

**DRAFT**

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Dandridge Historic District (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property Jefferson County
County and State 73001792
NR Reference Number

**Additional Documentation**

**State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this   X   additional documentation    move    removal  
   name change (additional documentation)    other  
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.

Signature of Certifying Official/Title:

Date of Action

**National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:  
   entered in the National Register  
   determined eligible for the National Register  
   determined not eligible for the National Register  
   removed from the National Register  
   additional documentation accepted  
   other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this Additional Documentation is to establish that the Maury High School is individually significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture within the Dandridge Historic District. When listed in 1973, the Dandridge Historic District had no inventory of resources and an unclear Period of Significance per standards of the time. The nomination narrative focused on the town’s establishment in the late eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century, suggesting that the Period of Significance ends ca. 1899. The Maury High School is within the boundaries of the district as shown on the boundary map. It was not identified specifically as a contributing or non-contributing building, but its original construction date of ca. 1927 means that it was likely non-contributing in the district as listed. However, the passage of time and additional research has shown that the Maury High School should be considered significant individually for its architectural design. Accordingly, this Additional Documentation amends the Dandridge Historic District listing to add ca. 1927- ca.1955 as an additional Period of Significance, related to the construction dates of Maury High School, beginning with the construction of its original Colonial Revival section and ending in ca. 1955 with the Modern-style addition.

**Description**

The Maury High School is a ca. 1927 Colonial Revival two-story irregularly shaped red brick veneer building with stone detail. The building’s irregular shape is formed by two wings. The east wing contains classrooms while the west wing is offset to the north and contains an auditorium and gymnasium. The building is covered by a cross-gabled metal roof. Projecting gabled sections, variously located around the building, have cornice returns. There are three brick exterior chimneys, generally located at the west and east ends of each wing. The most notable chimney is on the west end of the west wing. It is a circular brick chimney with regularly spaced open weave patterns that run the entire span of the chimney.

As originally designed by Barber & McMurry architects, the building has no obvious entrance from the street, which is atypical for most school designs. Barber & McMurry indicated the south elevation to be the facade, and the main entrance door is located on the west elevation of the east wing, near where the wings connect at the center of the building. From Academy Circle, which runs in front (south) of the building, the entrance door is only visible by the thick stone Classical surround. The character-defining surround features pilasters, panels, dentils, and a triangular pediment while the entrance door itself is recessed. The building’s most significant exterior character-defining feature is the fenestration pattern of regularly spaced wood 6/12, 9/9, and 12/12 double-hung windows. The auditorium windows also feature arched transoms with stone keystone. The majority of windows have stone sills and brick soldier arch lintels, though one gabled section on the south façade includes stone lintels and sills, as well as a blind transom above the center window.

A ca. 1955 two-story modern addition is attached via a brick hyphen to the east elevation of the east wing. Characteristic of the modern style, the building has a flat roof and no ornamentation. Other major character-defining features include its red brick veneer walls and windows. The east elevation has multi-light ribbon windows with stone lintels, and the west elevation has narrow single-light windows, set high up on the wall.

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The interior features plaster over lath and simple painted wood baseboards and trim. Classrooms have chalk boards with trays along the bottom edge. Floors are typically wood or concrete, though much has been covered with VCT.

The property also includes a front gabled ca. 1950 Shop Building, located to the north (rear) of the school. It is considered non-contributing as it does not contribute to the architectural significance of the property.



Figure 1: Facade of the Maury High School, June 2020

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Figure 2: Facade and Modern Addition, June 2020

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Figure 3: Entry Door, located on the west elevation of the East Wing, June 2020

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Figure 4: Circular Chimney on the West Wing, June 2020

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Figure 5: Modern-style Addition, June 2020.

**Significance**

Maury High School is significant for embodying the distinctive characteristics of the Colonial Revival style, particularly as expressed in school architecture, as well as a good example of Barber & McMurry's work in Jefferson County. The school also features a Modern-style addition, representing a common architectural evolution of schools in Tennessee.

Preceded by several private male and female academies in various locations around Dandridge, the Maury Academy was established in the second half of the nineteenth century. It was named for General Doheny Herndan Maury who was an American and Confederate soldier and later diplomat. It became Maury High School in 1910. In 1924, the Tennessee legislature allowed Jefferson County to sell bonds for education. The county selected Barber & McMurry, a prolific Knoxville-based architecture firm, to design a new school. The design was completed by November 1925. With the Barber and McMurry design, eleven bids were taken for the project. The "entire cost of this project was \$60,105.63. This was more than \$250 in excess of the fund and the Superintendent used the

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manual training shop to work lumber to meet deficit.”<sup>1</sup> The building opened in August 1927.<sup>2</sup> In the mid-1950s, a new Maury High School was built on Maury Circle, and the old high school building became the Dandridge Elementary School.<sup>3</sup> Around the same time, the modern-style addition was built on the east end of the Barber & McMurry school building.<sup>4</sup> The building was used as an elementary school until the 1980s and for storage until 1995.<sup>5</sup>

The original school utilizes such character-defining Colonial Revival features as symmetrical fenestration patterns of multi-light wood windows, a classical surround at the entrance door, cornice returns, circular brick chimney, and occasional arched transoms with stone keystones. The multiple gables also serve as a reference to the gabled and pedimented forms often favored in Colonial Revival buildings, as well as the closely related Classical Revival style, popular at the same time and part of the same architectural movement to reembrace classicism. The styles surged in popularity following the 1893 Columbian Exposition, commonly referred to as the Chicago World’s Fair, and the centennial of the United States’ founding. The fair’s buildings were professionally designed monumental examples of Classical architecture utilizing symmetry, elaborate ornamentation, classical columns and entablatures, and pediments. The event renewed interest in classical architecture, particularly for civic buildings such as government buildings, churches, and schools. Celebration of the country’s founding inspired architects to use colonial forms and design details, including many classical details common in the Classical Revival style, such as dentils and pediments. Designs were not an exact adaptation of colonial-era designs but rather an interpretation that mixed elements of multiple styles together. The Colonial Revival and Classical Revival styles remained popular until the mid-twentieth century when they fell out of favor as Modern architecture became popular for civic buildings.<sup>6</sup>

The Maury High School reflects the architectural evolution towards modernism, as embodied by the Modern addition on the eastern end, constructed ca. 1955.<sup>7</sup> Modernism eschewed ornamentation in favor of simple forms with clean lines and honest use of materials. While exact expressions can vary widely, modernism is generally known for flat roofs, lack of ornamentation, and use of innovative construction technologies that allowed designers to experiment with new forms. Modern architects wanted the structure and materials to express themselves, so material type is often a character-defining feature. Wood is commonly used in residential construction, but masonry and metal were more common for civic and commercial buildings.

<sup>1</sup> Eunece Jones “A History of Maury High School,” *Dandridge Banner*, available from <https://jefferson.tngenealogy.net/research-aids/26-schools-a-education/454-history-of-maury-high-school-1806-1931> [accessed June 05 2021].

<sup>2</sup> “Maury High School in New Building,” *The Knoxville Journal*, August 29, 1927.

<sup>3</sup> *Hi-Life Maury High School Yearbook* (Dandridge, 1958). Ancestry.com.

<sup>4</sup> “Legal Notice to Bidders,” *Knoxville Journal*, November 21, 1954

<sup>5</sup> Jones; Barber & McMurry Plans for the Dandridge High School, copy on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville, TN.

<sup>6</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), 408-446.

<sup>7</sup> “Legal Notice to Bidders,” *Knoxville Journal*, November 21, 1954.



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In Tennessee, modernism is most closely associated with urban architecture as cities such as Memphis, Knoxville, and Nashville contained the most examples. While monumental examples are almost exclusively found in the cities, simple and small-scale examples of modernism are found throughout Tennessee's small and rural communities, most commonly in such buildings as 'Thousand Series' Post Offices, schools (new buildings and additions to existing buildings), banks, and occasionally government buildings. Modernism was also expressed in efforts to update downtown commercial buildings, most commonly by covering the facades with unornamented slipcovers, many of which have since been removed as part of ongoing preservation efforts.

The Maury High School embodies the Colonial Revival and Modern styles as typically designed for schools, though in an unusual expression. The majority of contemporary schools in Tennessee have prominent and centered entrances, as well as overall symmetrical forms. While the Maury High School utilizes symmetry in its fenestration pattern, the overall design with sprawling offset wings is uncommon. The prominent surround at the main entrance is characteristic of similar Colonial Revival and Classical Revival schools, but its placement on a side portion of the façade means that the building appears to have no front entrance, which is very unusual.

Besides its important expressions of popular architectural styles, Maury High School is also distinctive as an example of the work of Barber & McMurry. Based in neighboring Knoxville, the firm was established in 1915 and became responsible for the design of numerous buildings across East Tennessee and the Southeast United States. The firm's designs reflected the architectural demands of the era with their earliest designs embracing classicism while later mid-century designs are clear expressions of modernism, though all of which were designed to suit the client's needs.<sup>8</sup> For example, the 1923 Candoro Marble Works Showroom (NR Listed 7/22/2005) is a small Beaux Arts-style building that utilized the East Tennessee Marble sold by the company. As a result, the building's structure contributed to its function as a showroom by showing how their product could be used to create beautiful architecture.

Another notable Barber & McMurry design, and a good comparable to Maury High School, is the 1928 Giffin Grammar School in Knoxville (NR Listed 11/22/2016). Giffin Grammar School is similarly designed in the Colonial Revival style with Modern-style additions. Like Maury, Giffin Grammar uses brick veneer, 12/12 symmetrically placed windows, a classical door surround, and wings. Both also have 1950s modern-style additions. A key difference is that the Giffin Grammar School used a U-shaped form that symmetrically placed the wings in a typical arrangement for schools with the elaborately styled entry centered on the south elevation. While the original portion of Giffin Grammar serves as an example of fairly typical school design of the 1920s, Maury High School represents an atypical plan, though it still significantly utilizes stylistic influences popular at the time. It is also significant as an example of the common architectural evolution of schools being enlarged in the mid-century with modern additions to meet additional educational needs and growing student populations.

<sup>8</sup> "100+ Years of Design," BarberMcMurry Architects, <https://bma1915.com/legacy>, accessed December 3, 2022.