-American school in Terre Haute, and the current structure, built in 1914, is the oldest remaining colored school building in the city. The Washington School housed the primary African-American school for the southeast part of Terre Haute and was the only school that continued to serve African-Americans through the county's period of school segregation. The Washington School has remained virtually unaltered since 1926 and is still an educational facility today, housing the city's alternative high school.

The Booker T. Washington School also meets all of the requirements set forth in *Indiana's Public Common and High Schools* Multiple Property Documentation Form. The school qualifies under the MPDF as a significant example of a multi-room consolidated school. The context within the MPDF, "Indiana's Public Common and High Schools," outlines the early history of education in Indiana and the period of consolidated schools that flourished toward the end of the 1800s and especially in the early 1900s. The property type analysis includes "Two or More Room Consolidated Rural and Urban Schools," which closely describes the Booker T. Washington School Building.

The Booker T. Washington School is located on the southeast side of Terre Haute, Indiana. Established as the county seat for Vigo County in 1816, the plat for the city of Terre Haute was filed in Vincennes by Joseph Kitchell in the same year. It was incorporated as a town in 1832 and as a city in 1853. Terre Haute is located on the east bank of the Wabash River, just north of the point where the river becomes the border between Indiana and Illinois. It is near the middle of Vigo County and is almost equidistant from the major Midwestern cities of Chicago, Cincinnati, and St. Louis.

In the three decades from 1820-1850, the population of Terre Haute grew from 3,390 to 15,289. Terre Haute's early growth came as a result of commercial flatboat traffic that was already established on the Wabash River. Steamboats from the Ohio River began using Terre Haute as a port in 1823. This provided a more dependable and faster means of transportation to the area. The National Road (U.S. 40) reached the city in 1838, providing an additional entryway for settlers. The Wabash and Erie Canal was completed to Terre Haute in 1849, and with it came more settlers and an increase in the transportation rate from two to eight miles per hour. These improvements helped to increase the population of Terre Haute over three decades.

In 1852, local entrepreneur Chauncey Rose built the first railroad, the Terre Haute and Richmond, through Terre Haute. This new form of transportation spurred an economic boom and marked a significant increase in the population of the city. The railroad made it easier to mine and to transport the large amounts of coal in the area. The abundance of fuel also made Terre Haute a major manufacturing city. Without including the railroad and mining industries, Terre Haute manufacturers produced 171 different commodities and employed 14,000 people by 1920. Terre Haute had the largest distillery in the world; one of the largest breweries in the nation; the world's largest producer of enameled steel household and hospital products; several large wholesale grocers; and the internationally known Commercial Solvents and Root Glass Companies. As mining and other industries were established in Terre Haute, the city became a significant member of the industrial revolution and the population of Vigo County doubled between 1890 and 1920, reaching 111,000.

Terre Haute was home to six major railroads by 1920, including the Big Four, the Pennsylvania, and the Chicago and Eastern Illinois. Also during this time, U.S. 41, the Dixie Highway, was completed between Chicago and Miami. It intersected U.S. 40, the old National Road between Washington D.C. and San Francisco, in downtown Terre Haute. This fact, together with an influx of workers and other permanent settlers, raised Terre Haute's population to over 72,000 by 1920 and prompted local boosters to begin to refer to their city as the "Crossroads of America."



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### Booker T. Washington School Vigo County, IN

#### Statement of Significance (continued)

The Terre Haute area was also an important center of higher education. Vigo County became the site of St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in 1840 and two other colleges were established in the following years. Indiana State Normal School, the state teachers' college (now Indiana State University), was founded in 1870 and Rose Polytechnic Institute (now Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology) became the first private engineering college west of the Alleghenies in 1874.

Indiana's formal educational history begins in 1824, however, with an act passed by the Indiana General Assembly that encouraged the formation of public schools across the state, but provided minimal funding. A "subscription" method of funding whereby students paid a yearly fee was in use until the late 1840s and 1850s. In fact, the first school for African-Americans in Terre Haute was a subscription school held in the basement of the A.M.E. Church on South First Street. Unfortunately, subscription schools were not affordable to most African-Americans.

Framers of the 1851 Constitution saw and responded to the need for free common schools. The "school law" of 1852 provided limited funding for the township school system and allowed local governments to tax private property for school buildings and funds beyond what the State would provide for salaries and expenses. However, lawsuits from rural property owners in the following years resulted in a State Supreme Court decision which stated that, although cities and towns do have the right to assess taxes for school buildings, they do not have the right to tax for school tuition (and therefore additional teachers). Indiana's cities, where most of the African-American population was located, were once again limited in providing a free education to their citizens. While some cities simply did without schools for a few years, other districts returned to the practice of charging pupils tuition, which once again left many out of a public system.

Even in the years following the Civil War, blacks were not offered the same educational opportunities as their white counterparts. While some communities tolerated African-Americans in their schools, it was not until 1869 that the Indiana General Assembly recognized the need to provide black neighborhoods and communities with public free schools of their own. At that, the mandate was more to separate blacks from whites than to provide public schools per se. The act encouraged trustees to create separate schools from one or more district areas if "sufficient numbers" of African-Americans reside together.

Thus in 1869, with a wave of migrating North Carolinian ex-slaves arriving in Terre Haute, the number of eligible students prompted the school board to establish its first free common school for African-Americans. Classes were first held at the A.M.E. Church on South First Street, but rapid growth led the school to be relocated and subsequently renamed several times. In 1888, it settled at Second and Crawford Streets, where it became known as the 12<sup>th</sup> District School and later the Paul Lawrence Dunbar School.

During this time, the African-American population between 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets was growing as well and in May of 1877, the community petitioned the school board for either accommodations in the Mont Rose School (the 8<sup>th</sup> District School) or their own building. Both requests were denied. In August of 1878, the community petitioned the school board again, this time with proof of fifty eligible students, and the colored students were granted a school by a majority of the board. It was to be held in a vacant room of the Mont Rose School beginning in the fall of 1878 and was to serve students through the 4<sup>th</sup> grade as long as an enrollment of at least 25 students could be maintained. A petition filed in September of the same year, by the white community, to remove the colored students from the Mont Rose School was denied.

In August of 1882, the school board voted to move the growing number of colored students from the Mont Rose School to a leased frame structure at 13 ½ and Dean Streets. Two years later the school board purchased the property at 13 ½ and Dean Streets and a two-room brick structure (later expanded to four rooms) was built on the site. The school was staffed with two white teachers and named the 10<sup>th</sup> District School. The school continued to grow and by 1903, it employed four teachers. In March of 1906, the school board voted to name the district schools. The 10<sup>th</sup> District School became known as the Booker T. Washington School.

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Continuation Sheet

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**Booker T. Washington School**  
**Vigo County, IN**

**Statement of Significance (continued)**

The school was named for Booker T. Washington, because he was thought to be the most influential black leader of his time. He advised numerous politicians on racial issues and spoke publicly, urging blacks to accept social inequality and segregation in exchange for economic advancement. Washington did much to fund and support black businesses and was significant as a black educator. He encouraged blacks of all ages to educate themselves and founded the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (now Tuskegee University), in Tuskegee, Alabama, as a vocational school for blacks. He believed that because of their economic status, blacks would benefit more from skills learned in a practical setting, than they would from a traditional college education.

The continued growth of the Washington School was typical of African-American schools throughout the state. African-Americans seemed to be conscientious of the importance of educating their young and enrollment at black schools experienced rapid growth in the years between 1869 and 1920. Within five years of the 1869 law, 6,651 black students were enrolled in Indiana's public common schools, 68% of the number eligible to attend. A period of school consolidation from 1890 to 1900, led educators to lobby to the Indiana General Assembly for more uniform school attendance and in 1897, the Assembly passed a compulsory education law requiring all children ages 6 to 14 to attend public or private schools. Another compulsory education law followed in 1913, extending the age to 16.

These laws significantly increased enrollment throughout the state and no doubt affected the growth of the Washington School. In 1913, the school board voted to abandon and sell the existing Washington School, and to purchase a plot of land on South 13<sup>th</sup> Street, between Cruft and Franklin Streets on which to construct a new school. The new building, costing over \$50,000, was formally dedicated on May 28, 1915 as the Booker T. Washington School and still stands on the site today. Unfortunately, the architects of the original school are unknown. A cornerstone, partially covered by the 1926 addition reads, "Jam/John/And/Stel/Geo/T," but does not provide enough information to identify the architects.

The Booker T. Washington School, as with most African-American schools, reflected the close-knit community that surrounded it. The building became a meeting place for African-American clubs, groups, and other activities. Its teachers were leading African-American persons of the community and tended to stay with the school for long periods of time. In fact, part of the Washington School's significance lies in its educators, including Charles T. Hyte, Jane Dabney Shackelford, and Evangeline Harris Merriweather, all of whom have all been intimately tied to the Washington School, the surrounding community, and the history of black education in Indiana.

Charles T. Hyte became the principal of the Washington School in 1924 and remained employed there until his death in 1941. He was a well-respected man throughout the community and sought to better race relations by improving his students' academic records and encouraging exemplary conduct in order to earn them the respect of the white community. He was active in the community and the Charles T. Hyte Community Center was established north of Washington School in his honor. Jane Dabney Shackelford taught at the Washington School from 1925-1962. She is remembered for teaching her students the black history of both Africa and America through pictures and stories. With no textbooks available on blacks or black achievement, Ms. Shackelford wrote her own, including *My Happy Days* and *The Child's Story of the Negro*. Ms. Shackelford, like Mr. Hyte, was very active in the academic and social communities. Evangeline Harris Merriweather served as a teacher at both Lincoln and Washington Schools for over 25 years and was the music supervisor for some time in the Terre Haute public schools. However, her fame came as a musician and author. She performed throughout the United States and penned the readers *The Family* and later *Stories for Little Tots*, a book geared for black elementary school students that included brief biographies of prominent black men and women.

African-American schools throughout the city continued to grow and in May of 1924, the school board voted to add junior high school grades to both the Washington and Lincoln Schools. (Established in 1885 to serve the northeast part of the city, Lincoln School was renamed Benjamin Franklin School; a plan adopted in 2002 by the Vigo County School Corporation calls for the demolition of this school in 2003.) In June of the next year, the Superintendent J.O. Engleman recommended additions to both the

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### Booker T. Washington School Vigo County, IN

#### Statement of Significance (continued)

Washington and Lincoln Schools. The board chose the architects Warren D. Miller and Ralph Yeager to design the additions, both of which were opened in July of 1926. The firm of Johnson, Miller, Miller, and Yeager and its successors was one of the leading architectural firms in Terre Haute at the time. Other projects undertaken by the firm and its successors included the Terre Haute Federal Building, Rea Park Club house, First National Bank, and about thirty high schools throughout the area.

In 1926, the Dunbar School, Terre Haute's first public African-American school, closed its doors; its students relocated to the Booker T. Washington School. A decline in school attendance by 1932, forced the consolidation of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades of the Washington and Lincoln Schools. Lincoln students reported to the Washington School for one year, after which the school board deemed it too expensive to transport them. In 1933, the Lincoln students were instructed to report to either McLean or Woodrow Wilson Junior High Schools while the Washington students were given the option of remaining at Washington School.

By 1963, the Washington School was the last remaining segregated African-American school in Terre Haute. (The Lincoln School had been combined with the McKeen School in 1958.) The building at 1201 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street ceased use as an African-American school in 1963 after 49 years of service to the black community. At this time, the building was remodeled and began use as an Instructional Materials Center, a headquarters for Guidance and Psychological Services, Attendance Services, and Health Services for the Vigo County School Corporation. The Washington School also sponsored federal programs for remedial reading and was home to programs serving students with emotional problems and sight or hearing impairments.

An alternative high school, catering to pregnant and troubled teens, was founded in Terre Haute in 1977. It moved into the lower level of the Washington School in 1982 and became known as the Washington High School. By 1984, after remodeling efforts replaced the exterior doors and windows, the alternative high school occupied the entire building, making the Washington School an educational facility once again. A Secondary Opportunity School for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students was added to the school in the same year.

Washington High School remains an educational facility today and provides a variety of programs including the Alternatives for Living and Learning (ALL) which has received recognition for its excellence and innovation. It provides child-care, encourages the development of interpersonal and parenting skills, and arranges for individual tutoring and legal aid among other services, all to make education more practical for this group of students. The school has been so successful that Lieselotte Maher—the program's first director—was called on by the American Association for Counseling and Development to testify in front of the Senate Subcommittee of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources in 1985. She addressed a federal commitment to dropout prevention and re-entry programs.

The Booker T. Washington School building has remained an educational facility since its construction in 1914, with its tradition of education dating to 1878. The fact that the building is still used for education, though it serves a different population, further illustrates its significance as an important educational, ethnic, and community resource.

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Vigo County, IN**

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#### Verbal Boundary Description

The Booker T. Washington School grounds consists of lots 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15, and 16 in Block Number 14 in the Commissioner's Subdivision of Cruft Farm, a Subdivision of the South West quarter of Section, 27 Town, 12 North of Range 9 West of the Principal Meridian. The site is bordered by 13<sup>th</sup> Street on the East, Cruft Street on the North, Franklin Street on the South, and 12<sup>th</sup> Street on the West

#### Boundary Justification

This is the historic property boundary and includes the significant resource and its surrounding environment.

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**Booker T. Washington School  
Vigo County, IN**

Additional Documentation

Photographs

**Photo #1**

1. Booker T. Washington School
2. Vigo County, Indiana
3. Marsh Davis
4. August 1, 2001
5. Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana
6. View of the southeast corner of the building shows original façade and 1926 addition. Photograph is taken facing northwest.

**Photo #2**

6. View of the entryway, school nameplate, and second story window. Photograph is taken facing west.

**Photo #3**

6. View of the cornerstone of the original structure. Photograph is taken facing northwest.

**Photo #4**

6. View of the west (rear) elevation of the building. Photograph is taken facing east

**Photo #5**

6. View of the north façade of the building, the 1926 addition. Photograph is taken facing south.

**Photo #6**

6. View of the limestone cornice and the swag and cartouche. Photograph is taken facing west.

**Photo #7**

6. View of the façade of the 1926 addition. Photograph is taken facing southwest.

**Photo #8**

6. Interior view of the main entrance of the building. Photograph is taken facing west.

**Photo #9**

6. Interior view of the second-floor hallway. Photograph is taken facing south.

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**Booker T. Washington School**  
**Vigo County, IN**

Photographs (continued)

**Photo #10**

6. Interior view of the north stairwell. Photograph is taken facing northwest.

**Photo #11**

6. Interior view of a typical classroom. Photograph is taken facing north.

**Photo #12**

6. View of a typical interior classroom door. Photograph is taken facing northwest.

**Photo #13**

6. View of the historic marker. Photograph is taken facing southwest.

**Photo #14**

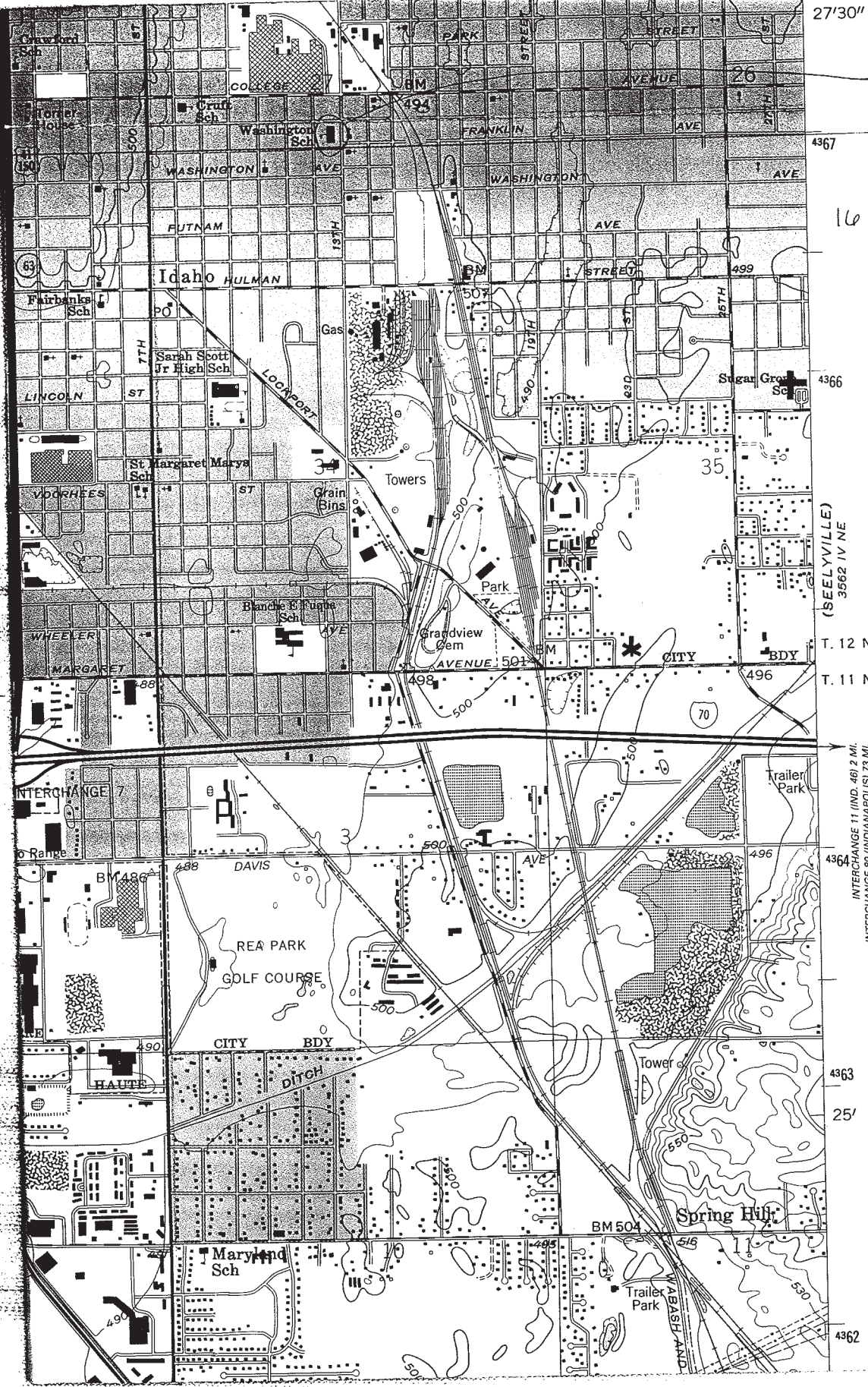
6. View of the south elevation and parking area. Photograph is taken facing northeast.

27'30"

Booker T. Washington School

1201 S. 13th St  
Terre Haute, IN

16 465760 4367050



(SEELYVILLE)  
3562 IV NE

T. 12 N.  
T. 11 N.

INTERCHANGE 11 (IND. 48) 2 MI.  
INTERCHANGE 80 (INDIANAPOLIS) 73 MI.

4363  
25'

4362