

**Dallas Landmark Commission
Landmark Nomination Form**

1. Name

historic: David Crockett Elementary School
and/or common: Davy Crockett Elementary School date: 4/26/93

2. Location

address: 401 N. Carroll Avenue
location/neighborhood: Alcade Street/Crockett School Historic District
block: E/796 lot: 1 land survey: _____ tract size: 8.854 Acres

3. Current Zoning

R-7.5(A)

4. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	<u>_____</u> museum
<u>_____</u> district	<u>_____</u> public	<u>_____</u> occupied	<u>_____</u> agricultural	<u>_____</u> park
<u>_____</u> building(s)	<u>_____</u> private	<u>_____</u> unoccupied	<u>_____</u> commercial	<u>_____</u> residence
<u>_____</u> structure	<u>_____</u> both	<u>_____</u> work in progress	<u>_____</u> educational	<u>_____</u> religious
<u>_____</u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessibility	<u>_____</u> entertainment	<u>_____</u> scientific
<u>_____</u> object	<u>_____</u> in progress	<u>_____</u> X yes:restricted	<u>_____</u> government	<u>_____</u> transportation
	<u>_____</u> being considered	<u>_____</u> yes:unrestricted	<u>_____</u> industrial	<u>_____</u> other, specify
		<u>_____</u> no	<u>_____</u> military	

5. Ownership

Current Owner: Dallas Independent School District
Contact: Dr. Marvin Edwards Phone: 824-1620
Address: 3700 Ross Ave. City: Dallas State: TX Zip: 75204

6. Form Preparation

Date: January 1993
Name & Title: Marcel Quimby, NOTF Member
Organization: Neighborhood Designation Task Force
Contact: Jim Anderson, Department of Planning and Development Phone: 670-4132

7. Representation on Existing Surveys

Alexander Survey (citywide) _____ local _____ state _____ national _____ _____ X National Register
H.P.L. Survey (CBD) _____ A _____ B _____ C _____ D _____ Recorded TX Historic Ldmk
Oak Cliff _____ _____ _____ TX Archaeological Ldmk
Victorian Survey _____
Dallas Historic Resources Survey, Phase 4 _____ X high _____ medium _____ low

For Office Use Only

Date Rec'd: _____ Survey Verified: Y N by: _____ Field Check by: _____ Petitions Needed: Y N
Nomination: Archaeological Site Structure(s) Structure & Site District

8. Historic Ownership

original owner: Dallas Board of Education

significant later owner(s): Dallas Independent School District

9. Construction Dates

original: 1903

alterations/additions: 1905, 1906, 1908 and 1920

10. Architect

original construction: Hubbel & Green, Dallas

alterations/additions:

11. Site Features

natural:

urban design:

12. Physical Description

Condition, check one:

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

unaltered

altered

Check one:

original site

moved(date _____)

Describe present and original (if known) physical appearance. Include style(s) of architecture, current condition and relationship to surrounding fabric (structures, objects, etc). elaborate on pertinent materials used and style(s) of architectural detailing, embellishments and site details.

David Crockett Elementary is a two-story building with a basement that sits on a large lawn, facing North Carroll Avenue in east Dallas. It is bounded by Victor, Alcalde, and Worth Streets and North Carroll Avenue.

This Romanesque Revival building is constructed of structural masonry brick with stone window sills and trim. This popular style was originally based on Roman and Byzantine elements and was "revived" in the late nineteenth century for commercial and public buildings throughout the United States. The Romanesque Revival style is characterized by round arches, solid volumes, weighty massing and articulated detailing.

The plan is a double-loaded corridor with classrooms on both sides; this main corridor extends from the front doors facing North Carroll to the doors facing Alcalde Street. Consequently, all of the classrooms have many windows looking directly out to the adjacent grounds. The first and second story contains classrooms and offices; the cafeteria is located in the basement. The overall form of the building is comprised of five distinct bays; these reflect the various additions made to the original building. The brick used on the building is a light brown pressed brick. All exterior wood trim at windows, doors, eaves, dormer siding and windows is painted a light cream color.

The building entry is centered in the North Carroll facade and is recessed slightly into the remainder of the building, and a porch then projects from this recess. The porch and building are several feet above the adjacent lawn, and there are concrete steps from the front walk to the porch. The porch is covered with a hipped roof, which is supported at each end by a pair of wood columns. Above the one-story porch are separated windows with Roman arches that open into the hall at the upstairs corridor. Mounted on the exterior wall below these windows is a plaque with

the school's name: David Crockett School. The plane of the wall continues above the adjacent roof line and culminates in a decorative parapet that contains another window with a Roman arch.

On each side of the entry and center section of the building the projecting side portions of the facade are symmetrical, with three separated windows on each story and with half-windows to the basement; these windows are aligned vertically. The windows are the original wood and those at the first and second story are six over one lites, with a transom above. This transom at the first story is a three-lite transom and that at the second story is rounded.

The brickwork at this facade is quite detailed with protruding brick panels below the second story windows, horizontal brick coursing, soldier courses above the second story windows, and corbelling below the roof eaves. Additionally, stone window sills are used at all windows (including those at the basement) and as a horizontal trim above the second-story windows and continues above the rounded soldier course above these windows. A stone horizontal course (approx. 8" high) is also used near the level of the first story.

The roof of the building is flat in the middle with a hipped roof over each of the protruding bays at the side facades. Due to the height and prominence of these hipped roofs, the flat roof is not easily discernable from the street or adjacent lawn. The eaves of the hipped roofs have wood fascias and soffits with ornamental brackets near the corners and at third points along the eaves. Two of the four hipped roofs have a dormer gable with the window centered in the hipped. The portion of the building nearest Alcalde Street has a flat roof behind a parapet.

The two side facades are similar to the North Carroll facade in materials and detailing but not in form. These two asymmetrical facades are much longer in length than the front facade and subtly reflect the different periods of construction of the building. These facades have five protruding classroom bays of which the four bays nearest North Carroll are almost identical. All windows within these four bays are separate but occur in groups of four. The two bays (including the building entry) nearest North Carroll were an early addition to the original building and are almost identical to the earlier original building. The third and fourth bays are the side facades of the original 1903 building. The line of the addition is visible from the exterior of the building if one searches for it. There are several window mounted air conditioning units on the two side facades.

There have been several modifications to the basement and first story of these facades in the recessed area between the protruding classroom bays. These modifications include small room additions, canopies and window and door relocations.

The fifth bay of the two side facades was an 1920 addition to the building and faces Alcalde Street; this addition closed the original entry to the school and required the North Carroll entry become the primary entry to the school. This addition is in the Colonial Revival architectural style which was very popular in the teens and 1920's for small commercial buildings in Dallas. The materials used in this addition match that of the original building but are used in a different manner. The wood windows are grouped together to create large horizontal openings with brick sills and stone headers. This last classroom bay does not have a hipped roof but a brick parapet with horizontal fascia at the roof line which matches the eave fascia and soffit at the adjacent classroom bays, including the brackets.

This Alcalde Street facade also has grouped windows in the center of the facade with flanking multi-sided turrets which protrude from the facade. The center portion of the wall continues up to a parapet with stone coping. Near the top of this facade, centered above the windows is a sign with the original name of the building: Davy Crockett School. The turrets contain doors to the exterior and windows at each story. Adjacent to the turrets are large expanses of brick wall with brick parapet and horizontal fascia.

The basement at the Alcalde facade has an extended area across the front of the facade between the turrets. This portion of the building has large separate windows with stone lintels and a flat roof above. On this roof are several air-conditioning units.

On the east side of the building is a central plant, built in 1960 when the building was provided with central air-conditioning and heat. This building is of a lighter brick with few windows.

The interior of the school is unusual for its simple single corridor plan as described earlier. Only schools built in the early years of this century have such plans; schools built after that were larger and had figure-eight or similar plans. The original internal stairs are in the center of the corridor, and later stairs are located at the end of the east addition, near what is now the front entry. All stairs are open and have wrought iron handrails and guard rails.

As previously referenced, several additions and modifications have been made to the building since its original construction in 1903. The subsequent additions tripled the size of the original building but replicated the original design. The 1920 addition was of a different design and moved the main entry from Alcalde Street to North Carroll Street. To the experienced eye, the difference in detailing and slight shades of brick color are clues to the changes this building has undergone during its long history.

A one-story central plant was added to the north of the school in 1956; this is a very plain brick building, without windows. Mark Lemmon, a well-known Dallas architect, was responsible for this structure.

David Crockett Elementary is remarkable for its continual expansion to meet the needs of the community yet retain and duplicate a successful design, thus resulting in a building with such architectural integrity.

13. Historical Significance

Statement of historical and cultural significance. Include: cultural influences, special events and important personages, influences on neighborhood, on the city, etc.

When the David Crockett Elementary School in Dallas closed its doors the last time on Tuesday, January 3, 1989, it was the oldest operating school in the Independent School District.¹ The eighty-six year old structure had been built when Dallas boasted a population of some 42,000 including a school population of 5,800.

The origins of David Crockett School came May 12, 1902 when the School Board minutes recorded that "a communication signed by about 150 citizens of East Dallas was read, asking that the Board select a site for building in east Dallas at a lot bounded by Carroll, Victor and Alcade Streets."² (It should be noted that although the request was noted as coming from the citizens of "East Dallas", the separate community which bore that name had been incorporated into Dallas on January 1, 1890. These citizens lived in that same area, but were in fact taxpayers of the city of Dallas.)

Following the citizens' request, the School Board met in special session on May 23, 1902. At that time, the President of the board, George W. Jalonik submitted a plat of ground and contract between him and Mr. Tom Field for the purchase of a lot bounded by Carroll, Victor, and Alcade Streets for a consideration of \$4,500. The purchase was approved.³ Two weeks later the School Board voted to advertise for plans for a four room school building to be built in East Dallas and another to be built in South Dallas.⁴

The Board had a quick response to its advertisement, for on July 1, 1902 six different architects presented plans to the board for the proposed school buildings. The next day the School Board voted to adopt the plans of architects Hubbell and Green whose bid had been \$9,500. But they did not wish to pay the architects for their supervision, just their plans. Architect Green appeared a day later to inform the Board that the plans could not be purchased outright, but he would allow the plans to be used for a payment of 3-1/2% of the building cost for the first use and 1% of the cost for the second use, or approximately \$425. The Board countered with an offer of \$400 which Mr. Green accepted.⁵

One month later, the Board approved bids for construction of the school building using the plans of Mssr. Hubbell and Green and awarded the contract to F. E. Ritter who had bid \$11,467. At that same meeting, the Board named E. V. Tasver to be Principal of the new building.⁶ Although the Board ordered the Committee on Property and Repairs to contract "to heat the new building with hot air," the new school was initially heated by pot bellied stoves that were placed in a corner of each room and fed daily by doses of coal by the school janitor. One early student recalled that when the janitor poured the coal, it made such a racket that "the teacher couldn't tell what anyone was doing and you could whisper or throw notes to your heart's content."⁷

The Crockett school did not open in the Spring of 1903, despite the School Board's proposal at its December 26, 1902 meeting that the first Monday in March, 1903 be opening day. A report to the Board on March 17, 1903 stated that construction had been delayed by weather and labor problems.⁸ The first man to actually serve as principal is also unclear from the minutes of the School Board. Two men had been named and resigned from the post before the school doors even opened - E. V. Tasver and A. F. Archer. It is equally unclear from the minutes just how the name David Crockett was selected, for no mention is made of the school's name until the announcement of the resignation of principal appointee A. F. Archer at the February 16, 1903 meeting. The Board's next mention of a principal was not until June 15, 1903 when S. D. Stennis was named

principal "for the next term". At that meeting the Board also heard plans proposed for the improvement of the grounds of the school by building walks and drives and diverting the creek into another channel.⁹

During the summer of 1903, the Board approved a bid of \$430 to build a janitor's house at David Crockett. This may be the structure visible on the 1905 Sanborn map of the school and surrounding area. The janitor served a dual function in those early days, for the only hot lunch provided to students at David Crockett was the chili made by the janitor's wife and sold from their house to the students for a nickel a bowl.¹⁰

David Crockett School opened with the other Dallas schools on September 21, 1903, for grades one through four. Enrollment was 178, a number which caused severe crowding in the new school.¹¹ School Board minutes indicate that during the 1903-04 school year an addition costing \$8,768.80 was made. This was followed in 1906 by more construction, noted as a "four room" addition costing \$9,968. The addition was not sufficient for the need, as the Board minutes indicate that there were two classrooms running double daily sessions during the 1907-07 school year. Consequently, another four room addition was recommended.¹²

This addition was let for bids in June 1907, and awarded to J. B. Moore, whose bid of \$13,548 was the lowest. Still another four room addition was proposed in January 1909. This addition actually added six rooms and possibly the installation of indoor bathrooms. The change in size of the school which resulted from these additions can be seen by comparing the 1905 and 1921 Sanborn maps. Subsequent changes in 1919, 1920 and 1930 included the remodel of the basement rooms and reversed what was originally the front of the school, facing Alcade Street, so that the front now faces North Carroll Avenue.¹³

The school had an organized parents group very early in its existence, as seen by the Mothers' Club petition to the School Board in 1907 to "have the lights cut in." (This would seem to be a petition for electric lights to be installed) They were back at the School Board a year later, asking that a "few loads" of sand be placed upon the grounds.¹⁴ The need for sand was significant, for according to an early student, the school had been built in a "hollow" adjacent to a deep gully which would fill with water when it rained hard. The resulting flooding of the "hollow" was enough to fill the first floor of the school with water.¹⁵ The source of the flooding, Peak Creek, can be seen on the 1905 Sanborn map. On the 1921 Sanborn map, the creek seems to have been routed under North Carroll Avenue; this street appears to have been paved by then.

Early students at Crockett recall a school yard complete with deep ravines and trees with wild grapevines hanging from them - suitable for swinging across the gullies. The school rooms were painted dark brown and had desks with ink wells that caused problems for the girls with long pigtails.¹⁶ Among the outstanding teachers who taught at Crockett over the years was Mrs. Virginia Collins Lipscomb, whose husband was principal of the old Dallas High School and for whom Lipscomb School is named. After her death a scholarship fund was established in her name to pay college tuition for students who could not afford it. One of Crockett's prominent graduates was Dr. Herbert Gambrell, noted Texas historian and chairman of the Department of History at SMU prior to his death.¹⁷

The school gained special prominence in 1955, when the popular song "Davy Crockett" was at its height. Until that time, the only place the school's name appeared was at the rear of the building due to remodeling efforts which moved the front door to the opposite side of the building. When students complained, a new sign was placed over the front door on North Carroll Avenue. It retained the formal name "David Crockett," despite the fact that the students called it "Davy, Davy Crockett, the school of a pioneer" in a special verse they added to the popular tune.¹⁸

In 1984, Davy Crockett celebrated its 80th anniversary and more than 150 former students returned from as far away as Costa Rica and as close as a few blocks to remember their school days. The school librarian who had been at Crockett for 29 years, recalled that "It had roots, deep roots, this neighborhood. People had great big old houses and great big old families to go with them. If you bought a house, you lived here forever. It is in a state of transition now." By 1988, a new school for Crockett students had been built and named Ignacio Zaragoza, in honor of a native Texan who led an underdog Mexican army to victory over the French in 1862. The David Crockett School now houses administrative offices for the Dallas Independent School District. 19

¹Dallas Times Herald, January 4, 1989, Section B-1.

²Dallas School Board, Minutes, [hereafter DSMB] Volume 4, page 163, meeting of May 12, 1902.

³Since less than two weeks elapsed between the citizen request and the School Board purchase, it would seem that there was more to this transaction than recorded in the official minutes.

⁴DSBM, Volume 4, page 165, meeting of May 23, 1902, and Volume 4, page 168, meeting of June 5, 1902.

⁵DSBM Volume 4, page 171, meeting of July 1, 1902; Volume 4, page 173, meeting of July 2, 1902 Volume 4, page 174, meeting of July 3, 1902.

⁶DSBM, Volume 4, page 177, meeting of August 1, 1902.

⁷Schiebel, Education in Dallas, page 42.

⁸Dallas Morning News, June 16, 1903, page 5.

⁹DSBM, Volume 4, page 198, meeting of December 26, 1902; Vol. 5, page 1, meeting of February 16, 1903; Vol. 4, page 177, meeting of August 1, 1902; Vol. 5, page 20, meeting of June 15, 1903.

¹⁰DSBM, Vol. 5, page 23, meeting of July 15, 1903; Schiebel, Education in Dallas, page 42.

¹¹Dallas Morning News, September 6, 1903, page 8; September 22, 1903, page 5.

¹²DSBM, Vol. 5, page 147, meeting of July 8, 1905; Vol. 5, page 208, meeting of June 4, 1906; Vol. 5, page 283, meeting of May 6, 1907.

¹³DSBM, Vol. 5, page 296, meeting of June 10, 1907. DISD records dated November 16, 1945.

¹⁴DSBM, Vol. 5, page 259, meeting of January 14, 1907; Vol. 5, page 332, meeting of January 13, 1908.

¹⁵Schiebel, Education in Dallas, page 42.

¹⁶Saxon: Reminiscences: A Glimpse of Old East Dallas, page 72, 53: meeting of January 13, 1908.

¹⁷Saxon: Reminiscences, page 54, 59.

¹⁸Dallas Times Herald, May 16, 1955.

¹⁹Dallas Morning News, May 20, 1984; Dallas Times Herald, January 4, 1989.

14. Bibliography

DAVID CROCKETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Harris, Cyril M., ed. Dictionary of Architecture and Construction. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975
Rifkind, Carole. A Field Guide to American Architecture. New York: Bonanza Books, 1980

Saxon, Gerald. Reminiscences: A Glimpse of Old East Dallas. Dallas

Schiebel, Walter. Education in Dallas: Ninety-two Years of History, 1874-1966. Dallas

Independent School District, 1966

Dallas Times Herald, various dates

Dallas Morning News, various dates

Dallas School Board Meeting Minutes, various dates

Designation Merit

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <p>A. Character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas or the United States.</p> | <p><u>X</u></p> | <p>H. Embodiment of elements of architectural design, detail, material or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation.</p> | <p><u>X</u></p> |
| <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event.</p> | <p>_____</p> | <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural or architectural motif.</p> | <p><u>X</u></p> |
| <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city.</p> | <p>_____</p> | <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar feature of a neighborhood, community or the city.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social or historical heritage of the city.</p> | <p><u>X</u></p> | <p>K. Archaeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories or historic or prehistoric value.</p> | <p>_____</p> |
| <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style.</p> | <p><u>X</u></p> | <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment of public pride.</p> | <p><u>X</u></p> |
| <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or specimen.</p> | <p>_____</p> | <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city.</p> | <p>_____</p> |

Recommendation

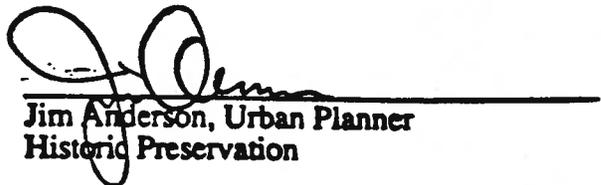
The Designation Task Force requests the Landmark Commission to deem this nominated landmark meritorious of designation as outlined in Chapter 51 and Chapter 51A, Dallas Development Code.

Further, the Designation Task Force endorses the Preservation Criteria, policy recommendations and landmark boundary as presented by the Department of Planning and Development.

Date: April 26, 1993



Kathleen Cothrum, Chair
Neighborhood Designation Task Force



Jim Anderson, Urban Planner
Historic Preservation