

VLR: 12-11-91  
NRHP: 8-24-92

\* SEE ALSO  
# 127-845

RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS MPC

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name NATHANIEL BACON SCHOOL

other names/site number DHR File No. 127-833

### 2. Location

street & number 815 North 35th Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Richmond

N/A vicinity

state Virginia

code

VA

county City of Richmond

code

760

zip code 23223

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

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

#### Category of Property

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

#### Number of Resources within Property

##### Contributing

##### Noncontributing

1

0

0

0

1

0 buildings

0 sites

0 structures

0 objects

0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Public Schools of Richmond, Virginia, 1869-1930

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Heath C. Miller  
Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Date

6 July 1992

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:  
Colonial Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1914-1930

Significant Dates

1914

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Robinson, Charles M.; Supervising Architect  
Carneal, William Leigh; Architect

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources  
221 Governor St., Richmond, VA 23219

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 3.1 acres

UTM References

A 18 287500 4156230  
Zone Easting Northing

B \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_

D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Paul L. Weaver, Senior Consultant  
organization Historic Property Associates date November 1, 1991  
street & number P. O. Box 1002 telephone 904-824-5178  
city or town St. Augustine state Florida zip code 32085

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**Continuation Sheet**

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Nathaniel Bacon School

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**SUMMARY**

The Nathaniel Bacon School is a two-and-one-half story brick educational facility with a raised basement. It is located at 1835 N. 35th Street in the potentially eligible Oakwood/Chimborazo Historic District. Constructed in 1914, it is vacant and in fair condition.

**PRESENT AND ORIGINAL PHYSICAL CONDITION**

The Nathaniel Bacon School dominates the northeastern sector of the Oakwood/Chimborazo Historic District. It has always been a focal point of the Chimborazo neighborhood and its Colonial Revival styling is consistent with the period and character of the architecture found there.

The Nathaniel Bacon School is located at the north end of a nearly square block. The site of the school is 3.1 acres in size. Besides the school, the site is covered by a lawn, scattered trees and shrubs, and playgrounds. The surrounding area is presently a residential neighborhood, composed primarily of detached, single-family homes. Most of the surrounding area developed between 1874-1926, when the school was built.

The school has a rectangular ground plan. It rests on a poured concrete slab foundation. Its structural system is load-bearing brick. It has a red brick exterior finish. The roof is a built-up type with parapet, with a gable roof above the former second floor auditorium. The fenestration is regular. It is composed primarily of double-hung sash windows with 9/9 or 6/6 light configurations. Transom lights above the sash windows are a common feature on the first and second stories. Windows are arranged in groups of four or six in the classroom areas. The main entrance fronts on 35th Street and contains much of the ornamentation of the building. Its elements are generally constructed of cast concrete. They include pedestals, pilasters with capitals, a frieze with the name Nathaniel Bacon School, and a cornice.

Decoration is a significant feature of the building and helps to define its eclectic styling. As is true of the entrance, cast concrete is the characteristic material used on decorative features. Decorative features include belt

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courses, lintels, cartouches, and diamond and arrow shaped elements in the parapet.

The Bacon School is a good example of the adaptation of standard school building design to the architectural trends of Richmond. The eclectic styling of the building, with elements of the Colonial and Beaux Arts revival styles, reads clearly as part of the period architecture of the Chimborazo area. However, the basic classroom size, expansive windows, high ceilings, and an open setting with adjacent playgrounds and athletic fields were shared by schools ranging from one-room rural types to large urban schools, such as those in the City of Richmond.

The principal alterations have been a one-story addition constructed in 1960 and the enclosure of the second floor auditorium. Otherwise the building is intact and retains its original features, including fine stairways.

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#### SUMMARY

The Bacon School appears eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C. It is eligible under Criterion A for its association with an important period of development in the history of the Richmond Public School system. It is further eligible under Criterion C for its association with a locally significant architect, its architectural style, and the type of property it embodies.

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Nathaniel Bacon School was named for Nathaniel Bacon, an early Virginia colonist who was the leader of Bacon's Rebellion. It opened in September 1915 and served pupils from kindergarten to grade 5. In 1958 it became a school for black students, receiving former pupils of Chimborazo and George Mason schools. It operated as the East End Junior High School Annex from 1971 until its closing several years ago.

The Bacon School is associated with an important period in the history of public education in Richmond. Between 1870, when the Board of Public Instruction launched its initial acquisition and development program, and 1909, capital outlay for school construction was modest. In 1909, Dr. J.A.C. Chandler was named Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools. Dr. Chandler soon initiated an ambitious construction program which was overseen by Public School Architect Charles M. Robinson. Over the next twenty years most of the extant historic school buildings in Richmond were constructed. The Bacon School is one of the best examples of the schools constructed during this period. The Depression of the 1930s and World War II effectively ended school construction in Richmond. Not until after the war were schools constructed on a scale comparable to the 1909-1929 period.

The Nathaniel Bacon School was designed by the firm of Carneal and Johnston, Architects and Engineers, of Richmond. William Leigh Carneal was a native of Richmond and designed numerous buildings in the city. In addition to the Bacon School, he designed the Springfield (Bowler) School and the Virginia State Library at Capitol Square. He

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was also associated with the design of several buildings at Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg.

Beyond its styling, the Bacon School shares certain traits common to hundred of others found throughout the country. While historic school buildings varied greatly in terms of their size, style, and materials, their designs did adhere to certain standards. The earliest published standards for school buildings date to 1832 when William A. Alcott prepared a brief treatise on school design. Alcott stressed that fresh air, space, and light were necessary in promoting a healthy learning environment. He suggested the liberal use of large windows, classrooms providing a separate desk for each pupil, and open surroundings for recreation. For more than a century afterwards, school architects followed similar standards. These schools featured a basic classroom size of about 25 by 35 feet, expansive windows, high ceilings, and an open setting usually with adjacent playgrounds and athletic fields. These characteristics were shared by schools ranging from one-room rural types to large urban schools. The Bacon School shares many of these traits and is a good example of the adaptation of the Colonial Revival style to traditional school design.

The Bacon School appears eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C. It is associated with a significant period of development and a locally prominent architectural firm. It embodies an important architectural style and building type.



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#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

##### Books and Manuscripts

- Deierhoi, William H. and Dr. Sam P. Sentelle. "Sketches of the Richmond Public Schools." Richmond, Virginia: n.p., 1973.
- Dulaney, Paul S. Dulaney. **The Architecture of Historic Richmond** Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1976.
- Historic Richmond Foundation. "Survey of Neighborhoods and Structures Church Hill Area." Richmond, Virginia: Historic Richmond Foundation, 1980.
- Loth, Calder, ed. **The Virginia Landmarks Register.** Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986.
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- Ward, Harry M. **Richmond, An Illustrated History** Northridge, California: Windsor Publications, Inc., 1985.

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Downtown Richmond.** Richmond: Junior Board, Historic  
Richmond Foundation, 1982.

#### Miscellaneous Sources

Commonwealth of Virginia. Department of Historic Resources.  
Richmond, Virginia. National Register Nomination File.

City of Richmond. Department of Community Development.  
Vertical Files.

City of Richmond. Board of Public Instruction, Real Estate  
Division. Original Plans of Richmond Schools.

Wells, John. Architectural Historian, Department of Historic  
Resources. Manuscripts and primary source material  
relating to Charles M. Robinson and William Leigh  
Carneal.

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#### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

BEGINNING at the point of intersection of the east right-of-way line of 35th Street and the south right-of-way line of "O" Street; thence in a southeasterly direction 264.00 feet, more or less, to the point of intersection of the west right-of-way line of 36th Street and the south right-of-way line of "O" Street; thence in a southwesterly direction along the west right-of-way line of 36th Street 90 feet, more or less, to a point in a property line; thence in a southeasterly direction along a property line 189.81 feet, more or less, to a point on the west right-of-way line of an alley 16 feet in width; thence in a southwesterly direction along said alley 176.13 feet, more or less, to a point; thence in a southeasterly direction along the south right-of-way line of said alley as it extends easterly 140.00 feet, more or less, to a point on the west right-of-way line of 37th Street; thence in a southwesterly direction along the west right-of-way line of 37th Street 51.05 feet, more or less, to a point; thence in a northwesterly direction 593.94 feet, more or less, to a point on the east right-of-way line of 35th Street, thence in a northeasterly direction along the east right-of-way line of 35th Street 316.12 feet, more or less, to the point of BEGINNING, and as shown shaded on Department of Public Works Drawing No. N-22079-A, dated May 29, 1990, on file in the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Public Works, of the City of Richmond and a copy of which is attached to Ordinance No. 90-176-181 on file in the Office of the City Clerk. Said property is more particularly described on that certain plat of survey by Fred A. Gibson & Associate dated October 29, 1990 reference to which plat is hereby made.

#### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary is justified under the National Register Criteria in that it contains all significant resources associated with the property.