

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 (former) Reidsville High School

other names/site number Reidsville Junior High School, Reidsville Middle School

## 2. Location

street & number 116 N. Franklin Street N/A not for publication

city or town Reidsville N/A vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Rockingham code 157 zip code 27320

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

William S. King, Jr. SHPO 12-7-93  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 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
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain) _____	_____	_____

(former)  
Reidsville High School  
Name of Property

Rockingham Co., NC  
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(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**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)

Classical Revival

Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Terra Cotta

Concrete

**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.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1923-1943

**Significant Dates**

1923

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Northup, Willard C. - Architect

Flora, L. B. - Contractor

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

(former)  
Reidsville High School  
Name of Property

Rockingham Co., NC  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approx. 1.6 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	7
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6	1	9	2	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	0	2	4	8	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone

Easting

Northing

2

3

Zone

Easting

Northing

4

Zone

Easting

Northing

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 Laura A. W. Phillips, Architectural Historian/Consultant

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date July 9, 1993

street & number 637 N. Spring Street telephone 919/727-1968

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

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 RHS Limited Partnership

street & number 842 W. Fourth Street telephone 919/722-9871

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

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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(former) Reidsville High School  
Rockingham County, N. C.

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### DESCRIPTION -

The former Reidsville High School is located in a predominantly residential neighborhood northwest of Reidsville's central business district and occupies the northern third of the block bounded by W. Morehead, N. Franklin, Pine, and N. Washington streets. Reidsville High School stands on a rise above N. Franklin Street, its front (east) lawn separated from the sidewalk by a brick retaining wall. The lawn continues along the south side of the auditorium. One expansive shade tree marks the southeast corner of the building, and a variety of smaller trees and shrubs have grown up untended along the east facade. An open field extends southwest of the school, and the north elevation nearly abuts the sidewalk along Pine Street. To the south and west of the school property there is middle-class housing dating largely from the 1910s-1930s. Across Pine Street north of the school is the present Reidsville Parks and Recreation Center, formerly the 1953 school gym and cafeteria. Beyond and downhill from N. Franklin Street to the east of the school is a post-1980 residential development where the stadium once stood.

The nominated school is a large, L-shaped, three-story brick building with terra cotta trim erected in 1923. A matching one-bay addition to the west end of the classroom wing was built in 1941. Designed by architect Willard C. Northup with a combination of Colonial and Classical Revival stylistic features, the school asserts its monumental character by the use of projecting entrance and stage bays, a tetrastyle portico reached by a long flight of steps, a heavy cornice, and a collection of large-scale round-arched windows. The classroom wing, which extends westward behind the front of the school, is of straightforward, utilitarian design that is distinguished by banks of double-hung sash on the north and south elevations. The building is currently in fair-to-good condition, having stood vacant for more than ten years. Except for the 1941 west end bay of the classroom wing--which continues the appearance of the rest of the wing--the exterior of the school is virtually unaltered from when it was constructed in 1923. The interior also remains largely intact, with alterations related to the changing school use of some of the spaces. All in all, the school retains its historic integrity in terms of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The exterior design of Reidsville High School is a wonderful combination of show and utility. The design of the main (east) facade and the south end--the areas encompassing the main entrance,

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auditorium, and stage--create a powerful public presence for the school. Here the ground floor is portrayed as a raised basement, and a heavy brick and terra cotta parapeted cornice forms a continuous boundary at the top edge of the building. A long, double flight of concrete steps leads from the sidewalk at the northeast corner of the building to the main entrance at the second of the three floor levels. The entrance area projects from the rest of the facade and is dramatized by the use of a two-story tetrastyle portico of Tuscan columns. Behind the columns are three double-leaf entrances, each surmounted by a herringbone-brick panel and terra cotta medallion. The whole is enframed by a brick round arch with a terra cotta keystone. Above each of the entrances is an eight-over-eight sash window at third-floor height. The projecting entrance is echoed in a simpler way by the projecting bays of the east end of the stage area at the southeast corner of the main facade. Here there are four brick pilasters above the raised basement with its eight-over-eight sash windows. The pilasters enframe three round-arched blind windows of patterned brickwork with surmounting eight-over-eight sash windows. Between the projecting end sections of the facade and along the south end of the building, the elevations are treated with a series of large, round-arched, complex windows with terra cotta keystones above and terra cotta panels below. Beneath each window at ground floor level is a rectangular three-part window. These windows define the auditorium and stage areas of the interior. At the rear of the building, four more arched windows continue to define the auditorium space. Otherwise, the rear of this part of the building is plain. Enclosed spiral stairs project from the west end of the stage area, a smoke stack with a decorative cap rises between two of the arched windows, and an air intake vent projects from the northwest corner of the rear.

In contrast to the facade of the building, the rear classroom wing is strictly utilitarian in appearance. On the south side of the wing, the six bays encompass bands of five twelve-over-twelve sash windows at each of the three levels. The north side of the wing is somewhat less uniform in design while retaining the expression of utility. On this side there are three secondary entrances with shed-roofed hoods and an array of both individual and banded windows ranging from four-over-four sash to twelve-over-twelve sash. While there is more variety in the fenestration on this side of the building, it is still orderly and conforms to the needs of the interior. The rear of the classroom wing has a double-leaf entrance with a shed-roofed hood at ground floor level and a total of four windows above. A fire escape

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projects from the rear.

The interior of Reidsville High School is simply but well-designed. The main interior feature of the school is the auditorium, which consumes the upper two levels of the front wing of the building. Here the full benefit of the round-arched windows can be experienced. The auditorium has a sloped floor, a balcony across the rear third, a simple wood and plaster paneled wainscot, and a coved cornice. Three sets of double-leaf doors enter the auditorium at its north end, above which are three doors providing access to the balcony. At the south end of the auditorium is the raised stage and shallow proscenium arch. Three sets of steps lead from the auditorium to the stage. At the rear of the stage are four of the large round-arched windows, while three eight-over-eight sash windows along the top of the east wall provide additional light. Beneath the stage, the ground-floor level contains the band room, and beneath the auditorium are the boiler room, the coal bin, the book storage room, and other storage rooms.

The long east-to-west wing at the north end of the main block houses classrooms and other support facilities. The wing has a central corridor at each level with classrooms along the south side. On the north side of the corridor, enclosed concrete stairs are found near each end of the wing. Rest rooms are located on each floor adjacent to the west stair and near the east stair. The rest of the space on the ground floor is utilized as a variety of classrooms. On the second floor of the wing, the north side is composed of the principal's offices and conference room, a teacher's lounge, a long library, and a classroom. On the third floor, a variety of classrooms makes up the remainder of the floor plan. On all three floors, the classrooms are characterized by Craftsman-style glass and wood-paneled doors, banked windows, chair rails, blackboards, built-in bookcases, hardwood floors, and plastered walls and ceilings. Some rooms have transom windows along the corridor wall. The corridors themselves feature hardwood floors, plastered walls and ceilings, chair rails, and projecting structural members which, on the ceiling, form shallow-arched spans. The north side of the corridor at each level reflects more alterations than do the rooms on the south side, because more of the north-side rooms were specialized in use and changed over time. The changes in this area consist primarily of the addition of several modern partitions and the deletion of others.

Several changes have taken place in the physical plant of the school since it was first constructed, but none of the changes disrupt the overall architectural character of the building. Originally, the stage doubled as the school gym. Beneath the stage were the locker

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rooms, now converted to the band room. The janitor's room was one of those beneath the north end of the auditorium. Across the hall from the ground floor service area were the offices of the school nurse and physical director. On the second (main) floor level of the east-to-west wing the superintendent's office was next to that of the principal. On all three floors, five classrooms lined the south side of the corridor. On the right side of the corridor at ground floor level were the cafeteria, kitchen, pantry, and domestic science room. On the main floor, a large study hall was located in the space that later became the library. The third floor north of the corridor originally housed the library above the main floor offices as well as the science lecture room flanked by science laboratories. The end result of the original plan was that the general classrooms were on the south side of the corridor at each level, while various support features were found on the north side. The use of some of the rooms changed over time as the high school became a junior high school in 1961 and a middle school in 1969.

New construction altered the overall physical plant of the school on several occasions subsequent to its 1923 construction. In the 1930s an agricultural shop was added, but it no longer exists. In 1941 another bay of classrooms was added to the west end of the classroom wing. This addition matched the original appearance of the building. The top floor of this addition housed the home economics department and was set up as a laboratory home with living room, dining, kitchen, and bedroom. In 1944 a stadium was built across Franklin Street. It has since been demolished and that land is not included in the nomination. In 1953, a building housing a new gym and cafeteria was completed across Pine Street from the school, and thus those features were removed from the main building. The 1953 building is not included in the nomination because it does not date from within the period of significance of the school, and it is no longer under the same ownership as the main school building. (The discussion of the physical character of the building and changes to it over time was facilitated by a set of the original architect's plans and by a school system evaluation of the school in the 1960s.)

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Rockingham County, N. C.

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE -

#### Summary:

The former Reidsville High School embodies local historic significance in the areas of education and architecture. Built in 1923, the school meets National Register Criterion A because it reflects the increased concern for public education in Reidsville after World War I and epitomizes the 1920s-period during which schools in North Carolina underwent significant change in the process of acquiring their modern characteristics. Willard C. Northup, a prominent Winston-Salem architect, designed Reidsville High School as a monumental 1920s-era expression of Colonial Revival classicism. Northup, individually and with his firm, Northup and O'Brien, carried on a prolific practice which included a wide range of building types, although they specialized in schools and public buildings. Between 1915 and 1940 the firm designed over one hundred schools in North Carolina. Reidsville High School is an outstanding example of both the quality of Northup's work and of the new look of North Carolina's schools that evolved in the 1920s, and thus meets Criterion C for listing in the National Register.

The period of significance for Reidsville High School extends from 1923, when the school was built and first used, to 1943--the last year in which it meets the fifty-year criterion for listing in the National Register. The building served as Reidsville High School for nearly forty years until 1961, when a new high school was built and this building became Reidsville Junior High School. The building became Reidsville Middle School in 1969 with the implementation of racial integration in the Reidsville schools, and it remained in service as such until 1980. At that time the school closed permanently after more than a half century of use. Vacant since 1980, the building will soon acquire a new role in the community. Plans call for its redevelopment by present owner, RHS Limited Partnership, into housing for the elderly.

#### Historical Background:

At the end of World War I, when energies could once again be focused on the local arena, the citizens of Reidsville examined their public school system and found it to be in need of a renovated and rebuilt physical plant. Accordingly, in 1919 and 1921, bond issues

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were approved which provided a total of \$375,000 for school-related construction. Much of this went toward the construction of a new high school for white students (Reidsville Review, October 17, 1924, 1).

On January 13, 1922, the school board voted to employ Winston-Salem architect Willard C. Northup to plan the new high school building (Minute Book, January 13, 1922, 25). In April, Northup's plans were accepted by the board, and the following month the contract for erecting the school according to these plans was awarded to Danville contractor L. B. Flora & Son (Minute Book, May 13, 1922, 35; May 31, 1922, 36). School board minutes reveal that both Northup and Flora had other contracts with the board for improvements to various other schools in Reidsville, such as Lawsonville Avenue School, Franklin Street School, and the "Negro School Building" (Minute Book, September 28, 1922, 39; February 15, 1923, 46).

By the spring of 1923, construction of the high school was well under way. Arrangements were being made for the painting of the school's interior, and a photograph of the rear of the building under construction was included in the 1923 yearbook (Minute Book, April 11, 1923, 49; The Souvenir). By June, additional money was needed, and in September the school board reported that \$40,000 had been borrowed to finance the completion of the new high school (Minute Book, June 20, 1923, 53; September 13, 1923, 55).

Reidsville High School opened on September 10, 1923, when the 1923-1924 school session began (Reidsville Review, September 10, 1923, 1). During the following year, finishing touches were accomplished, the site was landscaped, and an athletic field was created (Minute Book, September 25, 1924, 79; October 24, 1925, 92).

The new high school was the pride of the Reidsville school system, and architect Willard Northup's design clearly expressed this attitude. The prominence of the school in the community was self-evident in the large, three-story, brick structure of monumental Colonial Revival design with classical influences displayed in its two-story columned entrance and impressive, round-arched auditorium windows. The school boasted fifteen classrooms, a library, various laboratories and other support areas, a large auditorium, and a gymnasium which doubled as the stage (Northup, Original Plans).

Local pride, however, rested not only in the building itself, but also in what the school was able to offer students by way of an educational program. Reidsville High School was fully accredited by the state Department of Education and by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges. Initially it held grades eight through eleven, but by 1936, the twelfth grade had been added. In addition to the

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classical course of study which prepared students for entrance to college, commercial courses, home economics, and Bible study were offered. At the same time, every student was required to take some form of physical exercise (Reidsville Review, October 17, 1924; April 21, 1988, G1).

Through the years several changes were made to the school which affected its use. In the 1930s an agriculture shop was added ("The Last Assembly"). In 1941 four classrooms and a home economics department were added to the west end of the classroom ell. Located on the third floor, the home economics department was set up like a home for teaching and included a living room, dining room, bedroom, and kitchen (Minute Book, loose notes in Book 2). In 1943 land across Franklin Street in front of the school was purchased, and the following year a stadium was built. In 1947 land across Pine Street north of the school was acquired, and within the next several years plans were drawn up for a new gymnasium/cafeteria building. It was first used in 1953 (Minute Book, loose notes in Book 2; November 22, 1943; January 6, 1947; "The Last Assembly").

In 1959 the school board began to discuss the need for a new high school. On May 26, 1960, the ground-breaking was held, and in the fall of 1961 the new school opened (Minute Book, January 5, 1959; May 26, 1960; October 9, 1961). Thus, after thirty-eight years, the school at 116 N. Franklin Street ceased to be used as a high school. Nevertheless, its contributions to the Reidsville school system continued for nearly twenty more years. From 1961 to 1969 it served as Reidsville Junior High School. In 1969, when Reidsville's schools were racially integrated and reorganized, the old high school became the Reidsville Middle School. Finally, in the spring of 1980, after more than half a century of use, the building closed permanently as a school ("The Last Assembly;" Minute Book, loose notes in Book 2). The stadium was subsequently demolished for a housing development, and the 1953 gymnasium/cafeteria was converted to the Reidsville Parks and Recreation Center. The main building has remained vacant since 1980, but current plans call its conversion by present owner, RHS Limited Partnership, into apartments for the elderly.

### Education Context:

Reidsville High School epitomizes the 1920s-period during which North Carolina's public school system began to take on its modern characteristics. In order to appreciate this pivotal decade and

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Reidsville High School's reflection of it, the status of education in earlier decades--both statewide and in Reidsville--must be understood.

During the nineteenth century, North Carolina's school system was one of the nation's worst. (The following discussion of North Carolina's early twentieth-century schools is taken from Jim Sumner's "A Brief History of North Carolina's Early Twentieth Century Public School System" in NCHPO Newsletter, Spring 1990, 1-5.) Although various attempts, dating from the 1820s, had been made to establish an effective system of public schools, all succumbed to public apathy, legislative indifference or hostility, and a constant lack of funding. By the end of the nineteenth century, agitation was increasing to alter the decades of neglect. Several factors contributed to this. Critics could point to the poor quality of rural life, the state's backward state of agriculture, and/or to the chronic illiteracy of the state's work force which hindered efforts to modernize industry. Further impetus for improved schools came with the 1900 North Carolina constitutional amendment which required literacy for voters.

Education, in fact, became an important campaign issue in the 1900 gubernatorial election. In particular, Democratic candidate Charles B. Aycock, who had previously been a school teacher, conducted a strong campaign on behalf of improved schools. Aycock won the election and immediately began to make good on his promises. Aycock and his supporters were able gradually to increase funding for public schools, lengthen the school year, and strengthen compulsory school laws. Aycock's successors worked to continue his efforts regarding education.

The increased interest in public education after 1900 brought a surge in school construction. Between 1900 and 1915, approximately 3,400 public schools were built in North Carolina. Most were traditional one- or two-room buildings. By 1920, the state had 7,467 schoolhouses, of which 3,698 were one-room structures and 2,460 were two-room structures. Less than four percent had more than three rooms. Many of North Carolina's early twentieth-century schools were built with a lack of quality or a sense of permanence and thus deteriorated quickly. In the late 1920s John Blair, director of schoolhouse planning for the state, claimed that between 1900 and 1920, the entire system was practically rebuilt, but that by the end of that period three-fourths of the schools needed to be rebuilt again because of dilapidation and decay.

By 1920 larger, consolidated schools were being promoted by professional educators as preferable to the ubiquitous one-room schoolhouses. A measure of the change which took place in the 1920s

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can be seen in statistics of the period. One-room schoolhouses decreased from 3,698 in 1920-1921 to 1,887 in 1928-1929, while schools with eight or more teachers increased from 364 in 1924-1925 to 567 in 1929-1930. During the decade of the 1920s, the number of students increased from an average daily attendance of 473,553 in 1919-1920 to 872,895 in 1929-1930. Thus, more students were attending fewer and larger schools.

The types of construction utilized for school buildings also changed during the 1920s. By the end of the decade only twenty-two log school buildings were still in use in North Carolina. (All were schools for black students.) Frame schools declined by nearly fifty percent, while the number of brick buildings increased from 248 to almost 1,000 during the 1920s.

A comparison of property values is also indicative of the changes which took place in the 1920s in North Carolina's schools. In 1918 the average value of a school in the state was just under \$2,000. By the end of the 1920s the average value had climbed to almost \$18,000. By this measure, the Reidsville High School, which cost well over \$150,000 to build, was representative of the top-of-the-line schools built during the decade.

The larger schools built during the 1920s--often with as many as eight to sixteen rooms and an auditorium in a brick building--benefited not only the students but also the community. The larger school was not just a bigger version of the one-room school. It was often a consolidated school and was intended to be the agent of social, intellectual, and moral uplift for both the student body and the community. Facilities such as libraries, athletic fields, and, in particular, auditoriums--where a variety of programs could be accommodated--benefited all. As a result, the larger facility typically took on the dual role of school and community center.

In 1930 the state superintendent of public instruction wrote that the preceding decade "marks an important epoch in our State's history. It will stand and be known as a school-building period in which intelligent men and women have realized as never before the importance and necessity for well-planned, well-built houses, of pleasing design and placed so as to conveniently serve the community at large." Reidsville High School is an important reflection of that period in the history of education in North Carolina.

The particular situation in Reidsville fell in line with that in the state as a whole. In 1901 Charles B. Aycock came to town to address the need for better education. He inspired a stronger interest in education among the citizens of Reidsville, and they soon

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thereafter passed a bond issue for the construction of new schools. The old Franklin Street School for whites (south of the future site of the high school) was built in 1902. Although it initially had more classrooms than were needed at the time, by the mid 1910s it was inadequate to handle the school-age population, the result of which was the construction of the Lawsonville School in 1916 (Reidsville Review, April 21, 1988, G1). By the end of the 1910s the schools of Reidsville were again miserably crowded. The two schools for white children had a total of eighteen classrooms, and the old frame school which had served the black children since the late nineteenth century had only ten rooms. These were not enough to adequately accommodate the 1,166 pupils and twenty-eight teachers. In addition, none of the schools contained any provision for special studies such as home economics, industrial work, commercial courses, or science laboratories, and athletic equipment was non-existent (Reidsville Review, October 17, 1924, 1).

The First World War delayed building programs everywhere so that public efforts could be concentrated on the war effort. After the war, however, the citizens of Reidsville were once again able to look homeward to their own particular community needs. The status of the school system became a matter of concern, and bond issues were approved in the few years following the war for renovation and new construction. The focal point of this new work was the construction of the Reidsville High School for white children. In addition, the two other schools for whites were enlarged and improved, and two brick structures were built for the use of the black children. At the same time, the number of teachers was doubled to handle the increased enrollment of approximately 2,000, and provision was made in both the white and black schools for the teaching of special courses and physical education. The new high school--with its large physical plant, special courses, laboratories, gymnasium, and auditorium--represented the high point of this effort to improve Reidsville's school system in the 1920s (Reidsville Review, October 17, 1924, 1, 5).

### Architecture Context:

The former Reidsville High School is an excellent example of both the new type of schools built in North Carolina in the 1920s and of the design work of prominent Winston-Salem architect Willard C. Northup.

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When larger urban and consolidated schools became prevalent in North Carolina during the 1920s--all but replacing the earlier one-and two-room schools--they shared certain characteristics which made them more appropriate to the larger number of students attending school, to the broader range of courses offered, and to the intention of permanency. These larger schools were usually of masonry construction, of one, two, and three stories, had banked windows, and generally utilized a corridor plan. The most elaborate of these schools--usually in urban areas--often exhibited the influences of various period styles, especially the Colonial Revival, the Tudor Revival, and the Art Deco (SHPO, Typescript on Property Types: The Twentieth Century Consolidated and Urban School). Reidsville High School represents the type well. The three-story brick structure with terra cotta trim is a large L-shaped building with banked windows along the classroom wing, a corridor plan, a large auditorium and gymnasium, and specialized areas such as a library, science laboratories, a cafeteria, and home-like rooms for home economics. Its exterior reflects both classical and Colonial Revival stylistic elements which render the building monumental and thus more appropriate for the town's center of learning and community activities.

Prominent Winston-Salem architect Willard C. Northup (1882-1942) was chosen to design the Reidsville High School. Born in Hancock, Michigan, Northup was reared in Asheville, where he graduated from high school. After attending Drexel Institute in Philadelphia for two years, he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in architecture in 1906, and soon thereafter established an office in Winston-Salem. Northup was a charter member of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and at various times served as Secretary-Treasurer, Vice President, and President. He worked to establish architectural licensing in North Carolina, and when a licensing act was passed in 1915, he was among the first in the state to be formally licensed. Around 1920 Northup formed a joint practice with Leet O'Brien, and either alone or with O'Brien designed many of the prominent buildings of the period in Winston-Salem and elsewhere in North Carolina. Along with over one hundred schools in the state, Northup and his firm designed such buildings as the Winston-Salem City Hall, the Forsyth County Courthouse, the City Market, the Twin City Sentinel Building, and the O'Hanlon Building in Winston-Salem as well as the Department of Justice Building and the State Office Building in Raleigh (Phillips, Salem Town Hall NR nomination).

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Northup was particularly adept in the use of Colonial Revival stylistic elements and was able to combine them with other classical forms to create powerful public and institutional buildings. Reidsville High School--with its asymmetrical yet balanced design, raised basement, long flight of steps leading to the columned entrance, rows of large round-arched windows, pilasters, and classical cornice--serves as a little-altered example of the quality of Northup's work for which he was known.

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### GEOGRAPHICAL DATA-

#### Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property consists of that portion (approximately 1.6 acres) of Tract # 8905 (17) 21-4386 of the Property Maps of Rockingham County, North Carolina, which is delineated by the heavy black line on the accompanying tax map.

#### Boundary Justification:

The nominated property includes the main building of the former Reidsville High School and its immediate setting--both of which retain their historic integrity. The remaining open field portion of Tract # 8905 (17) 21-4386 south of the school is not included in the nomination because it is to be developed as Habitat for Humanity housing and thus will no longer retain the integrity of its association with the school. The former school property to the east across N. Franklin Street which once was the site of the school stadium is not included, because it is now the site of 1980s housing. The 1953 school gym and cafeteria located to the north across Pine Street is not included because it does not fit within the period of significance of Reidsville High School and it is not under the same ownership with the main school building.

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### PHOTOGRAPHIC IDENTIFICATION -

The following information for #1-5 applies to all nomination photographs:

- 1) Reidsville High School (former)
- 2) Reidsville, Rockingham County, North Carolina
- 3) Laura A. W. Phillips
- 4) April 23, 1993
- 5) State Historic Preservation Office, Raleigh, North Carolina
- 6-7) A: overall view, to southwest  
B: main entrance, view to west  
C: main facade, view to northwest  
D: south elevation, view to north  
E: rear elevation, view to northeast  
F: overall rear view, to northeast  
G: north elevation, classroom wing, view to southeast  
H: auditorium, view to south  
I: corridor, view to west  
J: classroom, view to east



