

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Rosewater School (D009:0105-001)

and/or common Rosewater School

## 2. Location

street & number 3764 So. 13th Street N/A not for publication

city, town Omaha N/A vicinity of

state Nebraska code 031 county Douglas code 055

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Apartments

## 4. Owner of Property

name Leslie J. Hassell

street & number 202 Caldor Drive

city, town Bellevue N/A vicinity of state Nebraska 68005

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Omaha/Douglas County Civic Center

street & number 1819 Farnam

city, town Omaha state Nebraska

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

1984 Omaha/Douglas County  
title Historic Building Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1984-ongoing  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Omaha City Planning Department & Nebraska State Historical Society

city, town Omaha/Lincoln state Nebraska

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Rosewater School is a brick two-story over raised basement structure built in 1910 in a simplified Second Renaissance Revival Style. Distinctive features include the subtle tripartite composition, the bracketed, projecting cornice, the central entry portico, the heavily modillioned, arched pediments that mark each entrance and the central octagonal cupola.

Rosewater School, 3764 South 13th Street, constructed in 1910; Fredrick W. Clarke, architect; concrete frame structure clad in brown brick with wood frame hip roof; original slate roof material covered with asphalt shingles; rectangular (85'x175') plan; two stories over raised basement; symmetrical facade with end bays defined by brick pilasters; primary entrance defined by Tuscan portico built of limestone; limestone trim also used throughout for capitals and bases of pilasters, central entrances at north and south side elevations, water table, window sills and the classically detailed area above the main entrance; contrasting brick of a slightly different color and texture than the wall brick is used to accent pilasters, to simulate quoins bordering pilasters, and for window lintels and decorative banding; white, painted metal cornice encircles entire structure; cornice is embellished at entries and pilasters with block modillions supported by brackets that impart a stilted appearance to the roofline; segmentally arched pediments enrich the roofline at each entrance; simple, wooden double hung windows are used throughout structure; the name "Edward Rosewater School" is inscribed in the frieze of the main entry portico and "Erected 1910" is inscribed immediately above at the top of the second story windows; a louvered octagonal metal cupola with details that echo the pediments of the entries is centered on the roof; U-shaped stairway defined by Tuscan columns provides access to the central hallway that runs the length of the building at each floor; oak used throughout the interior for floors, window and door trim, and in main entry. The structural integrity of the building is excellent.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates**      1910                      **Builder/Architect**      Frederick W. Clarke, Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Rosewater School is architecturally significant as a simple yet well - designed example of the Second Renaissance Revival style. In the area of education, the building is significant for its commemorative association with Edward Rosewater who, as a State Legislator in 1871, established a single school district and an elected board of education in Omaha.

The construction of a school at 13th and Phelps Streets in 1888 and again in 1910 identified different stages in residential development of that neighborhood. Starting with a frame school which was later replaced by a more prominent brick one, the school's growth and change paralleled the construction in the surrounding area as it became urbanized.

In the 1880's, the land near 13th and Phelps was rugged, with hills and valleys that characterize the Missouri River bluffs on the west side of the Missouri below Omaha. At this location, however, the rugged terrain extends further inland, and provided a break between the relatively flat river plan of Omaha's near south side and the new industrial village of South Omaha. As a result, there was only limited settlement in an area which was far from downtown Omaha and divided from South Omaha by the rough terrain of Syndicate (Spring Lake) Park.

Nevertheless, when the area became part of the City of Omaha in the big annexation package of 1887 which extended boundaries south to "F" Street, the Board of Education constructed a frame, one-story structure atop a hill at 13th and Phelps called Forest School. Two other buildings also stood on the site and were utilized for school purposes. Thirteenth Street was not yet a major thoroughfare, so the entrance to the school was by 50 wooden steps leading up from Phelps Street.

The 1880's brought a real estate platting boom to Omaha which probably precipitated the platting of most nearby subdivisions between 1884 and 1886. Even then, platting in the area was in small subdivisions laid out in an irregular fashion to suit the topography. Like most 1880's subdivisions, the lots were not filled up during the boom years or subsequent depression of the 1890's, but waited until the turn of the century when prosperity returned. By that time, Riverview and Deer Parks had been established nearby, and Deer Park Boulevard two blocks north, helped create a desirable residential neighborhood.

As new homes went up, the School Board saw the need for a new, modern school to serve southeast Omaha, and in 1909 began construction of the new Rosewater School. The school hill was cut down, and the new building oriented toward 13th, which had become a major street with a streetcar line since 1887.

By the turn of the century the Omaha School Board had begun naming schools in honor of eminent educators and Omaha pioneers. This custom resulted in names for Kellom, Howard Kennedy, Beals, Saunders and Train, as well as Edward Rosewater School.

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Edward Rosewater was a Czech immigrant who came to Omaha as a telegrapher in 1863. He was elected to the Nebraska House of Representatives in 1870, and in 1871 pushed through an act which established one Omaha School district and an elected board of education. Immediately prior to that time the schools of Omaha were under the direction of two groups of educational leaders, the Board of Regents and the Board of School Directors. Most citizens of the time felt that the public school system should be reorganized due to the incompatibility of the two boards and the deplorable conditions that existed in the schools. (Nelson)

Rosewater's act provided that Omaha residents ratify the act in a referendum. Since the primary Omaha newspapers opposed the measure, Rosewater started his own free news sheet, The Omaha Daily Bee, which gave the latest news on City and State politics. Rosewater's act was sustained by a vote of the people, and his news sheet's success led him to continue the Bee as a daily newspaper until his death in 1906.

Rosewater School is significant in the area of education as the only physical reminder of Edward Rosewater's contribution to the formation of Omaha's educational system, a system that remains essentially the same today. The only other major structure associated with Rosewater, an imposing brownstone building constructed as headquarters for the Bee newspaper in 1888, was razed to make way for the present Woodmen of the World building in the mid-1960's.

Architecturally Rosewater School is significant as a fine example of the Second Renaissance Revival style, a style used for many major public buildings in Omaha and throughout the state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Although simpler than the City's most important Renaissance Revival buildings - including the New York Life Insurance Building, the Aquila Court, the Douglas County Courthouse and Omaha Central High School - Rosewater School is well detailed and exhibits many elements representative of the style. Among these is a subtle tripartite effect created by the slightly recessed central portion of the long, rectangular structure. The effect is enhanced through the use of pilasters and a change of roof plane, both of which serve to further define the end bays. Other features associated with the style include the modillioned, arched pediments that coincide with each major entrance, the bracketed, projecting cornice, the central entry portico, the stone water table, the quion-like brick and stone work and the central, octagonal cupola.



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