

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Parker, George E., School

Other names/site number Parker, George E., Elementary School

## 2. Location

street & number 12744 Elmira St.  not for publication

city or town Detroit  vicinity

State Michigan code MI county Wayne code 163 zip code 48227

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date

Michigan State Historic Preservation Officer Michigan State Historic Preservation Office

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
___ entered in the National Register	_____	_____
___ determined eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
___ determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
___ removed from the National Register	_____	_____
___ other (explain:)	_____	_____

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box)

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal
<input type="checkbox"/>	private

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		Objects
		buildings
1	1	<b>Total</b>

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

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

Public Schools of Detroit, Michigan

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

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**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

roof: Other

other: Stone

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

Parker School occupies nearly a full city block in the Barton-McFarland neighborhood, approximately six and one-half miles northwest of downtown Detroit. It is located on the southern third of its site and faces south onto Elmira Street between Iris Street and Myers Road. It is a wide, flat-roofed, asymmetrical, two-story brick-faced building constructed in the Collegiate Gothic style in 1927. It was designed by architects McGrath, Dohmen & Page as a complete, "T" plan, elementary school. Others almost identical to it in appearance, including Atkinson School and Stellwagen School, were built in multiple units. They all exhibit face brick as the major building material and stone used for major elements such as towers, trim around windows, water tables and coping. Parker School has a high degree of architectural integrity and is in good condition. A large, noncontributing, temporary classroom structure is located at the rear of the original school building.

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### Narrative Description

George E. Parker School was built as a complete "T" plan in 1927. On the ends of its south-facing façade are shallow gables over the projecting end walls of the side-facing elevations, featuring large blind limestone niches supported on corner wall buttresses. The remainder of the front façade consists of a nineteen bay, fenestrated stretch broken by two limestone and brick entrance bays, each located in the third bay from the center. Each entrance bay is in the form of a single story, projecting vestibule with a compound Gothic-arched opening. Above each entrance is a limestone panel bearing the name of the school, "GEORGE E. PARKER SCHOOL," and spandrels containing a pair of roundels inscribed with the date, "19" and "27".

In the center of the long façade is a two story, three-sided bay of multi-colored, random ashlar that rises to a crenellated parapet wall, and a brick-faced gable sandwiched between two tower-like projections rising up from the narrow wall sections that flank the bay. This bay contains groupings of three windows in its center facet and single openings for windows in its angled facets.

The east and west side elevations containing the secondary entrances facing Myers Road and Iris Street are five bays wide and symmetrically arranged. The entrance bays are flanked by large openings containing groupings of windows, and a single window opening per floor in its outer bays. An auditorium and gymnasium are at the rear of the school, forming the supporting leg of the "T" plan. A separate, north-facing entrance to these facilities, so that they can be used in the evenings or weekends independent of the rest of the school, display pared-down, Late Gothic styling.

The boiler room is located in the basement of a part of the building in the rear, but its brick chimney stack faced in the same brick as the school building extends upward. It tapers up towards the top and utilizes modest stone banding at its apex. Parker School was identified as having tile by Pewabic Pottery of Detroit.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pear, Pewabic Pottery, p. 289

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

1927

**Significant Dates**

1927

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

McGrath, Dohmen, & Page

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance corresponds to the construction date of the building.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

George E. Parker Elementary School is locally significant under National Register *Criterion C* for its architectural design following a "T" plan by McGrath, Dohmen & Page, a Detroit architectural firm that designed buildings for the Detroit Board of Education in the later half of the 1920s. The two of the three partners, William McGrath and Anton G. Dohmen, were formerly with the firm of Malcomson & Higginbotham. Parker School is a handsome example of a Collegiate Gothic building by that firm.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

Parker School began as a pair of portable structures on the school site, consisting of 6.3 acres purchased in 1924. It was named after George E. Parker, a well-known principal in the Detroit public school system who, in 1919, became one of the first in a group of district principals. He worked on behalf of the retirement fund, and served as secretary of its Board of Trustees.

The area of Parker School was, back in 1911, part of Grindley's Subdivision in Greenfield Township known as "Little Farms."<sup>2</sup> A cow path from "Little Farms" ran to Grand River Avenue where the street cars ran regularly every hour. A playground along Plymouth Road had a creek with fish running through it. After annexation by the City of Detroit, the area was still on the outskirts of the city. Although the school was built in 1927, landscaping of its grounds was delayed because the owner of the property at the east boundary refused to sell a thirty foot wide strip of land that ran its entire length. He did, however, allow a temporary boardwalk across Myers Road so that the school could be reached. Also, Elmira Street was not yet opened, so the first unit of the building was accessed off a temporary wooden sidewalk along the south side of the school that blew away in the wind. When Elmira finally opened, hawthorn trees were transplanted from the back of the school to the front.

The school opened in late 1927, one room at a time as the construction workers finished. When completed, it had thirty-two classrooms, a gymnasium and auditorium, with a capacity for 1325 students. Only 1095 students were enrolled at the end of 1927, and five classrooms went unused. The school was arranged as a twenty-four section platoon system, housing grades one through eight.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

<sup>2</sup> Detroit, City of, Board of Education, *Histories of the Public Schools of Detroit*, 1967, vol. 2, p. 900.

Parker, George E., School  
Name of Property

Wayne, MI  
County and State

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property** 7  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>17</u> Zone	<u>321407</u> Easting	<u>4693311</u> Northing	3	<u>                    </u> Zone	<u>                    </u> Easting	<u>                    </u> Northing
2	<u>                    </u> Zone	<u>                    </u> Easting	<u>                    </u> Northing	4	<u>                    </u> Zone	<u>                    </u> Easting	<u>                    </u> Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

W MEYERS N 27.24 FT 24 AND VAC ALLEY ADJ 25 THRU 32 EXC MEYERS RD AS WIDENED ROBERT M GRINDLEYS SUB L27 P97 PLATS, W C R 22/574 ALSO LOTS 19&20 B H WARKS LONGACRE RE-SUB L48 P56 PLATS, W C R 22/577

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries described above include the entire parcel historically associated with Parker School.

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## 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title Deborah M. Goldstein  
organization City of Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board date March 25, 2009  
street & number CAYMC, 2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 204 telephone (313) 224-3487  
city or town Detroit state MI zip code 48226

Parker, George E., School  
Name of Property

Wayne, MI  
County and State

e-mail cc-historic@detroitmi.gov

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**Additional Documentation**

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

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**Photographs:**

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Submit clear and descriptive black and white photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:**

**City or Vicinity:** Detroit

**County:** Wayne

**State:** MI

**Photographer:** Timothy Boscarino

**Date Photographed:**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

1 of \_\_\_\_.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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

## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

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### **Bibliography**

Detroit, City of, Board of Education. *Histories of the Public Schools of Detroit*. Detroit: Board of Education, 1967.

Detroit, City of, Buildings and Safety Engineering Department. *Building Permit Card Index*. Permit #24339, February 9, 1927.

Pear, Lillian Myers. *Pewabic Pottery: A History of Its Products and its People*, Des Moines: Wallace-Homestead Book Co., 1976.

Sanborn Map Company. *Detroit, Mich.* Vol. 17, Sheet 9. Pelham, NY: Sanborn Map Company, 2003.