

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

416

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

MAR 23 2001

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

historic name St. Matthews School

other names/site number St. Matthew School

2. Location

street & number SE side US401, 0.5 mi NE of SR2213 not for publication N/A
city or town Raleigh vicinity X
state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27604

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jeffrey Crow SHPD

3/6/01

Signature of certifying official

Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: School

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: RELIGION Sub: Meeting Hall

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE BLOCK
roof ASPHALT
walls WOOD: Weatherboard
other _____

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

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

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

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION
ETHNIC HERITAGE: Black
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance 1922-1949

Significant Dates 1922

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

Name of repository: _____

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property 2.0 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>17</u>	<u>720200</u>	<u>3970990</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	<u>See continuation sheet.</u>					

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

organization _____ date 30 September 2000

street & number 1601 Highland Drive telephone 252.243.7861

city or town Wilson state NC zip code 27893

=====
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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name St. Matthew Baptist Church c/o Mr. Pryce Baldwin

street & number 3218 Crandon Lane telephone _____

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27604
=====

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

St. Matthews School
Wake County, North Carolina

Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION

St. Matthews School sits on the crest of a hill, facing northwest. A grove of trees stands to the south and north of the building. St. Matthews Baptist Church, which now owns the school, stands on an adjacent parcel to the northeast, on the other side of the grove of trees, and a cemetery is located behind the church. A large lawn, formerly used by the school children as a playground and ball field, separates the cemetery from the school.

St. Matthews School is a one-story, frame building standing on a continuous concrete block foundation. The hip roof has exposed rafter ends and is pierced by a short central brick flue. The building features a central front-gable ell, flanked by shallower shed pavilions, each containing a double door entry. The shed roofs of the pavilions are engaged with the front flank of the main roof.. The southwest pavilion is intact, and retains its recessed entrance and narrow four-over-four windows. The northwest pavilion has been remodeled: the window has been removed and the recessed entrance vestibule enclosed. The building retains its weatherboarding and large, nine-over-nine sash windows arranged in a group of four on the front gable ell and in two groups of five on the rear elevation. Two doors topped by a nine-light transom, each leading into a classroom, are located at the northeast and southeast ends of the rear elevation. The two end elevations feature two eight-light windows approximately one foot below the exposed rafter ends.

In 1995, new steps were built for the southwest entry. A long ramp for handicap accessibility was added across the northwest elevation. Two decks were built onto the rear elevation in the late 1990s and the rear exterior doors were also replaced at that time.

Within, the building retains its original floor plan: two separate entries that lead to the two classrooms. From each vestibule, a door leads to a room that was used as the "industrial" classroom that now is used as a kitchen. The two cloakrooms have been converted to rest rooms. One central chimney served stoves used to heat the three rooms. The original floors remain but have been covered with vinyl flooring. The tongue-and-groove walls and board ceilings are intact under modern sheetrock which was added in 2000.

A series of folding, paneled doors originally provided access between the two classrooms. During the 1995 renovation work, the opening was altered by the insertion of a low (approximately two-and-a-half feet high) wall. A wood partition that folds horizontally was inserted above the low wall to allow the two rooms to be open to each other. A single door was cut into the east end of the central wall to provide pedestrian access.

Although the school has experienced some renovation, the building retains its original plan, form, siding, and windows and is clearly recognizable as a Rosenwald School.

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St. Matthews School
Wake County, North Carolina

Section 8 Page 2

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

St. Matthews School is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in three areas of significance: education, social history, and ethnic heritage. Built in 1922 with funds from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation, contributions from the local African American community, and support from the Wake County School Board, St. Matthews School is one of only five remaining Rosenwald Schools in Wake County; twenty-one were constructed between 1919 and 1928. During the late 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, the school served as an educational and social center for the African American community, hosting plays, glee club performances, adult education classes, vaccination clinics, home demonstrations, and meetings between the county extension agent and farmers. The school closed its doors in 1949, but is presently used as a meeting hall by the St. Matthews Baptist Church and the surrounding community. St. Matthews School stands as a physical reminder of the strong, vital, historic African American community founded around the St. Matthews Baptist Church shortly after the Civil War. The community remains active and vital today. St. Matthews School is discussed in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, North Carolina (ca. 1770-1941)," under Property Type 4: Institutional Buildings, Post World War I Consolidated Schools and in Context 4: Boom, Bust and Recovery Between World Wars (1919-1941), Rural School Consolidation and High Schools Offer Greater Advantage. An addendum to the Wake County Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Wake County's Rosenwald Schools," discusses in-depth the social history, education, and ethnic heritage context for St. Matthews School and the county's other Rosenwald-funded schools. The School also meets Criterion Consideration A for religious properties because during its period of significance it was not owned by a religious institution, and it derives its primary significance from its historical associations and distinctive architecture.

Historical Background

The community surrounding St. Matthews Baptist Church and St. Matthews School was founded during the late 1860s or early 1870s. A group of African American families broke away from the New Hope Baptist Church to establish their own congregation, which they named St. Matthews.¹

St. Matthews School was built in 1922 with funds from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation, donations from the local community, and support from the Wake County Board of Education. In Wake County, the Rosenwald Fund helped to build twenty-one schools with eighty-one classrooms; the fund contributed \$23,000, while the school board gave \$143,805 (the second highest in the state), the white community donated \$605, and the African American community raised \$35,756 (the largest in the state).²

The school that the Wake County Board of Education chose to construct was a two-teacher building based on plans provided by the Rosenwald Foundation. The building has all the characteristics of a Rosenwald School: large

¹ Elizabeth Reid Murray, Memo to Kelly Lally, September 10, 12, 1990. St. Matthews School, Survey File, Wake County, NC. North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina. Currently the church and school are also known as St. Matthew Baptist Church and St. Matthew School, however, the township name is St. Matthews.

² Jerry L. Cross, "Julius Rosenwald: His Fund and His Schools, A Brief Historical Sketch of the Rosenwald Fund and Black Education in the South 1917-1948," March 19, 1980; unpub. typescript in the "Rosenwald Schools" file, Eastern Office, Division of Archives and History, Greenville, NC; 7. The Johnston County school district contributed \$156,500 toward the cost of constructing African-American rural schools. The greatest number of school buildings was constructed in Mecklenburg County, a total of 26.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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St. Matthews School
Wake County, North Carolina

Section 8 Page 3

windows with multi-light sash arranged in groupings; two large classrooms at the rear separated by a wall which opened to create a one large space; and a third room that was used as the "industrial" room.

During the 1920s and 1930s, the school year consisted of a six-month term, and the term for the African American schools would begin later than in the white schools. In 1932, the school year began on September 5 for white children and on September 19 for black students.³ Although the school consisted of only two formal classrooms, in 1933 three teachers were hired for St. Matthews School. Most likely, the "industrial" room had been pressed into service as a third classroom.⁴

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, grades one through seven were taught at the school. Grades one through four were taught in the southwest classroom, and grades five through seven occupied the northeast room. The "industrial" room was used as a kitchen where lunch was prepared and served and the girls learned home economics.⁵

From 1922 when it opened until 1949 when it closed, the school was actively used. At the school building, adult education was offered during the evenings; the county agricultural cooperative extension held home demonstration programs; the county agents met with local farmers; and almost everyone attended the plays put on by the students.⁶

In 1949 the Wake County Board of Education sold the school to the trustees of St. Matthews Church. The building was then renovated to house three apartments. During the late 1980s the school was vacant and began to deteriorate. In 1990 the congregation of St. Matthews Baptist Church decided to repair and rehabilitate the building and in 1995 began a full restoration. St. Matthews School remains a source of pride for the African American community of the area. The building is presently used as a social hall and for community meetings.⁷

³ Wake County Board of Education, Minutes, 2 May 1932. North Carolina State Archives. Raleigh, North Carolina. Microfilm.

⁴ Wake County Board of Education, Minutes, 3 June 1932.

⁵ Almarie Caudle, Interview with Nancy Van Dolsen, September 2000. Ms. Caudle attended St. Matthews School.

⁶ Almarie Caudle, Interview with Nancy Van Dolsen, September 2000.

⁷ Almarie Caudle, Interview with Nancy Van Dolsen, September 2000.

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St. Matthews School
Wake County, North Carolina

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Bibliography

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CONTINUATION SHEET

St. Matthews School
Wake County, North Carolina

Section 10 Page 5

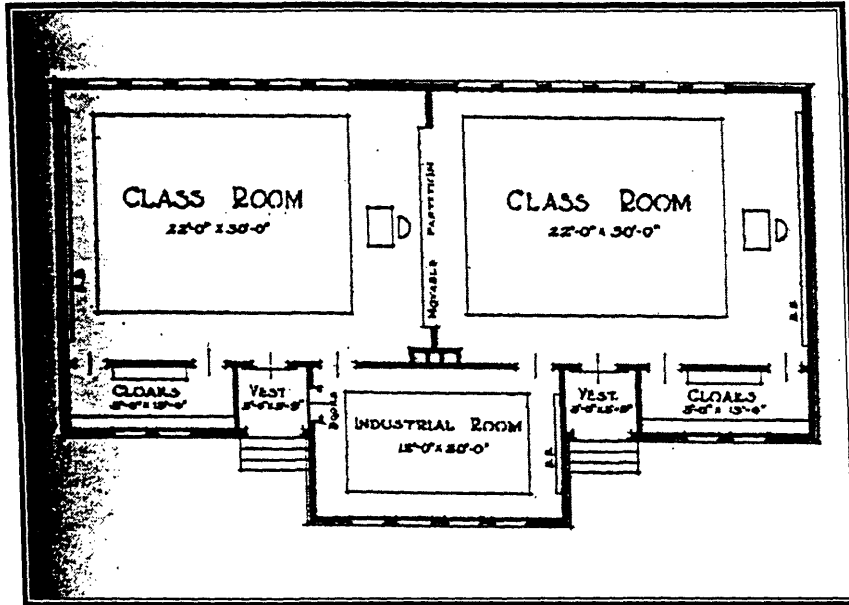
Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary corresponds to the present tax parcel number, St. Matthews Branch Township, PIN 0191.

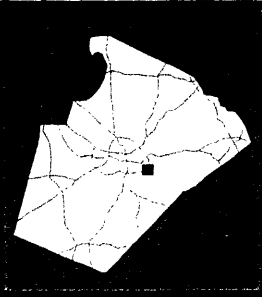
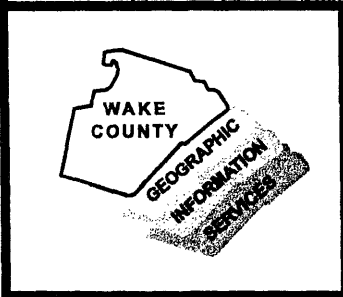
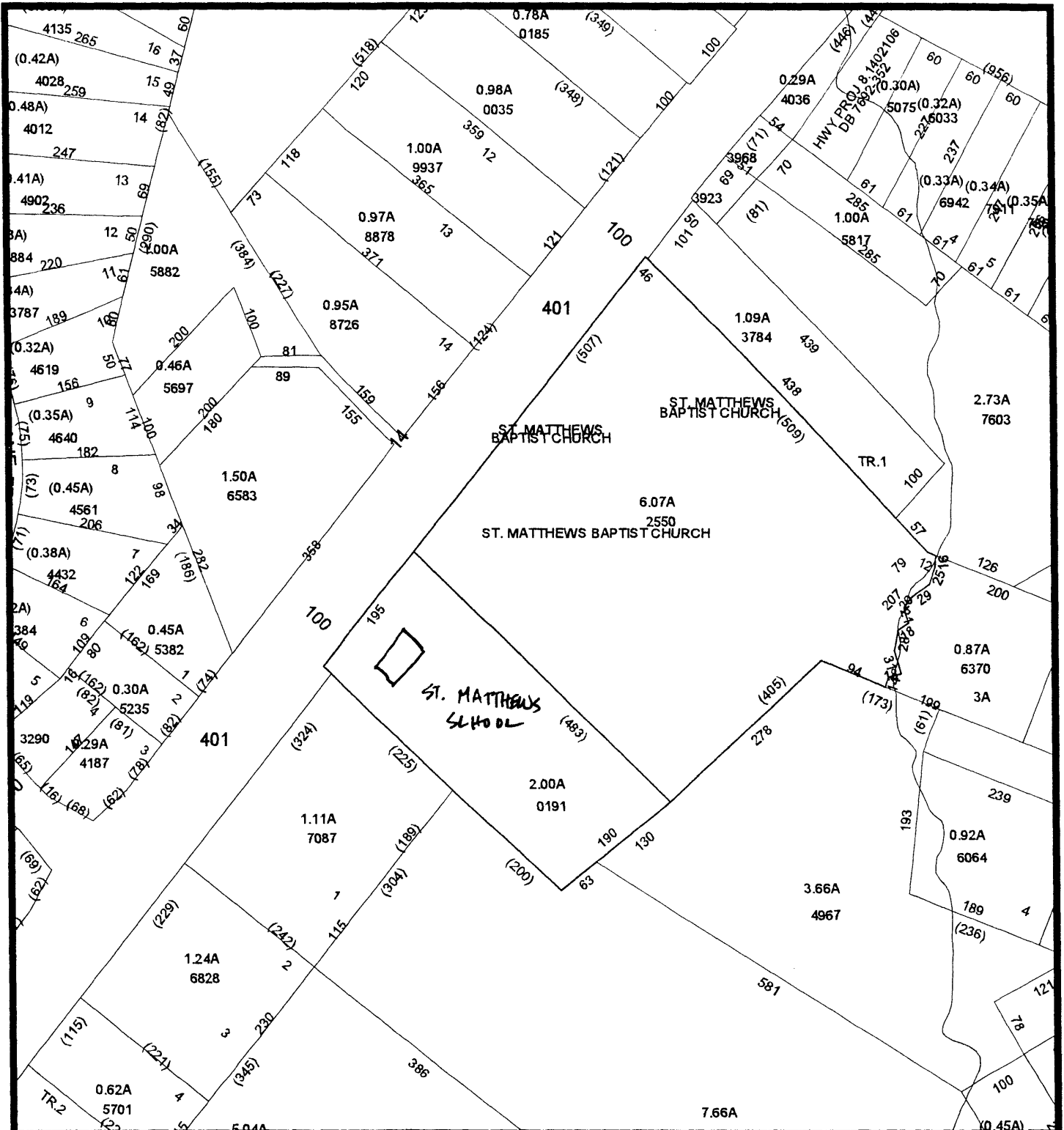
Boundary Justification

The proposed boundary includes the original two-acre tract of land associated with the school, and the school itself.

St. Matthews School
Wake County, North Carolina



Plan for a two-teacher school from the Julius Rosenwald Foundation.
Identical plan constructed for St. Matthews School, Wake County, NC, 1922.
[from Edwin R. Embree, *Julius Rosenwald Fund: A Review to June 30, 1928*
(Chicago: 1928) 23.]



ST. MATTHEWS SCHOOL
WAKE COUNTY, NC
TAX PARCEL MAP

