

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY FORM  
BUREAU FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION Box 1026  
PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION Harrisburg, PA 17120

7. Local survey organization

Philadelphia Historical Commission

8. property owners name and address

School District of Philadelphia  
21st & Winter Streets  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

9. tax parcel number / other number

88629000

10. U.T.M. Zone

118 4942610  
Zone Easting

2.1 acres

4 4 2 9 3 0 1 0  
Northing

11. status (other surveys, lists etc.)

usgs sheet: Frankford

12. classification

site ( ) structure ( ) object ( )  
building ( ) Thematic  
in N.R. district yes ( ) no ( )

13. date(s) (how determined)

1929-1930

15. style, design or folk type

Art Deco

19. original use

School

14. period

1929-1930

20. present use

School

16. architect or engineer

Irwin T. Catharine

17. contractor or builder

Unknown

18. primary building mat./construction

Brick with terra  
cotta trim

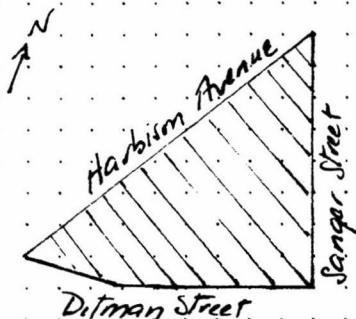
21. condition

Excellent

22. integrity

Excellent

23. site plan with north arrow



BLACK AND WHITE PRINT(S)  
3 1/2" x 5" enlargement or medium format contact  
note location of negative in block 24.

24. photo notation

25. file/location

26. brief description (note unusual features, integrity, environment, threats and associated buildings)

See reverse side

27. history, significance and/or background

See reverse side

28. sources of information

See reverse side

29. prepared by:

Jefferson M. Moak

30. date

5-31-87

revision(s)

(continue on back if necessary)

1. County  
Philadelphia  
5. present name  
James J. Sullivan School

2. municipality  
Philadelphia  
6. other name (historic name if any)  
N/A

3. street address or specific location  
5300 Ditman Street

4. survey code

(continue on back if necessary)

(continue on back if necessary)

3. ADDRESS: Ditman Street, 5300  
5. NAME: Sullivan, James J., School  
6. FORMER NAME:

13. DATES: 1929-1930

ADDITIONS:

DESCRIPTION: A 3-story, 8-register, yellow brick school set upon a raised basement. The outside registers have no openings. A diapered brick panel occupies the full height of this space. The second openings from the outside are the projecting stairtowers. A colorful arched entryway with terra cotta trim and clustered pilasters forms the focus of this register. Terra cotta panels form a rectangular surround to the entrance on the first floor. A band of three windows appear at the landing levels above the entrance. Tall, narrow single openings pierce the register at the floor level on either side of the central band. Another three windows appear above the third floor cornice. The central four registers each contain five windows in a 1-3-1 pattern. A brick dripcourse appears above the basement openings. A terracotta cornice is set above the third floor. The name of the school appears on a carved stone in the middle of brick parapet.

HISTORY/SIGN.: This is one of six schools designed by Catharine using School Board Type Number 144. The first, the Clara Barton School, was constructed in 1924-1925. The attractiveness of this school, and the new use of colored terra cotta tiles, apparently was received well and school design took a new direction from the Colonial Revival of Catharine's predecessors into the modern Art Deco. Soon Catharine was designing many schools in this style. However, he did something unusual for him: he returned to a particular design years after originally conceiving of it. Between 1926 and 1930, five additional school buildings were erected from Type Number 144: the Francis Hopkinson School (1926-1927), the Edwin Forrest School (1928-1929), and the Thomas K. Finletter, James J. Sullivan and Ethan Allen Schools (1929-1930). Catharine also executed a Gothic variant, which he employed for the Pennypacker, Creighton and Carnell Schools between 1929 and 1931.

One of a group of six constructed on the same model by Catharine between 1924 and 1930, the James J. Sullivan School possesses a very high degree of integrity. It is an excellent example of Catherine's 1920s and 1930s Art Deco designs.

28. SOURCES: Edmunds, Chronological List of Public Schools, 1818-1934  
School Board, "New School Buildings Under Contract"

EVALUATION: This building should be included on the National Register as part of the Philadelphia Public Schools Thematic District.

National Register Criteria: C, Architecture

Boundary Justification: The nominated property contains the contributing building and all the historically associated land.

There is one contributing building on the nominated property.

Verbal boundary: the nominated property is tax parcel #886290000.

EVALUATION

EVALUATOR(S)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Philadelphia Public Schools TR  
State Philadelphia County, PA

Nomination/Type of Review	Date/Signature
81. Shaw, Anna Howard, Junior High School <i>Substantive Review</i>	Keeper <u>Linda McClelland</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
82. Sheridan, Philip H., School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
83. Smedley, Franklin, School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
84. Stanton, Edwin M., School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest <u>✓</u>
85. Sullivan, James J., School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
86. Sulzberger, Mayer, Junior High School <i>Substantive Review</i>	Keeper <u>Linda McClelland</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
87. Taylor, Bayard, School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
88. Thomas, George C., Junior High School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
89. Vare, Edwin H., Junior High School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____
90. Vaux, Roberts, Junior High School <i>Entered in the National Register</i>	for Keeper <u>Delores Byers</u> 11/18/88 Attest _____

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Sullivan, James J., School

MULTIPLE NAME: Philadelphia Public Schools TR

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Philadelphia

DATE RECEIVED: 10/04/88      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/18/88  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/03/88      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 11/18/88  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 88002327

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    11/18/88 DATE    Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

CLASSIFICATION

\_\_\_ count      \_\_\_ resource type

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

FUNCTION

\_\_\_ historic      \_\_\_ current

DESCRIPTION

\_\_\_ architectural classification  
\_\_\_ materials  
\_\_\_ descriptive text

SIGNIFICANCE

Period              Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates                      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

\_\_\_ summary paragraph  
\_\_\_ completeness  
\_\_\_ clarity  
\_\_\_ applicable criteria  
\_\_\_ justification of areas checked  
\_\_\_ relating significance to the resource  
\_\_\_ context  
\_\_\_ relationship of integrity to significance  
\_\_\_ justification of exception  
\_\_\_ other

BIBLIOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

\_\_\_ acreage              \_\_\_ verbal boundary description  
\_\_\_ UTM's              \_\_\_ boundary justification

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

\_\_\_ sketch maps      \_\_\_ USGS maps      \_\_\_ photographs      \_\_\_ presentation

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



James J. Sullivan School  
Harbison Sanger & Ditman  
1987

Negatives at Philadelphia Historical  
Commission

Photographed by City of Philadelphia  
Front Facade

*Phila. Public Schools TR*  
*Phila. County*

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000730