

State of California & The Resources Agency  
 DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary #  
 HRI #  
 Trinomial  
**NRHP Status Code**

Other  
 Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Listings

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Resource Name : Granite Grammar School

**P1. Other Identifier:** Granite Center

**P2. Location:**  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

- a. **County:** Sacramento
- b. **USGS 7.5' Quad:** Folsom, CA **Date:** 2018; **T 10 N R 7 E SW ¼ of the SE ¼, Section 35,** Mount Diablo Meridian
- c. **Address:** 909 Mormon Street **City:** Folsom **Zip:** 95630
- d. **UTM:** Zone 10S, E: 658,490 N: 4,282,170
- e. **Other Locational Data:** APN:070-0151-001; Site elevation: 251'-256'

**P3a. Description:** Located in the original 1855 ninety-eight block gold rush Town of Folsom, the 12,500 SF Granite Grammar School was built in 1915 on 1.29 acres (1/2 block) that was originally acquired by the Granite School District in 1862 and 1875. Granite replaced a one-room wood-frame schoolhouses and a larger brick schoolhouse that were built in 1862 and 1875, respectively. Located in a residential area, Granite fronts Mormon Street on the north, Decatur Street on the east, Reading Street on the west and an alley on the south. Later, the District's acquisition included additional property across Reading Street where a ball field, tennis courts and play area were located. Granite Grammar School was designed by George C. Sellon and Alden W. Campbell as a single-story structure with two two-story towers with Spanish-style architecture. Granite was considered a model of the new modern school design in the early 1900s because of its focus on the pupil's environment and its use for social and community purposes. The new "E-shape" design provided for optimal light and ventilation with a central section for administrative and social functions including an auditorium, principal's office, teacher's office, library and restrooms. Four classrooms were situated on either side. See continuation sheets

**P3b. Resource Attributes:**

**P4. Resources Present:**  Building

**P5a. Photograph**



**P5b. Photo Description:** 909 Mormon St., NE front façade.  
**View:** southeast, 12/28/19

**P6. Date Constructed/Age:** 1915, 104 yrs.  
**Source:** Folsom Telegraph, 7/2/1915

**P7. Owner and Address:**  
 Folsom Cordova Unified School District  
 1965 Birkmont Drive  
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95742

**P8. Recorded by:**  
 Jeremy Bernau  
 Bernau Development Corp.  
 915 Sutter Street, Suite 110  
 Folsom, CA 95630

**P9. Date Recorded:** December 30, 2019

**P10. Survey Type:** California Register Nomination

**P11.** None

**Attachments:**  Location Map  Continuation Sheet(s)  Building, Structure, and Object Record  Photograph Record

## CONTINUATION SHEET

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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

### P3a. Description (continued)

The auditorium was designed to seat 250 with a dressing room, washroom and toilet on either side of a good-sized stage. In addition, two large restrooms were designed flanking the auditorium with the most modern equipment obtainable for school purposes including toilets that flushed automatically from seat action and a ventilating system where air changes every six minutes. A utility chamber was located behind the toilets for easy access to prevent repair delays.

Unlike earlier school buildings, Granite was designed with many open-air features including spacious corridors and cloisters that could be opened during good weather and closed and heated in the winter. Classroom window space was maximized extending almost the entire distance from floor to ceiling and casement type windows allowed for full opening when desired. The classrooms were ventilated through the cloak rooms to the attic with the air calculated to change six times an hour. Steam heating was originally utilized and guaranteed to heat the entire building to 70 degrees in the coldest winter. Denison hollow clay tile blocks were used to construct the exterior walls. Providing insulation characteristics, the hollow clay tile blocks were estimated to save twenty percent on heating fuel bills.

Since the hollow clay tile blocks did not meet new earthquake standards, Granite Grammar School was no longer used as a school after 1966. In 1968, the school district sold the additional recreational property across Reading Street to the City of Folsom for a new park, Granite Park. Also, in 1968, the school district rehabilitated the school building for use as a multi-media, audio-visual repair and testing and research centers, a curriculum office, a maintenance office and storage for textbooks. In 2012, those functions were moved to a new facility.

In 2013, the City of Folsom approved a use-permit for Granite for an entrepreneurs' campus, a public/private partnership headed by Velocity Capital. The campus was technology focused with virtual and physical business incubation to support the creation and growth of local technology companies. A University of the Pacific master's level class in entrepreneurship was also held there. To accommodate the new use, ADA improvements were made to two of the building entries, one of the two offices was converted to an ADA restroom and the west classroom wing was blocked off until additional ADA improvements could be made.

After Velocity Capital was offered alternative space in Sacramento, the Folsom Economic Development Corporation (FEDCorp) leased the east and central portion of the building. In addition to their affiliated entities (the Folsom Chamber of Commerce and Folsom Tourism Bureau), FEDCorp has allowed other local organizations to use the auditorium. Today, FEDCorp is under contract to purchase the building and supports the historic registration.

# BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

- B1. **Historic Name:** Granite Grammar School, Granite Center
- B2. **Common Name:** Granite Center
- B3. **Original Use:** Grammar School
- B4. **Present Use:** Office, meetings and events
- B5. **Architectural Style:** Spanish

**B6. Construction History:** Granite was designed as a single-story with (2) two-story towers. The central section houses the main entrance and the auditorium. Flanking the central pavilion are the classroom wings, two two-story towers and restrooms. The building's central section also has a partial basement for heating equipment. With its low-pitched roof, overhanging bracketed eaves, solid massing, and E-shaped arrangement, the Granite school was designed as a Spanish style that was popular for modern type schools. Entry stairs lead to the gabled main entry with a set of arched double doors. The design clearly identifies the main entrance and suggests that the building serves an important civic function. Like many public schools in the western United States during the early 1900s, Granite School was constructed with hollow clay tile. Clay tile was inexpensive, quick to assemble and resistant to fire. However, with ongoing improvements to building codes and an increased knowledge that the western United States was susceptible to earthquakes, use of hollow clay tile was discontinued because it had little capacity to resist out-of-plane loads, was brittle and subject to shattering. The foundation stem walls for the Granite School were constructed with brick re-used from the brick schoolhouse located on the site.

**B7. Moved?** No

**B8. Related Features:**

**B9. a. Architect:** George C. Sellon and Alden W. Campbell

**b. Builder:** Willam C. Keating

**B10. Significance: Theme:** Education, Master architect **Area:** Folsom

**Period of Significance:** 1915-1951 **Property Type:** Grammar school building **Applicable Criteria:**

1. *It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States.*
3. *It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values*

**B11. Additional Resource Attributes:**

**B12. References:**

see continuation sheets

**B13. Remarks:** None

**B14. Evaluator:** Jeremy Bernau  
Bernau Development Corp.  
915 Sutter Street, Suite 110  
Folsom, CA 95630

**Date of Evaluation:** December 30, 2019



(This space reserved for official comments.)

**B6. Construction History** (continued)

**Building condition.** The building remains relatively intact and is generally in good condition. The roof functions well and exterior walls are in good condition in most places although there is water damage visible on the wall and the ceiling in the south classroom in the east wing and the north-south hall of the west wing. Most load-bearing interior walls appear to be structurally sound. Non-load bearing interior walls include original partitions built with conventional lumber and covered with plaster. Floors are of wood construction surfaced with maple strips, composition tile, and carpet. Classroom floors have been carpeted, and some of the original wood flooring has sustained water damage. The ceiling surfaces are plastered, and some areas need repair. Much of the original wood trim and cabinetry remains in place throughout the building, although some trim has been removed, and some built in cabinets and doors have been damaged or replaced. Mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and life safety systems are functional, but all need upgrades to meet current building codes. The building is currently not completely accessible. The west entrance from the main hall will need an ADA ramp and path to the public way. The wood framed windows have single pane glass and need repair or replacement. A few wood windows are completely missing or damaged and, in others, the window panes are broken or not completely sealed. The window putty that holds the glass panes in the wood frames contains asbestos.

**Building Site.** Originally laid out in 1855 as eight 50'x 140' residential lots in the Town of Folsom, the Granite School building site occupies half a block or approximately 1.29 acres in the heart of Folsom's Historic District. The property is bounded by Mormon Street on the north, Decatur Street on the east, Reading Street on the west and the alley between Mormon Street and Natoma Street on the south. The site is just two blocks from the historic commercial area located along Sutter Street and the Historic District light rail station. The site has been used for public purposes since the 1860s, when Folsom's first permanent public-school building was erected on the property. The site is relatively flat with a slight slope towards Reading Street on the west. Landscaping is installed along the building frontage on Mormon Street and the balance of the site is paved.

**Building changes.** The Granite School has not been significantly altered since its original construction. Several small changes have been made to both the interior and exterior of the building, and are outlined below:

Interior

1. The dividing walls between the cloakrooms in classrooms 3 & 4 and 5 & 6 have been removed and an opening has been created between classrooms 7 & 8.
2. The original restrooms located on each side of the stage in the auditorium have been converted to closets that house mechanical units.
3. A small storage closet was added in the central pavilion.
4. A wall with a door has been added to the north end of the east wing's north-south hallway.
5. A wall with a door has been added to the main hall west of the west office and west restrooms to prevent use of the west classroom wing until the necessary ADA improvements are installed.
6. Carpet and acoustical panels were added to the auditorium.
7. Three new oak and glass arched double entry doors replaced the original doors at the entry and east and west exits of the main hall.

Exterior

1. The arched wood double exit doors at the south end of the north-south halls in the east and west wings were replaced with plywood top and side panels with small windows and metal doors.
2. The building is now roofed with composition shingles.
3. One of the windows in classroom 4 has been replaced with a metal door that used to provide access to a loading dock. The loading dock was removed when the ADA ramp was added to the east entrance to the main hall.
4. ADA ramps were added at the main entrance and the main hall east entrance.

**B6. Construction History** (continued)

**Additional structures.** In the early 1920s, two additional buildings were added to the site west of the main building. The first building was 660 square feet built in the same architectural style as the main building. Instead of hollow clay tile, the exterior walls were made of wood. Interior improvements included wall-to-wall carpet, wood paneled walls, acoustic ceilings and fluorescent lighting. As a result of significant deterioration and the asbestos used in the roofing, flooring and drywall, this building was removed in 2017.

In the southwest corner of the site, a second building was added and was used as a kindergarten. Two smaller buildings were also erected and ultimately combined with the kindergarten building to form a 2,151 building most recently was used as a print shop. This combined building was of wood-frame construction and had vinyl flooring, fluorescent lighting and painted drywall. A furnace and wall coolers provided heat and cooling. As a result of significant deterioration, sub-standard construction and asbestos used in the flooring and drywall, this building was also removed in 2017.

In the early 1980s, two metal buildings totaling 1,725 SF were added. They were constructed with steel I-beam framing with corrugated metal siding over asphalt or concrete slab flooring. They had suspended lighting and space heaters. One building was located on the hall side of the east classroom wing and the other is located adjacent to the back of the auditorium. In addition to storage, these metal buildings served as maintenance facilities until maintenance was moved to Rancho Cordova in the late 1980s. The metal storage building adjacent to the east classroom wing was removed prior to Velocity Capital's occupancy in 2013.

**B10. Significance** (continued)

In California, Granite Grammar School is significant under Criteria 1 as one of the first and finest models of a new modern school design of the early 1900s that sought to improve the student's environment to enhance their education. Granite is also significant under Criteria 3 as representing the work of a master architect, George C. Sellon.

Contribution to education. Schools built during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were largely standardized, utilitarian spaces that were designed to house as many students as possible, maximizing classroom space. While the elevations of some could be quite elegant, they were crowded and impersonal. One scholar described early school buildings as, "almost universally, badly located, exposed to the noise, dust and danger of highway, unattractive, if not positively repulsive in their external and internal experience." As cities and towns became more populous and greater attention was focused on establishing proper infrastructure for a growing society, school buildings became a new project for societal reformers. Public education is one of the central tasks of a democratic society, the buildings that house this important task not only shape the way we teach but provide icons and symbols for the values we hold common as a society. In 1910, A.D.F. Hamlin, Professor of Architecture and Design at Columbia University, wrote about a revolution in school architecture: "How large a span of the life of a community is spent within the walls of its schools, and how important it is to surround children with the most perfect environment for their hours of study. The schoolhouses of any community are gauges of its enlightenment. They should be the best and most carefully constructed building it possesses".

Including all the problems of safety, sanitation, heating, lighting ventilation and others, school architecture, having the physical well-being of the pupil in mind became the earnest study of many leading architects in the country. This new movement also sought to utilize more fully the school buildings for social and community purposes and introduced some new features both in the forms of the buildings and the methods of furnishing. In 1915, Wilbur T. Mills published "American School Building Standards", a 616-page book where the standard methods of construction and best practices of the country were set out to assist legislatures, Boards of Education, building committees and school architects who were often perplexed and in doubt when attempting to meet these needs of their communities. Many education architecture scholars also contributed to this book including A.D.F. Hamlin of Columbia, S.H. Woodbridge of M.I.T. and W.B. Ittner.

Clearly, George C. Sellon and Alden Campbell were part of this movement and designed Granite Grammar School in 1914 as a model of this new school design including the following features:

1. From the main entry, access is direct through three pairs of double entry doors into the 250-seat auditorium. The auditorium is so much apart from the classrooms that it can be used during school hours without interfering with the work in any of the classrooms. The auditorium's high ceilings, natural light, cross ventilation and acoustical properties are all that could have been desired. With its footlights, spot lights and place for a moving picture outfit, the auditorium was well suited for both educational and community events.
2. The entire building is E-shaped, an arrangement which permits every opportunity for best light and ventilation. The main or central portion is the administrative and social center, and on either side are four classrooms of standard size. The center portion consists of the auditorium, principal's room and teachers' room. In a tower on either side, provision has been made for a library and restroom. Opposite the towers are the main restrooms flanking the auditorium.

**B10. Significance** (continued)

3. An outstanding characteristic strongly advised for modern school design were the open-air features. The corridors and cloisters are very roomy. The full-height arched hall window panels could be removed in the Spring, Summer and Fall allowing air to flow freely through the halls and the high vent windows to the classrooms. In the winter, the cloisters could be closed and both these and the corridors may be heated when necessary.
4. The classroom had considerably more window space than the minimum advised by educational authorities. The windows extend almost the entire distance from the ceiling to the floor and are casement giving the benefit of full opening when desired.
5. All lighting is from the north and east. The light will strike each pupil over the left shoulder, a little to the rear, and cross lighting is impossible.
6. The classrooms are ventilated through the cloakrooms to the attic space, and air in the rooms is calculated to change six times an hour. The system also ventilates the cloakrooms which is especially desirable in damp weather.
7. The system of then modern steam heating will provide warmth in the winter months and guaranteed to heat the entire building to 70 degrees in the coldest weather. In the classrooms, all radiators are under the windows. In the winter, any air coming through the windows will be warmed as it enters the rooms.
8. For fire safety, the building has seven exits and, with every room full of children, the entire building can be emptied in 1½ minutes in an emergency.
9. To ensure cleanliness and sanitation, the highest quality equipment then attainable for school purposes was installed. In the toilet rooms, the toilets flush automatically from seat action. Behind each toilet room is a utility chamber where easy access is had to all pipes and fixtures assuring no delay in repairs or adjustments. The ventilation system changes the air in the toilet rooms every six minutes.
10. The outer walls of the building are all constructed of Denison hollow clay tile blocks. There are three air spaces in the wall which assures warmth in the winter and coolness in the summer. This construction means a savings of fully twenty percent in fuel bills. The blocks are covered with cement plaster on the outside and with the ordinary plaster inside.

To enhance students' education and serve social and community purposes, Granite Grammar School is significant as a model of the new modern school design of the early 1900's. Folsom is lucky to have a well-preserved example to help us understand this evolution as every era has had their careful studies of school environments, and every era has had technological innovations and every era has had the goal of making better, more delightful learning environments for young people.

**B10. Significance** (continued)

**Work of a Master Architect.** Granite Grammar School is also significant due to its fine architectural design by a master architect, George C. Sellon. George gained initial acclaim as the first California State Architect, serving from 1907 to 1909. George was an accomplished architect credited with dozens of public and commercial structures including some 100 public schools. He established a long-term prominent and respected practice in California. He was a master in his field.

George was born February 9, 1881 into a prominent California Pioneer family. His grandfather was Judge Sellon, a 49er who served as Yuba County Recorder from 1868-69 and a County Judge from 1876-77. George's father, Latrobe J. Sellon, was born in Marysville in September 1850. L.J. was the supervisor of a railroad mail route between Sacramento and Ogden, Utah. He was transferred to Chicago in 1894 as chief of the night wire. George subsequently graduated from Chicago High School in 1900.

From his boyhood, George was interested in buildings and architecture. After graduation from high school, he took a job in an architect's office and studied at the Armour Institute of the University of Chicago and the Chicago Art Institute. George was also known to have studied under Frank Lloyd Wright. It wasn't long before George was in business for himself as an architect in Chicago from 1904-06. While in Chicago, he married Margaret Hughes in 1904. They later had two children, Walter C. and Virginia.

Following the earthquake of 1906, George returned to San Francisco and went to work for the State to helping to rebuild that devastated city. While in San Francisco, he formed the partnership, Sellon & Hemmings, with E.C. Hemmings. By May of 1907, George accepted an appointment as State Architect from Governor Gillet, and he organized the state bureau of architecture. During these formative years, the office was under the supervision of the State Engineer and up until 1910, the fledgling department had only three employees.

After the '06 quake, the original 1888 buildings at Agnew's State Hospital were severely damaged. Working with Dr. Leonard Stocking, superintendent of Agnew's, George took on the task of designing a whole new campus for Agnew's. It became the first hospital facility in California designed to accommodate progressive, humane approaches to treating the mentally ill. Rather than large centralized blocks of buildings, they focused on decentralized pavilions, or cottages, to provide centers for specialized treatments and for patients with special needs. The small-scale buildings were designed to bring light and air into the therapeutic mix. Thereafter, Agnew's was recognized as a model facility for treatment of the mentally ill.

As State Architect, George also designed the main buildings for the State Normal School at San Jose (now San Jose State), the California Building at the Alaska-Yukon Exposition, the Administration Building at Sonoma State University and San Quentin Penitentiary. During that time, San Quentin was recognized as the model prison in the U.S. George left State service in the spring of 1909 under some pressure from the State Engineer, Nathaniel Ellery, because he refused to devote all his time to the State's work. In 1909, George also purchased his partners interest in their firm, Sellon and Hemmings.

George is also credited as the architect for the Sacramento Hotel, Charlemagne Apartments, American Cash Store, Bel Vue Apartments, Sacramento News Publishing, Hagelstein Building Inverness Building, State Fairgrounds Buildings, California Almond Growers Exchange, Sacramento County Hospital, Caleb Greenwood School, Dos Rios School, Bank of America (6th & K St. branch), Realty Exchange Building, Nevada, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Amador and Sierra County Courthouses, Well Baby Clinic (Oak Park) and Cranston-Geary House (2101 G St.).



**B10. Significance** (continued)

George also designed the California Western State Life Insurance Building at 926 J Street, Sacramento's first skyscraper. At 216 feet tall and 14 stories, the Cal-West was the tallest building in Sacramento when it was completed in 1925. After an extensive renovation, 926 J is now the Citizen Hotel.

George was a member of the American Institute of Architects, Pacific Coast Architects' League, Civic Architects' League, Sutter Club, Scottish Rite Masons, and Woodland Park Masonic Lodge. George died in a Livermore sanitarium on October 13, 1954.

**Historic Integrity**

Granite Grammar School meets all seven aspects of integrity including location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association as discussed below:

Location. The Granite School District purchased the property for its first one-room wood-frame school house in 1862. In 1875, the school district purchased the balance of the half block for its second school house. Built in 1915, Granite Grammar School replaced both the wood frame and brick school houses on the same property. In 1875, the school district also purchased additional property to the west for school-related recreational facilities. Today, 157 years later, the school district still owns the original school property and, 104 years later, the Granite school building is still located there.

Setting. The setting and character of the place where Granite Grammar School was built remains the same 104 years later. The school still sits on 1.29 acres or a half block that fronts north on Mormon Street with Decatur Street adjacent to the east and Reading Street adjacent to the west. The alley between Mormon and Natoma Streets is the school property's southern boundary. Located in the residential portion of the 98 block Town of Folsom laid out in 1855, the property is still surrounded by single family homes on the north, south and east. To the west and across Reading Street, the school owned property that was utilized for recreational facilities including tennis courts, a baseball field and play area was sold to the City of Folsom in 1968. The City of Folsom developed that property as Granite Park. While there is no longer a ball field, tennis courts and a play area are still located there, and the property's use remains the same.

Design. The combination of elements that creates the form, plan, space, structure and style of Granite Grammar School remains the same as it did when it was built in 1915. While updated earthquake standards in 1966 no longer allowed the building to be used as a school, the building was used by the school district for administrative uses, storage and maintenance. While there were minor interior changes discussed above and the addition and removal of outbuildings, the original building has not been compromised.

Materials. Since the building was used for a school for over 50 years and administrative and office uses for another 54 years some materials and/or systems were changed or upgraded. For example, the oil-burning steam heating system was replaced with forced air. However, the radiators and original heating system remain. The wood shingle roofing was changed to fire-rated composition shingles.

Over years, the electrical wiring was upgraded, and low voltage added. Three of the five double arched true-divided light wood entrance/exit doors were replaced with similar double arched true-divided light wood doors while the remaining two were replaced with square doors with small sidelights. Carpet was used to cover the floor tiles containing asbestos. Otherwise, the majority of the materials remain the same including the original brick foundation (brick re-used from one of the schools that Granite replaced on the property), the raised wood floor, the stucco covered Denison hollow clay tile exterior walls, the plaster covered interior wood walls and ceilings, the interior doors, case work and hardware and the wood true-divided light windows.

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**Resource Name:** Granite Grammar School

**Recorded by:** Jeremy Bernau

**Date:** December 30, 2019

**B10. Significance** (continued)

Workmanship. Without substantive changes, the original workmanship is still evident. From the original re-used brick foundation, Denison hollow clay tile walls, floor and roof wood framing, the exterior stucco, the interior plaster, doors, casework and windows, the original workmanship is still evident.

Feeling. As recent visitors and alumni of the school, my mother and aunt (valedictorian-1943), were able to re-imagine their experiences there. They visited their classrooms, remembered the cloakrooms where they hung their coats and stored their lunch boxes, visited the auditorium where they attended many school and community events and walked on-stage where they performed. The principal's and teachers' offices, restrooms and library in the tower were all where they remembered. Outside, in the front, they remembered where their class pictures were taken and, out the doors by the restrooms, are the courtyards where they would go for lunch and recess. They walked to Granite Park where they use to play ball. As prior students, Granite Grammar School was everything they remembered.

Association. While the Granite school is still fully recognizable to its former students and teachers, the community at large attended hundreds of functions in the auditorium or classrooms over the last 104 years. Whether it was performance, like a play, fashion show or Christmas musical, an educational seminar, an organizational meeting, political debate or polling place, Granite School played a significant role as both an educational and community asset.

Alden Campbell and the master architect, George Sellon designed Granite to address the new movement in education by improving the students' environment and utilizing the building for more social and community purposes. Whether it is safety through large corridors and exits, sanitation, heating, lighting, ventilation, methods of construction, shape, orientation and others, these features and characteristics survive today and convey the property's historic character.

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**Resource Name:** Granite Grammar School

**Recorded by:** Jeremy Bernau  
**P5a. Photograph** (Continued)

**Date:** December 30, 2019

909 Mormon Street

1. Front elevation (east portion)  
View to southeast  
12/28/19

East classroom wing, east tower and entry, large classroom windows recent handicap access ramp addition



909 Mormon Street

2. Front elevation (west portion)  
View to southwest  
12/28/19

East tower, entry, west tower and west classroom wing

(4) large hall arched window panels flanking entry are removeable for light & ventilation. High windows above provide light and cross ventilation for auditorium



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 28, 2019

909 Mormon Street

3. Front elevation (west portion)  
View to southeast  
12/28/19

West classroom wing and  
west tower



909 Mormon Street

4. West elevation  
View to east  
12/28/19

West classroom wing, main  
hall west exit and west wing  
N-S hall and south exit.

(6) large arched removable  
hall window panels for light  
and ventilation

Parking and entrance not  
currently handicap accessible



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 28, 2019

909 Mormon Street

5. South elevation  
View to northwest  
12/28/19

West classroom wing, restroom  
And west courtyard



909 Mormon Street

6. South elevation  
View to northeast  
12/28/19

West side of auditorium, courtyard  
exit from main hall by restroom and  
tower behind, chimney for original  
oil-burning steam furnace.

The two classroom wings, courtyards  
in between and the auditorium create  
the E-shaped design for light and  
ventilation



Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 28, 2019

909 Mormon Street

7. South elevation  
View to northwest  
12/28/19

East side of auditorium, east  
Courtyard and metal storage  
building. Corner of east  
classroom wing and south exit stair  
from east N-S hall.



909 Mormon Street

8. East elevation  
View to west  
12/28/19

East classroom wing, main hall  
east exit, high classroom windows  
for light and cross ventilation and  
recent handicap ramp addition



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 28, 2019

**P5a. Photograph** (Continued)

909 Mormon Street

9. Main hall at entry, (3) pr.  
of double doors to auditorium

View east down main hall to  
east exit.  
12/28/19



909 Mormon Street

10. Main hall at entry, entry to  
auditorium

View southeast down main  
hall to east exit.  
12/28/19



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 28, 2019

909 Mormon Street

11. Auditorium stage, chair storage below, right stage entry  
View southwest  
12/28/19



909 Mormon Street

12. Auditorium entry

View north to building entry  
12/28/19





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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 28, 2019

909 Mormon Street

13. First classroom east of entry, dual entry to cloakroom, large windows with high hall windows for cross ventilation, steam radiators below windows

View northeast  
12/28/19



909 Mormon Street

14. Office to left, stairs down to west restrooms and exit to west courtyard on right

View east  
12/28/19



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 30, 2019

909 Mormon Street

15. Office west of entry

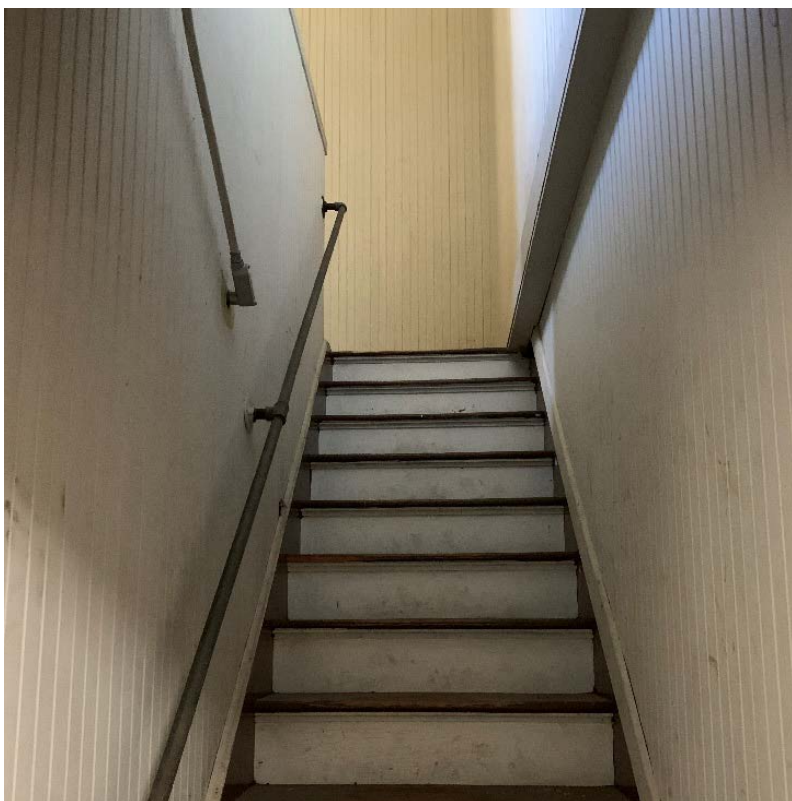
View north  
12/28/19



909 Mormon Street

16. Stairs to tower

View north  
12/28/19



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau  
P5a. Photograph (Continued)

Date: December 30, 2019

909 Mormon Street

- 17. West classroom wing,  
north-south hall to south exit,  
large removable window panels  
for ventilation

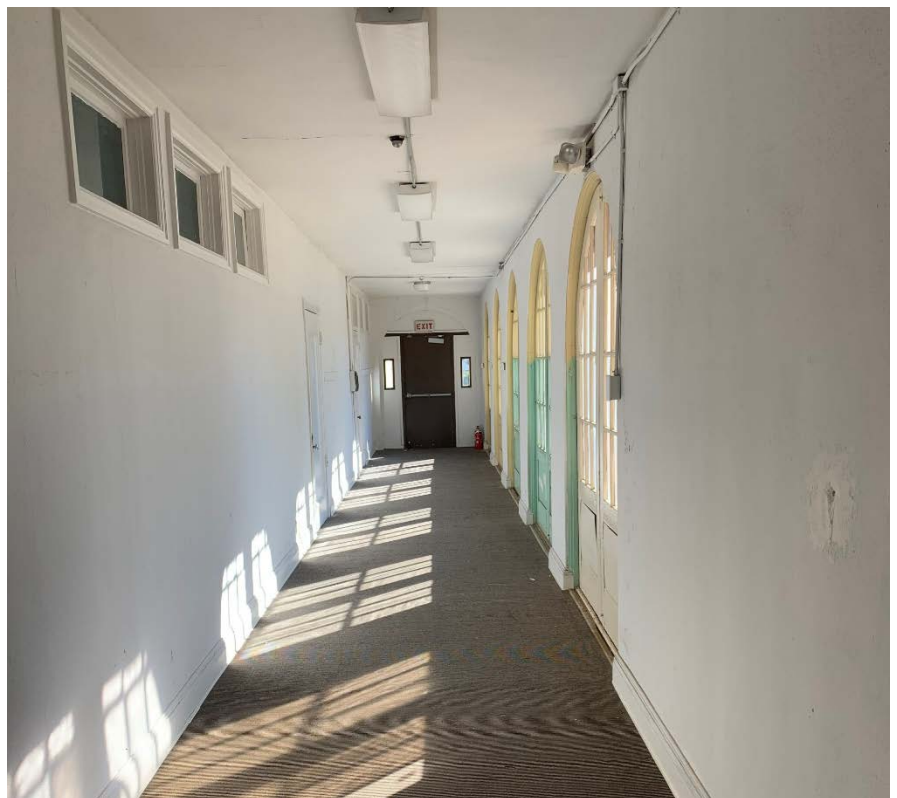
View south  
12/28/19

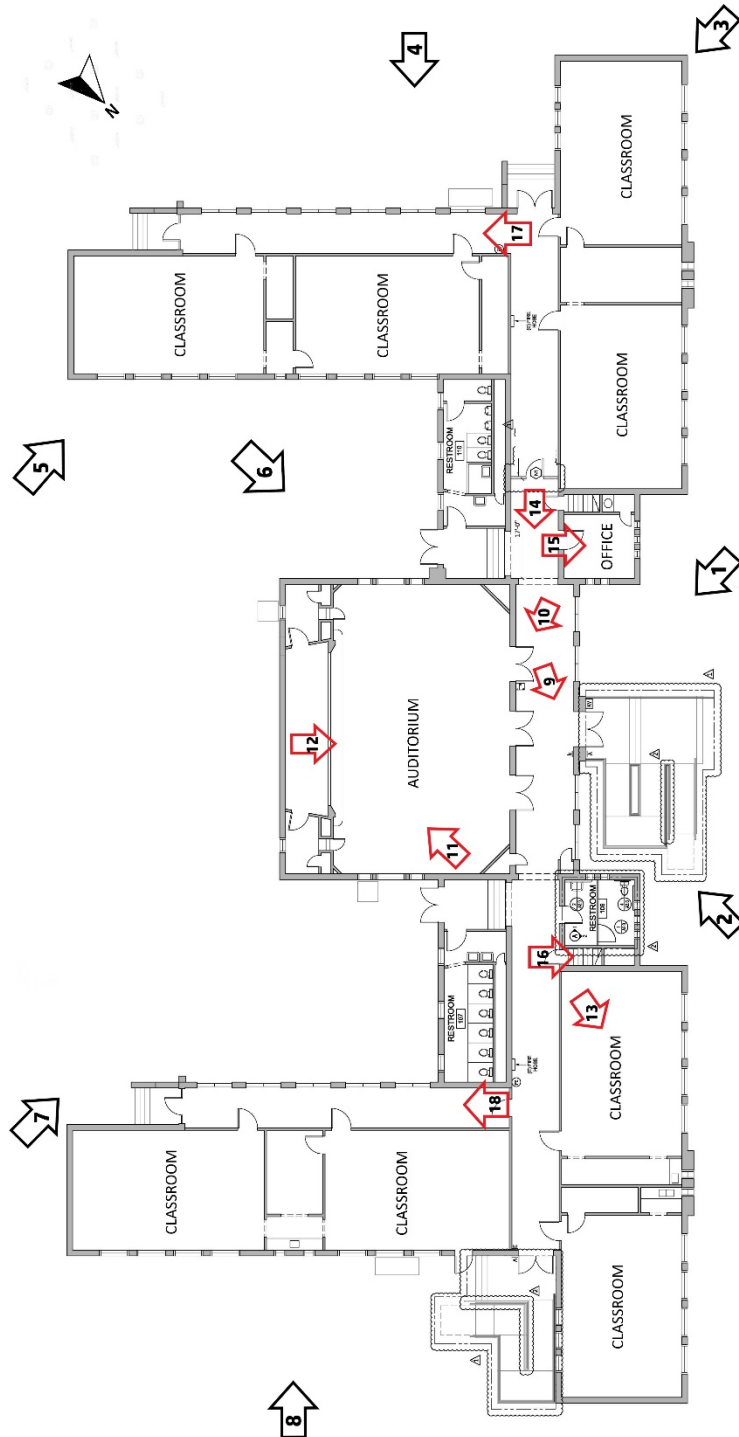


909 Mormon Street

- 18. East classroom wing,  
north-south hall to south exit,  
large removable window panels  
for ventilation

View south  
12/28/19





### Reference Materials

#### Deeds

1. Leverett Bradley to Granite School District, dated September 26, 1862, recorded October 2, 1862, Lots 5-8, Block 65, Town of Folsom, Sacramento County records
2. W. S Beals, administrator of the estate of Jesse Dresser to Granite School District, dated December 22, 1875, Lots 1-4 of Block 65, Town of Folsom, Sacramento County records
3. FCUSD to City of Folsom, dated July 16, 1968, recorded May 7, 1969, Book 60-05-07 Page, Lots 1-8, Block 66, Town of Folsom, Sacramento County records, December 27, 1855, Book of Maps, Map No. 7

#### Books

1. Wilbur T. Mills, "American School Building Standards", 1915
2. Linda Baker, "A History of School Design and its Indoor Environmental Standards, 1900 to Today", National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, January 2012
3. William L. Willis, "History of Sacramento County, California, Biographical Sketches of The Leading Men and Women Who Have Been Identified with Its Growth and Development from the Early Days to the Present", Historic Record Company, Los Angeles, California, 1913
4. Willis, William L., "History of Sacramento County, California, Pages 825-826, Historic Record Company, Los Angeles, CA. 1913

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1. The Folsom Telegraph  
May 30, 1913, "Folsom To Have A New Schoolhouse"  
November 7, 1913, "Schoolhouse In Bad Condition"  
November 7, 1913, "To Hold Bond Election"  
April 17, 1914, "School Bond Meeting Next Thursday"  
April 24, 1914, "A Plea For Better Local School Facilities"  
April 24, 1914, "School Bonds Should Receive Favorable Action Tomorrow"  
May 1, 1914, "School Bonds Voted"  
June 5, 1914, "Planning For New School Building"  
July 3, 1914, "Plans For The New School Building"  
September 18, 1914, "Bids For Schoolhouse Are Rejected"  
October 30, 1914, "Bid For Schoolhouse Is Accepted"  
December 18, 1914, "The School Building"  
January 1, 1915, "The School Building"  
February 5, 1915, "The School Building Agitation"  
April 2, 1915, "Local Schoolhouse Taken As A Model"  
May 7, 1915, "New School Board Is Organized"  
May 28, 1915, "School Furniture Contract Awarded"  
June 18, 1915, "Dedication Of School Building June 25"  
July 2, 1915, "Folsom's New \$30,000 Schoolhouse"  
May 28, 1943, "Grade School Graduates 20"  
March 21, 1968, "Granite School-Eyesore Or A Bit of Nostalgia?"  
July 24, 1968, "Reuse Granite"

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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 30, 2019

**Reference Materials** (continued)

**Newspapers & Periodicals** (continued)

2. The Galt Herald  
April 1915, "One Design Submitted Of New Grammar School"
3. The Sacramento Bee  
December 5, 2014, Ed Fletcher, "Demo Day Presents Investment Opportunity For California Startups"
4. Sacramento Business Journal  
March 19, 2014, "Velocity Venture Capital launching Entrepreneur Campus in Folsom"
5. Folsom Progress  
December 5, 1988, "Granite School Restoration – A Near Reality"
6. Structure Magazine  
Ronald G. Vandehey, P.E., *Old Masonry Schools-Garbage or Gold*, May 2004

**Surveys, Manuscripts and Other**

1. FCEA & FCUSD, *History of the Folsom Cordova Education Association and the Folsom Cordova Unified School District*, May 2004,
2. William Burg, *Sacramento's First Skyscraper-Rebirth at 926J Street*, April 22, 2009,
3. Dunn Environmental, Inc. & Entek Consulting Group, *Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment & Hazardous Materials Survey*, November 2007
4. The Complete Building Show Co., *The Average Man's Home*, Denison Interlocking Tile advertisement 1916
5. City of Folsom, *Granite School Entrepreneurs' Campus CUP*, staff report, PN 13-149, June 5, 2013
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Support letters



**FCUSD**

Office of the Superintendent

**Sarah Koligian, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

January 7, 2020

Mr. Jay Correia, Supervisor  
Cultural Resources Management  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

RE: Nomination of Granite Grammar School to the California Register of Historical Resources

Dear Mr. Correia,

On behalf of the Folsom Cordova Unified School District (District), we are the owners of the Granite Grammar School (aka Granite Center) located at 909 Mormon Street in Folsom and are in support of Granite being listed on the California and National Register of Historic Resources.

Granite Grammar School is the third school located on this property. In 1862, the District built Folsom's first permanent public school on this site, a wood-framed, one-room schoolhouse. In 1875, the District added a second three-room, brick school house. In 1914-1915, the District hired the architects, George C. Sellon and Alden W. Campbell, to design and William C. Keating to build Granite Grammar School, a 12,500 school with eight classrooms and a 250-seat auditorium.

In the early 1900's, Granite Grammar School reflected the new movement in school design that sought to enhance the students' education and serve both social and community purposes. Whether it was safety through large corridors and exits, its innovative E-shape and orientation to maximize light and ventilation, sanitation, heating, methods construction and its large auditorium, Granite became a model for other California schools.

Since the hollow clay tile wall blocks did not meet new earthquake standards, Granite was no longer used as a school after 1966. However, the District used the building for administrative purposes and has maintained it continuously for the last 104 years. The building is in good condition and retains its historic integrity.

Since we are now in the process of selling the property, the District would like to make sure the public is aware of the significance of this historical asset for its contribution to education and the community and, as an example of, the work of master architect, George C. Sellon. While Granite School has been listed as a cultural resource in the City of Folsom's Historic Preservation Master Plan since 1998, we believe that the visibility resulting from State and National recognition would further continue to encourage preservation, awareness and stewardship of this important asset.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Koligian".

Sarah Koligian, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 30, 2019

Support letters (continued)



December 16, 2019

Mr. Jay Correia, Supervisor  
Cultural Resources Management  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23rd Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

Re: CA Register Nomination of Granite Grammar School, 909 Mormon St., Folsom, CA,

Dear Mr. Correia:

The Heritage Preservation League (HPL) is eager to see Granite Grammar School placed on the California State Register; it is already individually designated as a local historic resource. The school is located in the center of the City's designated Historic District, the area laid out as a city by Theodore Judah in 1856, and is one of the most important contributing buildings in the District. It is the only historic school still existing in Folsom as the high school was destroyed in a fire.

The building contributes architecturally through its high artistic value and as the work of the first California State Architect. Just as importantly, it stands as a symbol of community in a fast-growing area that values its sense of community very highly. Many of Folsom's, Rancho Cordova's and the region's residents and leaders were educated at Granite School, and many of today's residents and leaders are descended from Granite students.

HPL was formed in 2003 with the express purpose of advocating for preservation of the historic and prehistoric resources of our area. We successfully worked with the City of Folsom, CalTrans and the Lincoln Highway Association to restore the Orangevale Avenue Bridge; the bridge is now listed on the National Register and won a top national award from the American Public Works Association. HPL views the Granite Grammar School as of equal or greater importance to the region, and we look forward to its inclusion on the California Register.

Sincerely,

Beth Kelly, President

THE HERITAGE PRESERVATION LEAGUE OF FOLSOM  
P.O. Box 353, Folsom, CA 95763-0353  
[www.FolsomPreservation.org](http://www.FolsomPreservation.org)



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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 28, 2019

Support letters (continued)



*"First in the West"*

**FOLSOM, EL DORADO & SACRAMENTO  
HISTORICAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**  
*A California Non-Profit Corporation*

December 12, 2019

Mr. Jay Correia, Supervisor  
Cultural Resources Management  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

RE: Granite Grammar School, 909 Mormon Street, Folsom, CA

Dear Mr. Correia,

On behalf of the Folsom, El Dorado and Sacramento Historical Railroad Association (FEDSHRA), we support the listing of the Granite Grammar School on the California and National Register of Historical Resources.

The FEDSHRA's mission is to educate the general public by preserving and maintaining railroad history in the City of Folsom, County of El Dorado and County of Sacramento and related connections. The continued success of the railroad has depended on an educated workforce and economically vibrant community.

When Granite Grammar School was built in 1915, it was a model of new school design that, over the years, has contributed to the education of the community including the railroad workforce and their families. Granite has also served as a gathering place for community meetings and social functions.

While Granite is no longer used by the school district, Granite's auditorium is still used by community organizations for performances, receptions and business meetings. In addition, the local economic development organization, Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau use Granite for offices and meetings and intend to provide office space for local start-up companies that find it difficult to initially afford Folsom office rents.

Fortunately, Granite Grammar School appears as it did when it was initially built. After 104 years, it is difficult to find buildings that have not been remodeled or have not deteriorated from lack of maintenance or use. In addition, in more earthquake prone areas of California, most buildings built with hollow clay tile have been torn down and/or damaged. The Granite School remains intact and has been occupied since it was constructed. Even prior to the construction of

198 Wool Street • FOLSOM, CA 95630 • Telephone & FAX (916) 985-6001 – Museum (916) 985-6031

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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 28, 2019

Support letters (FEDSHRA support letter continued)



*"First in the West"*

**FOLSOM, EL DORADO & SACRAMENTO  
HISTORICAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION**  
*A California Non-Profit Corporation*

Granite, this property has been a school site since 1862 when a wooden one-room schoolhouse was built on the property shortly after the town of Folsom was laid out in 1855. In 1875, a larger brick schoolhouse also added and the bricks from the second schoolhouse were used for the foundation of Granite. Children as far away as Latrobe rode the train to attend school at Granite School.

Interestingly, Granite School was designed by two very prolific California architects, George Sellon and Alden Campbell. George Sellon was the first State Architect for California and many of his buildings are still standing and in-use today including several California county courthouses, San Quentin Prison, Folsom Prison and the Citizen's Hotel (formerly Sacramento's first high-rise at 14 stories completed in 1925). Many of the fine residences that Alden Campbell designed still stand today including Dr. Hart's residence (founder of Sutter Hospital) and T. G. Schmeiser's residence, the founder of the farm implement company, Schmeiser Manufacturing.

Unlike many communities that have historically significant buildings that are vacant, vandalized and/or deteriorating, Granite has continued to be maintained and the current tenant, the Folsom Economic Development Corporation, a 501 C-3 community benefit organization, is negotiating to purchase, occupy and preserve it. Understanding the importance of this building and property, the City of Folsom already recognizes and has listed Granite on their local listing of significant historical resources.

The Folsom, El Dorado and Sacramento Historical Railroad Association strongly requests the Office of Historic Preservation support the listing of the Granite School on the California and National Register of Historic Resources so that it can be protected and preserved while continuing to be used by the current tenant and new owner.

Sincerely,

Bill Anderson, President  
Folsom, El Dorado & Sacramento  
Historical Railroad Assn., Inc.  
bill@fedshra.org  
916-849-6751

Support letters (continued)



**Folsom Historic District Association**

December 16, 2019

Mr. Jay Correia, Supervisor  
Cultural Resources Management  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

RE: California Register of Historic Resources  
Granite Grammar School, 909 Mormon Street, Folsom, CA

Dear Mr. Correia,

On behalf of the Folsom Historic District Association, we support the listing of the Granite Grammar School on the California and National Register of Historical Resources.

1. Granite Grammar School has been an important facility that has contributed to the education of the children and future leaders of the Folsom community. Since its completion in June 1915, the building and the property of Granite Grammar school still retain their historical integrity. The building remains in the same condition without changes or modifications, except an attached storage building behind the auditorium.
  2. During construction, Granite Grammar School became known as one of the finest modern type school buildings in the state. Unlike earlier school buildings, Granite was designed as an E-shape to permit for the best light and ventilation with many open-air features which were strongly advised for new schools of the time including spacious corridors and cloisters that could be opened during good weather and closed and heated in the winter. Classroom window space was maximized extending almost the entire distance from floor to ceiling and casement type windows allowed for full opening when desired. The classrooms were ventilated through the cloister rooms to the attic with air calculated to be change six times an hour. Steam heating was originally utilized and guaranteed to heat the entire building to 70 degrees in the coldest winter. Denison hollow clay tile blocks were used to construct the exterior walls. Providing insulation characteristics, the hollow clay tile blocks were estimated to save 20% on heating fuel bills.
  3. Granite Grammar School was designed by George C. Sellon and Alden W. Campbell. George Sellon is known as California's first State Architect initiating the position in 1906 and designing and constructing the Angew State Hospital under his authority. Sellon went on to design many public and private buildings including San Quentin Prison, six California county courthouses that are still in use today and Sacramento's first skyscraper, the California Western State Life Insurance building completed in 1925 at 926 J Street (now home to the Citizen Hotel).
- Alden Campbell prepared plans for fine residences including the residence of Dr. Hart, the founder of Sutter Hospital and T.G. Schmeiser, founder of the farm implement company, Schmeiser Manufacturing Company. In Davis, Campbell also designed apartments, offices and public school buildings.

915 Sutter Street Suite 110 Folsom, CA 95630

[info@historicrofolsom.org](mailto:info@historicrofolsom.org)

[www.historicrofolsom.org](http://www.historicrofolsom.org)

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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 28, 2019

Support letters (FHDA support letter continued)

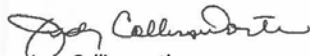
4. The City of Folsom already lists Granite School as a significant local historical resource.

5. While Granite is no longer utilized by the school district, Granite School has been leased as an entrepreneur center where University of the Pacific master level classes in entrepreneurship and venture capital have been held and it services as offices and a meeting place for the Folsom Economic Development Corporation, Folsom Chamber of Commerce and Folsom Tourism Bureau. The large auditorium is also used by for community events and organizations including the Sutter Street theater, Muhr House Foundation and the Folsom Historic District Association.

6. Fortunately, we have a strong and credible community benefit organization the intends to continue to use Granite for economic development, provide space for local start-up companies and continue its use for community meetings, receptions and gatherings.

The Folsom Historic District Association strongly supports the listing of the Granite School on the California and National Registry to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible from substantial change, while continuing to be used as a community asset as it has been for almost 105 years.

Respectfully,

  
Judy Collinworth  
Executive Director

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Resource Name: Granite Grammar School

Recorded by: Jeremy Bernau

Date: December 28, 2019

Support letters (continued)



December 16, 2019

To:  
Mr. Jay Correia, Supervisor  
Cultural Resources Management  
Office of Historic Preservation  
1725 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95816

From:  
Jeff Ferreira-Pro  
President  
Folsom Historical Society  
823 Sutter Street  
Folsom, CA 95630

RE: California Register of Historic Resources  
Granite Grammar School, 909 Mormon Street, Folsom, CA

Dear Mr. Correia,

I am sending this to you on behalf of the Folsom Historical Society in support of Folsom's Granite Grammar School being listed on the California and National Register of Historical Resources. Here are some of the key reasons that tie to the Historical Society's mission

1. Granite Grammar School has been a defining element of Folsom's Historic District for over 100 years. Multiple generations of Folsom resident have attended the school going back to 1915. The school's continued existence is a trigger for many in the community to reminisce about their childhood in Folsom. We are actively collecting these oral histories and fear that the stories will lose some of their meaning and context if the school they reference is lost.
2. Granite School is a unique example for the study of California's architectural history, not just because of the intact historic structure, but also because of its context as an integral part of the Historic District's architectural history. The district represents a layering of architectural styles going back to the California Gold Rush.

The Folsom Historical Society strongly supports the listing of the Granite School on the California and National Registry to be protected, to the extent prudent and feasible from substantial change while continuing to be used as a community asset as it has been for almost 105 years.

Respectfully,  
Jeff Ferreira-Pro  
President  
Folsom Historical Society