

NPS Form 10-9000
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Moscow High School

other name/site number: 1912 Whitworth School Building; Moscow Junior High School/ 011757

2. Location

street & number: 410 3rd East

not for publication: n/a

city/town: Moscow

vicinity: n/a

state: ID county: Latah code: 057 zip code: 83843

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: public-local

Category of Property: building(s)

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Public School Buildings in Idaho

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

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. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Thomas J. Green
Signature of certifying official

3-19-92
Date

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
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): _____

Autumnella of Lee 5/5/92

for Signature of Keeper Date
of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: EDUCATION

Sub: school

Current : EDUCATION

Sub: _____

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7. Description

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Architectural Classification:

Classical RevivalOther Description: n/a

Materials: foundation	<u>concrete</u>	roof	<u>asphalt</u>
walls	<u>brick</u>	other	<u>terra cotta</u>

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

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8. Statement of Significance

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally.Applicable National Register Criteria: ACriteria Considerations (Exceptions) : n/aAreas of Significance: education

_____Period(s) of Significance: 1912-1942 _____Significant Dates : 1912-1913 _____Significant Person(s): n/a
_____Cultural Affiliation: n/aArchitect/Builder: Hubbel, Clarence H.
Skinner, H.J.

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

X See continuation sheet.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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 X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): n/a

 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:

 X State historic preservation office

 Other state agency

 Federal agency

 Local government

 University

 Other -- Specify Repository: _____

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 1 acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A 11 500300 5176240 B

C D

 See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Russell's Addition, all of Block 2

Boundary Justification: X See continuation sheet.

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11. Form Prepared By

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Name/Title: Elizabeth Egleston, State Architectural Historian

Organization: Id. State Hist. Presv. Office Date: 1/5/92

Street & Number: 210 Main Street Telephone: (208) 334-3861

City or Town: Boise State: ID Zip: 83702

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 1
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The Moscow High School is located in a residential area of Moscow, a few blocks from the downtown commercial core. It has three stories, including a high, raised basement, and is constructed of brick. Parapet walls demarcating the corners and entrance bays break the flat roofline. The school is oriented to the south, and is situated on Third East Street between Van Buren and Adams Streets, two blocks south of the Fort Russell historic district, which was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

The south facade can be divided into five bays. The first and fifth are composed of windows on the first and third stories and blind windows on the second. The second and fourth bays contain the entrances which are embellished by rusticated posts and Tuscan columns in antis. These posts and columns support an entablature and balustrade; "Moscow High School" is inscribed in the frieze. On the second floor of these bays are arched windows; three-over-one light windows are located on the third story. The third, or center bay, contains a row of ten windows at each story.

The east and west facades are identical, and contain three bays. The first and third bays have rows of five windows on the second and third floors. In the center bay is an entrance, similar to those on the south wall. Above the entrance are pilasters; crowning the entire bay is a broken pediment.

The rear, or north elevation, is very similar to the south facade in that it has the same fenestration pattern. It does not, however, have the ornate entrances seen on the front wall. A fire escape leads from a door on the third floor to a protruding block in the center of the facade; this block is situated in the center of the wall.

Terra cotta was used for a string course between the first and second levels, the entablature and balustrades above the entrances and the roof coping.

According to the Latah County Historical Society, the Moscow High School is one of the largest and most elaborate historic schools in the county. Its ornate quality, achieved through classical details and the use of terra cotta, is typical of this period and for what would have been a large, regional center in Idaho. The building maintains a high degree of integrity, and clearly conveys the original intent of the architect and builder in its setting, design, materials and workmanship. The only alteration that detracts from its original appearance is the plywood that obscures the windows.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 1
=====

The Moscow High School is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A. It is significant for its association with the growth of Moscow (the county seat of Latah County) and with the development of education in the city. Constructed from 1912 to 1913, the school represents both the maturation of the community and the city's educational system and reflects a local response to the Progressive Era reform of school curriculum.

Permanent white settlement in the Moscow area first occurred in 1871, when about twenty residents of the Walla Walla, Washington area were attracted by the region's abundant grass and timber. By 1875 the growing city was known by its current name, and was incorporated by 1887. In 1885, Moscow received an impetus of growth with the arrival of the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company, and again in 1890, when the Northern Pacific Railroad reached the town. The establishment of the University of Idaho in 1890, combined with reliable transportation methods, secured Moscow's role as the region's cultural and business center.

Various written accounts state that Moscow's first school, established in 1878, was located several miles south of the present town, and was known as the Maguire School. The fact that the first school was established several years after settlement is atypical of communities in Idaho in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. From this point on, however, the evolution of the Moscow school system seems to have followed the general pattern seen elsewhere in the state: the construction of a multi-room school with a central staircase, followed by a more fireproof building (brick with stairwells at either end). One of the earliest settlers, John Russell, donated land in 1884 on the condition that it be used for a school, and that the building must cost at least \$1,000. Accordingly, a school was erected at what is now A and Adams streets and was named for its benefactor; photographs document its appearance as a two-story frame structure with a front-facing gable and cupola. The school had two rooms, but with 120 students, it quickly became over-crowded.

In 1889 four rooms were added to the Russell School, funded by money raised from a bond election, so that 600 children could attend. Soon it became apparent that a new school building was necessary. J.C. Muerman, superintendent from 1891 to 1901 wrote,

The only school building was the Russell and a fire trap it was. The few pupils in the high school were in the same room as the eighth grade and this grade had 44 pupils which made for a crowded room...this crowded condition effected [sic] the discipline and school work... (1)

In response to this need, in 1891-92 a \$20,000 structure, known as the Moscow High School, was built on the south side of Third Street between Adams and Jefferson streets. The brick construction, the central-hallway plan and the overall blockiness of the massing were characteristics of the third wave of school design in the state at the close of the nineteenth century. During this phase, communities built more substantial schools, but although they typically used brick, which afforded a greater measure of fire protection, the central hall plan was unsafe.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 2
=====

Despite its name, only one of its ten rooms was used for high school classes; the rest of the building was used for the lower grades. Reasons for this are unclear; it could be due to a burgeoning lower grade population, or perhaps few students were either prepared or able to attend high school, as the entering high school class contained only seven students. The high school population grew, so that by 1897 the enrollment grew to seventy-two students, but this still would not have filled the capacity of the school, which could hold 425 pupils. It must be considered that the low high school enrollment during the 1890's could be due to the fact that by 1897 many local high school students had the option of attending the "preparatory" program at the University of Idaho. This program consisted of a high school curriculum and was available to students who planned to enter the University of Idaho, but who had either not had access to a high school education in their community or who were unprepared for college course work.

School Board members and Moscow citizens began discussing the construction of a new school in 1911; they were motivated, to some extent, by the realization that within three years the school district would absorb at least sixty high school students, because the University's preparatory program would be phased out in 1914. School capacity reached an even greater crisis when the Russell School burned in January, 1912. The school board had experimented with a program known as the ward plan, in which small neighborhood schools were constructed to meet the needs of the lower grades. Once discussions concerning the issuing of bonds were underway, however, the majority opinion favored the construction of a central school. Earliest newspaper accounts indicate that a new school building would be a high school, costing \$50,000, and that the 1892 structure would be used for grades one through eight. By the end of August, 1911, however, the board had decided that bonds should be issued in the amount of \$65,000 for a building that could accommodate 250 students, as the previous plans would provide only four additional classrooms than the school system currently had. The election to approve the bond issue was held on September 14, 1911 and passed by a wide margin.

In January, 1912 the architect, Clarence H. Hubbel of Spokane, Washington, presented the board with plans, but the location was uncertain. The board had an option to buy the Hanna block, a residential block on the north side of Third between Jefferson and Adams streets (across from the 1892 building), but some citizens wanted to see the structure located upon the site of the Russell School (two blocks north). Because of its easy grade and the fact that it was a "popular street," the Third Street location was chosen. H.J. Skinner, a contractor who was also from Spokane, won the bid for the contract in April. In a ceremony that attracted 300 people, the cornerstone was laid on July 6, 1912. Various items of memorabilia were included in the cornerstone, such as copies of the school's plans and specifications, the history of the school, articles from the local newspaper documenting the different phases of the struggle to get the building, and a photo of a revered local schoolteacher, Ida Whitworth.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 3
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The new high school was finished in January, 1913; the dedication ceremony was held on January 17. The final cost of the building totaled \$75,000. A gymnasium, manual science and domestic science rooms were located on the basement floor; offices, classrooms and the physics and botany laboratories were located on the first floor, and the second floor housed a chemistry laboratory, classrooms, and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 520 people. Overcrowding in the grammar schools was still a problem, however, as indicated by the fact that two rooms in the new high school were used for grade school classes for many years.

Two documents illustrate the effect that the Progressive Era, with its emphasis on reform and civic involvement, had on the school. The first is a newspaper article from 1913, in which the activities of the Arts and Crafts Department of the Historic Club are discussed. The club wished to "awaken an interest in the decoration of the school buildings of Moscow" through the selection of pictures and statuary to be purchased for the school. (2) The meeting appears to have been attended primarily by women, and during their gathering on February 6, 1913, they discussed such topics as "Good Pictures, and How to Get Them," "The Use of Good Sculpture in Public Buildings," "An Ideal Decorative Scheme in School Room Decoration," and "A Classified List of Pictures Suitable for School Room Decoration."

The second document concerns the discussion of changes in school curriculum. The facilities and increased space of the new high school enabled the school board to expand the curriculum, a pattern that occurred throughout the nation during the period 1890-1920. High school students discussed this in a commencement program in 1939, pointing out that domestic science, manual training, agricultural courses and commercial studies were available with the opening of the new structure. Science programs were also expanded, as the high school incorporated laboratories for physics, chemistry, and biology.

When a new high school was built on the south side of Third Street in 1939, the Moscow High School was used as a junior high, and was known for many years as the Whitworth School. The building has been used as the offices of School District #281 since at least 1957 (research has not revealed the exact, earliest date of the district's occupancy). Recently, the district has considered demolishing the school, inspiring local citizens to attempt to preserve the building through adaptive re-use.

Footnotes

1. J.C. Muerman to Superintendent L.C. Robinson, 31 March 1953, Archive SC MUE-1, Latah County Historical Society, Moscow, Idaho.
2. "Plan for Decoration of New High School," *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 22 January 1913, p. 1.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 1
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Newspaper Articles

"Big Majority for New \$65,000 High School." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 14 September 1911, p. 1.

"Board Desires to Build Best Type of School." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 31 August 1911, p. 9.

"Bond Election for New High School." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 3 August 1911, p. 1.

"Contract Signed for New High School." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 2 April 1912, p. 1.

"Cornerstone to be Laid." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 5 July 1912, p. 1.

"High School Plans Before Board for Final Review." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 30 January 1912, p. 1.

"High School will be Rebuilt on Hanna Block." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 1 February 1912, p. 1.

"New High School to be Dedicated." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 16 January 1913, p. 1.

"Plan for Decoration of New High School." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 22 January 1913, p. 1.

"Tabernacle will be New Home of Six Grades of Russell School." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 11 January 1912, p. 2.

"Women of Moscow Study Art in Schools." *Daily Star-Mirror* (Moscow, ID.), 7 February 1913, p. 1.

Other Sources

Crabtree, Jennifer. *School Days in Idaho*. Unpublished manuscript in the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, Boise, Idaho, 1989.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 2
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Emery, W.G. "A History of Moscow, Idaho." *Latah Legacy* 9 (Winter 1980).

Latah County Historical Society Archives, Moscow, Idaho. Dialogue of Commencement Program, 1939.

Muerman, J.C. to Robinson, Superintendent L.C. 31 March 1953, Archive SC MUE-1, Latah County Historical Society, Moscow, Idaho.

Otness, Lillian Woodworth. *A Great Good Country*. Moscow, ID.: Latah County Historical Society, 1983.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 10 Moscow High School, Latah County, ID Page 1
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BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary is based on the legally-recorded boundary lines of the property. The boundary includes the school and it contains the area which has historically been associated with the Moscow High School.



Moscow High School

Moscow, Idaho

Elizabeth Eggleston

September 24, 1991

Idaho State Historical Society

view from the east



Moscow High School

Moscow, Idaho

Elizabeth Eggleston

September 24, 1991

Idaho State Historical Society

view from the southeast