



April 17, 2025

**NYCEDC is in receipt of this Resource Evaluation letter from New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, but makes no representations to the Williams Avenue Site's eligibility. It is the responsibility of the Respondent, at the Respondent's discretion, to do their own due diligence to understand eligibility and any implications of seeking a listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places.**



## RESOURCE EVALUATION

DATE: 4/4/2025  
STAFF: Christopher D. Brazee  
PROPERTY: Public School 63  
ADDRESS: 116 Williams Avenue, Brooklyn NY 11207  
USN: 04701.025938

- I. ☐ Property is individually listed on SR/NR:  
name of listing:  
☐ Property is a contributing component of a SR/NR district:  
name of district:
- II. ☒ Property meets eligibility criteria.  
☐ Property contributes to a district which appears to meet eligibility criteria.

### Criteria for Inclusion in the National Register:

- A. ☐ Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;  
B. ☐ Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;  
C. ☒ Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction; or represents the work of a master; or possess high artistic values; or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;  
D. ☐ Have yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

## SUMMARY STATEMENT

Based on available information—including exterior and a few interior photographs—it appears that the former Public School 63 at 116 Williams Avenue in Brooklyn, NY is eligible for individual listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The building was permitted in 1923 and opened in 1926. Its design was attributed to William H. Gompert, Superintendent of School Buildings for the New York City Board of Education—although it may in fact be a late work of the previous superintendent, C.B.J. Snyder, who retired in 1923, the same year the building permits were issued. It was part of a major expansion campaign by New York City initiated in the mid 1920s, “To alleviate the serious overcrowding in the schools caused by immigration after World War I.” Upon opening, the school contained twenty six classrooms accommodating 1,550 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. In addition to classrooms, the building also contained administrative offices (first floor), a cafeteria and industrial kitchen (first floor), auditorium (second floor), and a rooftop playground (third floor).

Public School 63 is a four-story building on a mid-block site that extends through to Hinsdale Street. The neo-Gothic façade is divided into seven bays with projecting corner bays and a central, two-story entrance pavilion. The steel-framed structure is clad in red and black brick with limestone trim. The first story features full limestone window surrounds and a limestone beltcourse. The upper stories feature patterned brickwork, brick window lintels, and cast-stone sills. The fourth story windows are group under wide Tudor arches trimmed with limestone lintels. The stepped brick parapet features low-pitched pediments and cast-stone beltcourse,

medallion, and coping. The side and rear elevations consist of minimally ornamented red and black brick. A two-story auditorium and gymnasium projects from the rear of the main school block. The interior appears to retain many of its historic finishes, particularly in the hallways and other common spaces. Some interior spaces have been subdivided, although many of the partitions are half-height or easily removable.

Public School 63 is **locally significant** under **Criterion C** in the area of *Architecture* as a representative example of Snyder's late-career of school design. The prolific architect's tenure with the Board of Education lasted between 1891 and 1922, and his output can be divided roughly into three periods of school design and construction:

- 1891-1910: The popularization of the H-plan, first employing Renaissance and Tudor Revival styles, and later, more elaborate styles such as English Flemish, French Renaissance and Collegiate Gothic sometimes applied to a high-rise school.
- 1910-1918: The introduction of the Type-A school which utilized a rectangular plan and featured simpler massing, straighter lines, repetitious ornamentation and flat parapets in an effort to standardize design and reduce costs.
- 1918-1922: Development of two new U-shaped plans and two improved Type-A plans to accommodate additional classrooms in the end wings, along with a cafeteria, auditorium and rooftop playground within a centrally located wing.

Stylistically, the building reflects Snyder's widespread use of the neo-Gothic between 1918 and 1922, characterized by a flat roof with a high, crenellated parapet, symmetrical end pavilions, a two-story projecting entrance, wide window bays containing three-four windows per opening, a belt course over first floor windows, decorative details concentrated around main entrance with typical Gothic motifs and a stone base below the first-floor window sills.

The **period of significance** comprises the building's completion in 1926.