USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Princeton Graded School
Johnston County, North Carolina

NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018
(Rev. 10-90)

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 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 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

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historic name Princeton Graded School
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

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street & number 601-611 West Edwards Street not for publication N/A vicinity N/A
city or town Princeton state North Carolina code NC county Johnston code 041 zip code 27569

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 ___ nationally ___ statewide ___ locally. ( ___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

jeffrey mcrone shpo 8/18/05
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau
4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

____ 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): __________________

______________________________  ______________________
Signature of Keeper                  Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

X  private
public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

X  building(s)
district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributing</th>
<th>Noncontributing</th>
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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register  N/A
Name of related multiple property listing  N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat:  Education                  Sub:  school
Funerary

Present Functions

Cat:  Vacant                  Sub:  Cemetery
Funerary
7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Rosenwald School

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation: Brick
- roof: Metal
- walls: Brick

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)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- 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.
- Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- removed from its original location.
- a birthplace or a grave.
- a cemetery.
- a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- a commemorative property.
- less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Education
- Ethnic Heritage: Black

Period of Significance: 1925/1926-1955
Significant Dates: 1925/1926, 1952
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above): N/A
Cultural Affiliation: N/A
Architect/Builder: Rogers, J. P. (Smithfield, N.C.), Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
9. Major Bibliographical References

(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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.86 acre

UTM References Zone: 18 Easting: 756880 Northing: 3928620

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 Nancy Van Dolsen date May 9, 2005
street & number 1601 Highland Drive telephone 252.243.7861
city or town Wilson state NC zip code 27893

Property Owner

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

name Elaine Mabson number 12205 Malin Lane City or town Bowie state MD zip code 20715
The Princeton Graded School sits at the center of a 3.83-acre parcel at the west end of the small town of Princeton in Johnston County, North Carolina. The one-story, six-classroom brick school, constructed in 1925-1926 faces north, toward NC 70A (also known as West Edwards Street and as SR 2532) and the railroad tracks. The lot is primarily mowed lawn, but the perimeter is wooded. A half-circle dirt drive fronts the school. A one-story brick combined classroom and cafeteria building constructed in 1952 stands to the west of the 1925-1926 school, and is linked to the school by an open breezeway. No other buildings, playing fields, or playgrounds are on the property. To the south of the combined classroom and cafeteria building in the wooded area is a small cemetery with less than twenty stone markers. The Hamilton Funeral Home in Princeton used the cemetery from 1934 through 1960-1961 to bury African Americans; during those years the Princeton municipal government would not allow African Americans to be interred in the public cemetery. It is not known if there are earlier unmarked graves.1 Between the school building and cemetery is a concrete septic tank

Princeton Graded School, 1925-1926, Contributing Building

The Princeton Graded School is a six-teacher, frame school building sheathed in brick. The H-shaped building has two additions, a one-story, brick hip-roof extension to the rear of the east wing that contains two bathrooms—one for the female and one for the male students, and a low, one-story, brick, asymmetrical gable-roof section built onto the rear of the west wing that housed the furnace. The brick building has an all-stretcher bond exterior, with an all header slightly projecting water table above a common bond brick foundation, and a soldier course above all openings. It has a seamed metal gable roof with exposed extended rafter ends. The cross gable end above the plate on the west elevation is not sheathed with brick, but instead has an applied decorative wood and stucco treatment similar to half-timbering. An original shed-roof porch links the two wings on the façade and retains Doric-style posts. The porch floor and steps are poured concrete.

The five-bay central section features a double-door entry topped by a six-light transom, and six six-light clerestory windows are located between the porch roof and cornice. A single door leads into both wings from the porch. As in all Rosenwald schools as originally built, the windows are large and are placed in multiple groupings. At the Princeton Graded School the windows are in multiples of six on the west and east elevations to provide adequate light to the classrooms. Windows contain nine-over-nine sash except on the façade and in the additions where they are six-over-six light sash. Original window sash and five-panel doors remain intact in the rear courtyard created by the two wings and central section. A one-story porch with square pillars

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runs the depth of each of the wings on the courtyard elevation. The porch floors and steps are poured concrete.

Interior

The original section of the building contains six classrooms, an auditorium, and two small rooms that most likely served as an office and as a library. The two wings each contain three classrooms, and the central section that linked the two wings contained the auditorium, office, library and a passage leading from the auditorium to an original exterior door in the west wall. The central classroom of the west wing is separated from the auditorium by a folding wall and is up a flight of stairs from the auditorium. In addition to serving as a classroom, it also was used as the stage. A large opening between the central classroom of the east wing and the auditorium was closed with sheetrock during the late twentieth century.

The building exhibits historic integrity, retaining all but two windows (which have been converted to doors on the west elevation), the seating in the auditorium, the stage, all interior doors, all original narrow board wood flooring, and all of the manufactured beaded-board wainscoting and woodwork in the auditorium and three classrooms. Two of the three classrooms on the east end of the building have had the wainscoting removed, and have been sheetrocked. Bathrooms were added to the north end of the front classroom in the east wing with the insertion of a non-load bearing partition wall at the end of the twentieth century. Temporary partitions (which had originally served as partitions at the back of the classrooms for cloaks) were moved to the southern classroom on the west wing to create bathrooms in 1978.

Cafeteria and Classroom Building, 1952, Non-contributing building

A brick-sheathed 1952 cafeteria and classroom building is located to the west of the school, attached by an open breezeway. The building is concrete block with brick sheathing on the exterior. The L-shaped building contains a cafeteria with a food serving area, a passage, and four classrooms. All of the interior walls are unfinished concrete block with the exception of the food serving area that is sheathed with ceramic tiles to the base of the windows. A recessed entrance, with a four panel and three-light double door is located on the south elevation of the west section of the building. An identical set of doors is located on the east elevation of the east section of the building. The floors are poured concrete.

As in the schools proscribed by the Rosenwald Fund, the classrooms all featured multi-light sash. The two classrooms and cafeteria in the eastern section of the building have had the ceilings, roof, and windows removed as part of an asbestos abatement program ordered by the town of Princeton. The roof and windows are intact in the west section of the building. Due to the removal of exterior walls, windows, and roof of the eastern section of the building, the resource does not have sufficient integrity to be a contributing resource.
Cemetery, ca. 1934-1961 (possibly earlier), Contributing Site

South of the school buildings, in a wooded area, is a cemetery with less than twenty visible markers. The cemetery was established on the public school property. It is overgrown with small trees and vines, so more markers may be extant. The cemetery has two, approximately two-foot tall brick pillars marking the entrance to the site. In its current overgrown condition, the cemetery appears to measure approximately sixty-by-sixty feet.

Septic Tank, ca. 1950, Contributing Structure

A large, concrete filter tank, roughly measuring fifteen feet square, with cast iron pipes is located at the edge of the woods to the south of the school, separated from the cemetery by a drainage ditch. Approximately one-foot of the tank is above grade.
Summary

Princeton Graded School meets National Register of Historic Places Criterion A under two areas of significance—education and ethnic heritage/black—and Criterion C for architecture. Princeton Graded School stands in the small community of Princeton in Johnston County, North Carolina. Constructed in 1925-1926, the school was one of ten built in Johnston County with financial help from the Rosenwald Foundation, and only one of two extant. These ten schools were built between 1919 and 1929. A brick-faced concrete block building that served as the cafeteria and additional classroom space was built to the west of the older school in 1952. From 1925 through 1955, the Princeton Graded School served as an educational and social center for the African American community. Also, a local African American funeral home used a cemetery which was historically associated with the school property. Although the buildings continued to serve as a school within the past fifty years, this use does not meet Criterion Consideration G for exceptional significance.

Historical Narrative, Education and Ethnic Heritage/Black Context

At the opening of the twentieth century, the educational system for African Americans in North Carolina, and throughout the South, was rudimentary at best. The public school system had officially segregated the races in 1875, declaring that there should be separate but equal educational facilities for white and black children. Not until 1910, however, did public elementary schools for blacks begin receiving state funds. In 1913, further recognizing the need to improve schools for black students, North Carolina established the office of supervisor of rural elementary schools to promote the education of African American children. In 1921, a separate agency, the Division of Negro Education, was created to further advance public education for black students.1 A survey in the early 1930s conducted by the Division of Negro Education found that some black classrooms had sixty to one-hundred students, that only half of the schools stayed in session for the full school year, and that only seven percent of black students attended high school.2

Simultaneously, as North Carolina was working toward bettering education for its African American children, Julius Rosenwald, a Chicago philanthropist, started a fund for building new and modern school facilities for black students. Rosenwald (1862-1932), who made a fortune through his part ownership of Sears, Roebuck, and Company, became interested in aiding the African American community after reading two books, a biography of William H. Baldwin, a northern white man who devoted his life to promoting black education in the South, and Up From Slavery, the story of Booker T. Washington’s life. In early 1911 he met with Booker T.

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2 Crow, 135.
Washington in Chicago, and later that year, toured Washington’s Tuskegee Institute, which impressed him greatly. In 1912, he was made a trustee of Tuskegee.3

Rosenwald created his fund for southern education in 1917 with four funding priorities: the building of schoolhouses for rural African American children, the establishment of libraries, the education of teachers, and the development of centers for higher education for the black population.4 When Rosenwald established his fund, in the entire South there was not a single standard eight-grade rural black public school and no black public high school approved for even two-years of high school work. Where there were African American schools, they were open an average of four months a year, and the teacher usually had only attended school through eighth grade.5

In October 1919 the Johnston County “colored Supervisor,” Mrs. Laura J. A. King, reported that “several colored school districts were without any school buildings.”6 The County Superintendent was instructed to “investigate carefully the needs of the colored schools of the county, and as soon as the finances of the County would permit, plan to erect several colored school buildings.”7 That year, the Johnston County school district did build one African American school with funds from the Rosenwald Foundation, a one-teacher school in the Hodges Chapel district.8

For a community to qualify for support to build a school they needed to meet certain criteria. According to a publication printed by the Rosenwald Fund,

A school had to represent common effort by the state and county authorities and the local colored and white citizens. The state and county had to contribute to the building and agree to maintain it as a regular part of the public-school system. White citizens had to take an interest and contribute part of the money, since it was felt that white leadership was essential to the success of such a program in the South. . . . And the Negroes themselves had to show their desire for education by making gifts of money or labor, usually both.9

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4 Embree and Waxman, 37.
5 Embree and Waxman, 38.
6 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, October 6, 1919.
7 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, October 6, 1919.
9 Embree and Waxman, 39.
The buildings were to be constructed according to simple plans that were provided by the fund. The curriculum was to include formal and theoretical education and, as according to the principles of Booker T. Washington, students were also taught practical skills.\textsuperscript{10}

The plans provided by the fund featured the most up-to-date pedagogical thought regarding the best spaces to help children to learn. Since the majority of schools were in rural areas with no electricity, maximizing natural light was a major concern. For this reason, the Rosenwald plans all featured groupings of tall, double-hung sash, classroom windows along the east and west walls. A southern exposure would be too warm during the late spring, summer, or early fall months; and northern light in the winter would not provide enough light. The plans also specified that each window should have two tan shades, to better regulate the amount and intensity of light. Windows were always to the children’s left, so that a shadow would not be created as they wrote (except for left-handers). The interiors were to be painted either a cream ceiling with buff walls and walnut-stained wainscot, or ivory cream ceiling with light gray walls and a walnut-stained wainscot. Interior corridors were to be minimized so that usable space was maximized.\textsuperscript{11}

Each Rosenwald school also included an “industrial room,” smaller than the standard-size classroom, for girls to be taught home economics and boys farm work and how to use simple tools. In addition, the school was to be used as much as possible by the public, and to that end, an auditorium that could seat the entire community should be built as part of the school. If there were not sufficient funds for an auditorium, a moving partition should be erected between two classrooms to create enough space for a large public meeting.\textsuperscript{12}

Alabama was the first state to take advantage of the fund’s support, and Tennessee, North Carolina, and Georgia soon followed. When the Fund closed its building program in 1932, North Carolina had received the greatest support and had constructed 813 buildings for 114,210 students at a cost of $5,167,042.\textsuperscript{13} The Fund had decided to end its building program not because it felt that its work was finished but they “felt that this particular demonstration had served its purpose of stimulating interest and must be discontinued in order that the southern states should not rely too heavily on outside aid and thus be delayed in assuming full responsibility for the schools...as an integral part of public provisions for the education of all people.”\textsuperscript{14}

The Johnston County Board of Education used aid from the Rosenwald Fund to build three schools between 1920 and 1924, a nine-teacher school (high school in Smithfield) in 1921-1922,

\textsuperscript{10} Embree and Waxman, 40.
\textsuperscript{11} Thomas H. Hanchett, 401.
\textsuperscript{12} Hanchett, 401-405.
\textsuperscript{13} Embree and Waxman, 51. In addition to schools, these buildings included teacherages, training schools for teachers, and shops; Hanchett, 444.
\textsuperscript{14} Embree and Waxman, 57.
and two three-teacher schools in 1923-1924 (Kenly and Short Journey). In 1924, a number of white citizens complained that tax dollars paid by whites were being used to build schools for African Americans, so on July 30, 1924 the Board of Education adopted the following policy, “Now be it ordered that all of the special tax that is paid by the Negro race be kept separate and put into a fund to be known as “Building Fund for The Colored Race,” and that be used by this Board to aid in the construction of School houses for the Negro race in the County.”

A little over a year later, on September 7, 1925, a group of African American citizens approached the County Board of Commissioners (not the Board of Education) to petition for a new school building in Princeton, since “the present one-room building is inadequate . . . they are no longer able to rent buildings for school purposes.” The Board of Commissioners ordered the Board of Education to build a new school in Princeton. The Board of Education agreed to construct a building, a “Plan No. 6-A, Rosenwald School” with two stipulations, the first being that “the Negro citizens of said district contribute in cash one thousand dollars ($1000.00), and “that the Negro race would not ask for a longer term of school than six months for a period of ten years after the erection of said building.” These stipulations were never required for the construction of schools for white children in the county. They also decided that “it would be more economical to build said building of brick veneer instead of wood as the Rosenwald plans call for, and instructed the Superintendent to have the County architect prepare plans and specifications for the same at once.”

Three months later, the Board of Education decided to construct the exact same building (with the same stipulations) for the African American children in the town of Wilson Mills. They hired J.P. Rogers, a construction company from Smithfield, N.C., to build both schools at a fixed sum of $1,000. The millwork and lumber for the schools was to be supplied at a cost of $4,788 each by the firm of C.M. and W.G. Wilson, of Wilson Mills. The schools were completed for the opening of the 1926-1927 school year. The teachers at the two new schools earned an average of $77.50 per month, as opposed to white teachers in the county who on average made $91.26 per month.

In August 1929, the Johnston County school system had severe financial problems. To balance the budget, the school board had three solutions: reduce the number of teachers, “dispense with the services of Mrs. Laura J. A. King, colored supervisor,” and apply “for Rosenwald aid for the

15 Hanchett, 36.
16 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, July 30, 1924.
17 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, September 7, 1925. It is not known why the group approached the County Board of Commissioners, but it may be because they felt that the Board of Education would not be supportive of their petition. The appearance of the one-room building is also not known.
18 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, September 7, 1925.
19 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, September 7, 1925.
20 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, December 7, 1925.
21 Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, June 18, 1926.
purchase of six new trucks to be used in the Negro schools.\textsuperscript{22} The following year, the County Commissioners ordered the school board to further cut the number of teachers (to the bare minimum required by North Carolina regulations). They cut one teacher from the Princeton Graded School.\textsuperscript{23}

Twelve years after the Princeton Graded School was built, the children finally had a school year longer than six months (due to action by the state); the year ran from October 5, 1938 through May 26, 1939.\textsuperscript{24}

By 1952, the Princeton Graded School, which served grades one through seven, needed additional space. A cafeteria building with four classrooms was constructed to meet those needs.\textsuperscript{25} The school was closed by 1973, and that year, Dr. Eula P. Kyle purchased the property by auction. The property is presently owned by Dr. Kyle’s daughter.

Architecture Context

The Princeton Graded School is one of ten schools that were constructed in Johnston County with aid from the Rosenwald Fund; only two survive: Princeton Graded School and Short Journey Graded School, a brick five-teacher school built in 1923-1924. The Short Journey Graded School is also a brick building with similar half-timbering in the gable ends, and is in good condition. Wilson Mills Graded School, built the same year and with the same plan as the Princeton Graded School, has been demolished.

The plan of Princeton Graded School is similar to Floor Plan No. 6-A in the Rosenwald Fund’s 1924 publication, \textit{Community School Plans, Bulletin No. 3}, but it does not follow the plan exactly.\textsuperscript{26} In Princeton Graded School, the auditorium is larger, with greater prominence to the stage. The stage area is designed to be separated from the auditorium by a folding paneled door to make a sixth classroom; in the original plan, a solid wall separated the classroom from the stage. Also, the Princeton Graded School has a brick furnace room attached to the rear of the main building at the southeast corner and a brick boys and girls bathroom attached to the northwest rear corner. The Princeton Graded School has a brick veneer, not a weatherboarded exterior, as recommended by the Rosenwald Fund.

The Princeton Graded School retains excellent integrity; the survival of the auditorium seating is notable, as is the retention of wainscot and fixtures in most of the classrooms.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[22] Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, August 26, 1929.
\item[23] Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, August 26, 1930.
\item[24] Johnston County Board of Education Minutes, September 8, 1938.
\item[25] The Johnston County Board of Education minutes from 1938 through the early 1960s have not survived, so further information regarding the combined classroom and cafeteria building could not be found.
\end{footnotes}
Graded School is the only known Rosenwald School in North Carolina to have retained its metal and wood, attached auditorium seats. The Princeton Graded School is similar to Riley Hill School in Wake County and the Greene County Training School in Snow Hill, both brick six-teacher school built with aid from the Rosenwald Fund. A cafeteria and classroom building was constructed in 1952 at Riley Hill School. A brick classroom building was added to the Greene County Training School campus also in 1952. Both the Riley Hill School and the Greene County Training School had gymnasiums built on their campuses in the 1950s but a gymnasium was never constructed at the Princeton Graded School.
Bibliography


Mabson, Elaine, Correspondence with Nancy Van Dolsen, October 17, 2004; interview May 2005.

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary encompasses the school, the cafeteria/classroom building, the historic cemetery, and the associated 3.83-acre lot, and is identical to the present tax parcel, 264212-76-5875.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the school, the cafeteria/classroom building, the historic cemetery, and the educational institution’s historically associated property.
Six-Teacher Community School Plan, Rosenwald Fund
Plan followed for the Princeton Graded School, 1925-1926
Princeton, Johnston County, North Carolina
(from Julius Rosenwald Fund, Community School Plans, Bulletin No. 3,
Nashville, TN: 1924, 17)
1925/20 SCHOOL

OPEN BREEZEWAY

1952 CAFETERIA AND CLASSROOM

WOODS CEMETERY

BRICK PILARS

SEPTIC TANK

NORTH

WEST EDWARDS ST. (70A, SR 2532)

RR RAILROAD TRACKS

PRINCETON GRADED SCHOOL

PRINCETON

JOHNSON CO., N.C.

NOT TO SCALE