

Thurgood Marshall School, Public School 103 Special Resource Study

March 2021

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



**Attend a Virtual Public Meeting
on April 13 at 6:30pm EDT,
see parkplanning.nps.gov/ps103
for details.
Submit comments online or using
the enclosed comment card.**



The National Park Service (NPS) is pleased to announce the launch of a special resource study (SRS) of Public School 103 (P.S. 103), the elementary school of former Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, located at 1315 Division Street, Baltimore, Maryland.

P.S. 103 was originally built in 1877 for West Baltimore's white immigrant population but in 1911 it became a segregated African-American school. Thurgood Marshall attended P.S. 103 from 1st through 8th grade, from 1914 to 1921. In adulthood, Marshall became the lead counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a leading civil rights lawyer, and the first African-American US Supreme Court justice.

The John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act of 2019 directed the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resource study of P.S. 103 and any other resources in the neighborhood surrounding P.S. 103 that relate to the early life of Thurgood Marshall. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the study resources' national significance and determine their suitability and feasibility of designating them as a unit of the national park system.

As we begin the special resource study, we would like to engage the public in discussions about P.S. 103 and any other resources in the neighborhood surrounding P.S. 103 that relate to the early life of Thurgood Marshall. The health and safety of our visitors, employees, volunteers, and partners is our priority. The National Park Service is working with federal, state, and local authorities to closely monitor the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. A virtual public meeting will be held to receive the public's ideas and opinions about the site.

The National Park Service will evaluate the property using congressionally established criteria for national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for direct NPS management. Based on the analysis, the National Park Service will determine whether the site meets the criteria for inclusion in the national park system and will prepare the study for the Secretary of the Interior. The Secretary will then submit the findings and a recommendation to Congress.

We hope you will take time to let us know your thoughts and ideas through the NPS study website. More information and project updates can be found at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/ps103>.

Contents

This newsletter introduces the special resource study and includes:

- Frequently Asked Questions
- About the Study Area
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About the National Park Service



The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world. The National Park Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior and manages more than 400 park units that comprise the national park system. Administration of park units occurs in many ways, from traditional units that are federally managed to non-traditional units that rely on partnerships and may have little, if any, federal landownership.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Special Resource Study?

A special resource study evaluates the eligibility of an area to be designated as a national park or other special designation. The National Park Service collects information about the quality of resources in the study area. If the resources meet the criteria for national significance, the National Park Service evaluates the potential for visitor enjoyment and efficient management and analyzes the feasibility and appropriateness of different management options. The National Park Service provides its findings to the Secretary of the Interior who then presents a recommendation to Congress. Regardless of the outcome of the study, new units of the national park system can only be established by an act of Congress or by presidential proclamation.

How will the Thurgood Marshall School (P.S. 103) and associated resources be evaluated?

The 1998 National Parks Omnibus Management Act (54 United States Code 100507) established the process for identifying and authorizing studies of new national park units. Under the law, a study area must meet all four of the following criteria to be recommended as an addition to the national park system:

- Contain nationally significant natural and/or cultural resources.
- Represent a natural or cultural resource that is not already adequately represented in the national park system or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity.
- Must be (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term protection of the resources and visitor enjoyment, and (2) capable of efficient administration by the National Park Service at a reasonable cost; important feasibility factors include landownership, acquisition costs, life cycle maintenance costs, access, threats to the resource, and staff or development requirements.

- Require direct NPS management that is clearly superior to other management approaches.

NPS personnel will evaluate P.S. 103 and any other resources in the neighborhood surrounding P.S. 103 that relate to the early life of Thurgood Marshall according to the above criteria for national significance, suitability, feasibility, and need for NPS management. If at any point throughout the SRS process NPS staff determine the site does not meet one of the criteria, the study will terminate and a document with a negative finding will be prepared for Congress.

What Are Some of the Possible Outcomes of the Study?

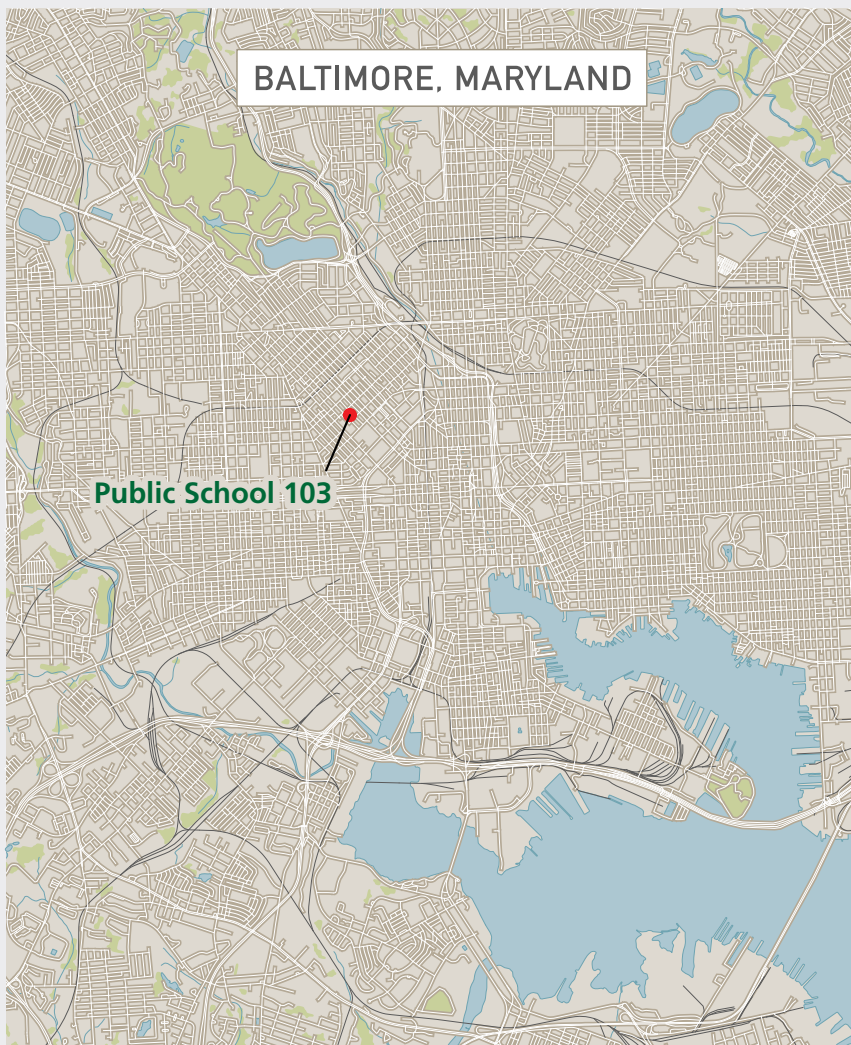
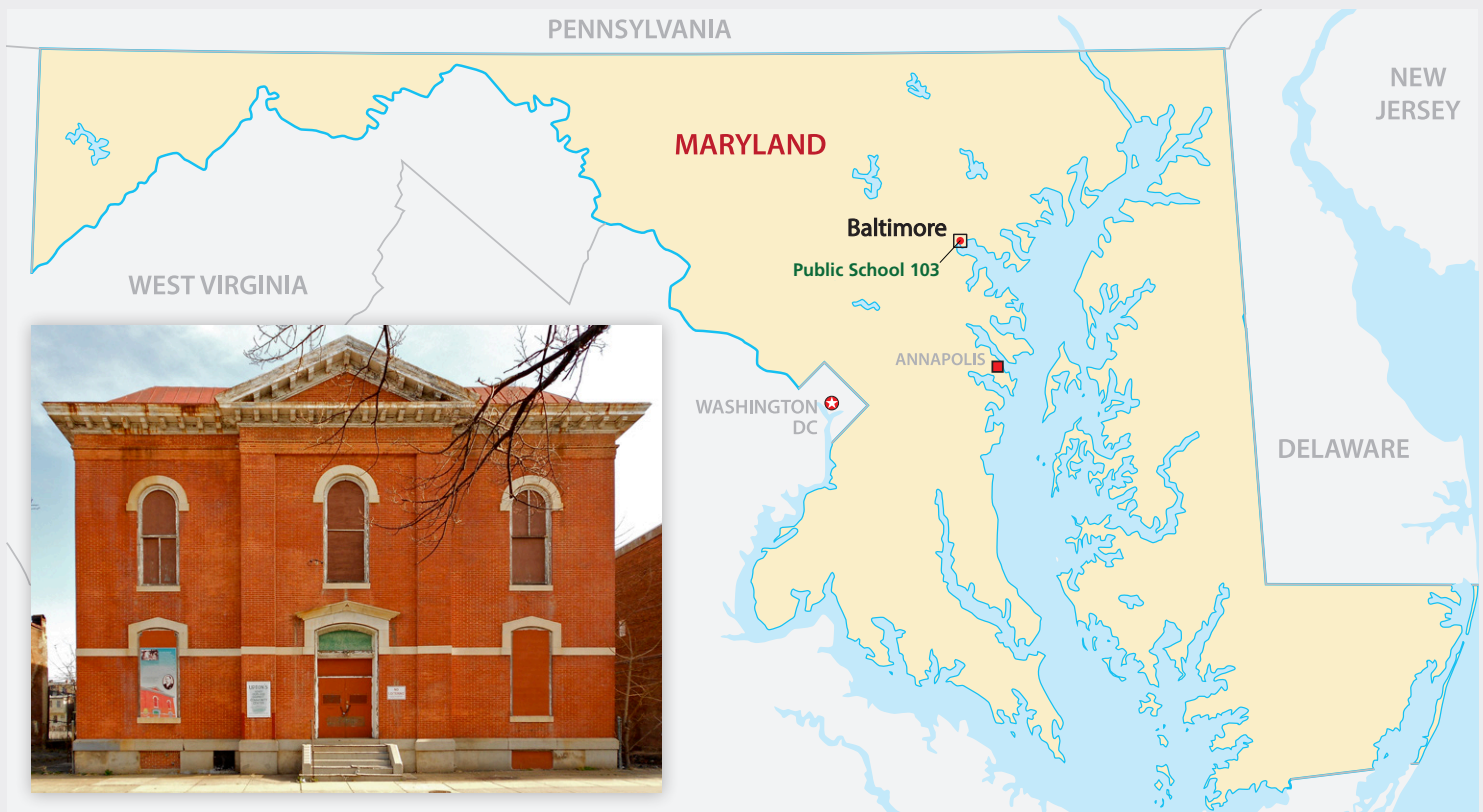
Over the last 15 years, approximately one in four special resource studies have resulted in a positive finding whereby the study resources evaluated meet all four criteria required for inclusion in the national park system. Many studies conclude that the study resources do not meet all required criteria or find that existing management; technical or financial assistance; or local, state, or private initiatives are preferable to the establishment of a new national park unit.

If the special resource study results in a positive finding and a recommendation from the Secretary of the Interior that P.S. 103 and any other resources in the neighborhood surrounding P.S. 103 relating to the early life of Thurgood Marshall warrants addition to the national park system, Congress may or may not act on or follow the recommendation. There is no timeframe for legislative action.

When will I learn the results of the study?

The National Park Service generally does not release preliminary findings or drafts of the study or indicate whether the study is likely to recommend inclusion in the national park system before the study's transmittal to Congress.

About the Study Area

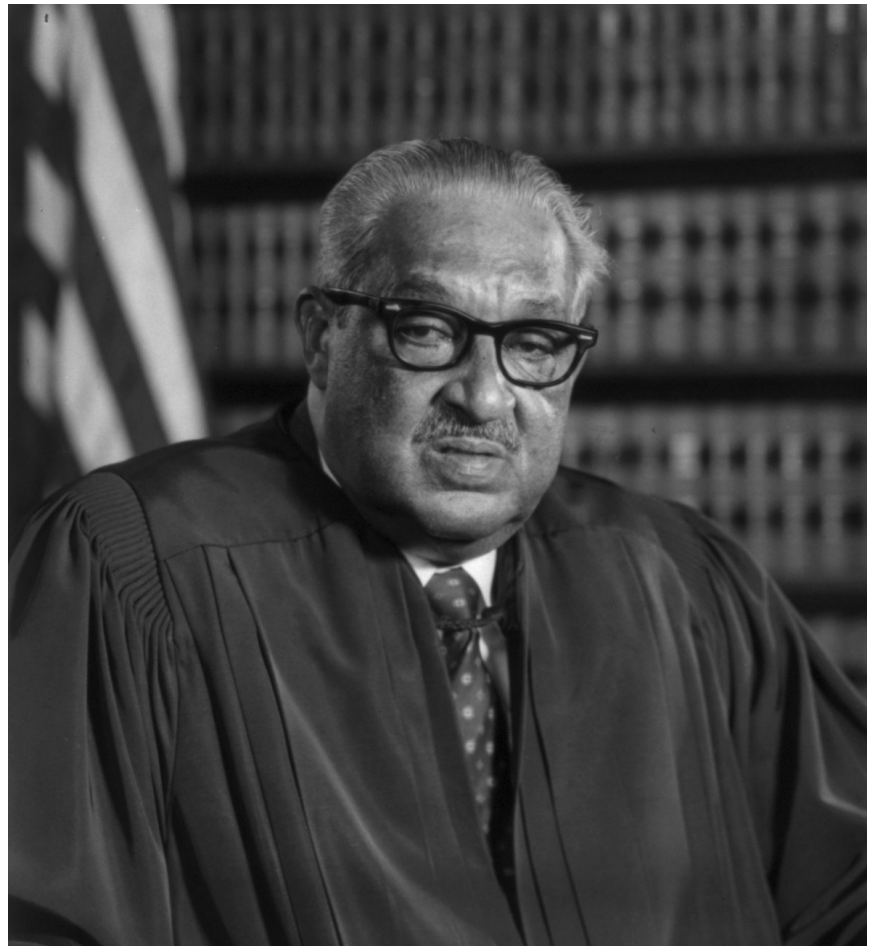
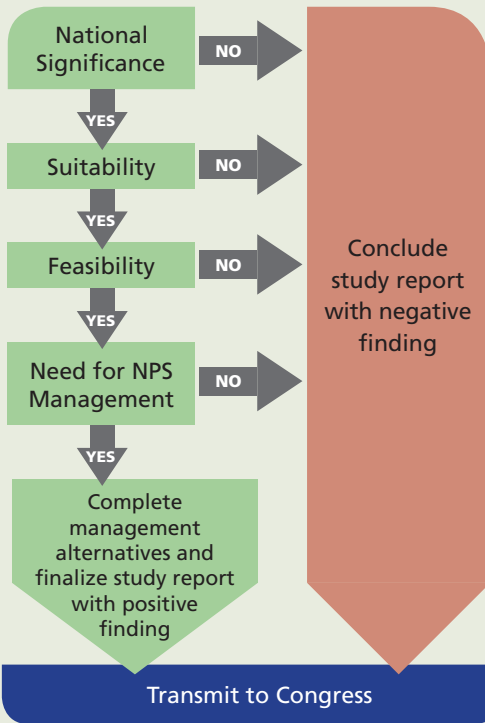


P.S. 103 is located in the Upton neighborhood of West Baltimore, Maryland. The building is listed as a contributing resource in the National Register of Historic Places listing for the Old West Baltimore Historic District. P.S. 103 is being evaluated in this study for its role in the education of Thurgood Marshall, who is best known as the lead counsel for the landmark school desegregation case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954), and as the first African-American Supreme Court justice. The study's enabling legislation also directs the study to consider other resources in the P.S. 103 neighborhood that are associated with the early life of Thurgood Marshall.

Thurgood Marshall lived in the West Baltimore area from his birth in 1908 to 1910. He moved back to West Baltimore in 1914 and lived there until 1936, when he and his wife moved to New York City when Marshall was 28 years old. As an adult, Marshall's accomplishments included systematically dismantling the legal framework for Jim Crow segregation, which became the foundation of the civil rights movement. As a nationally leading civil rights lawyer, Marshall won 29 cases argued before the US Supreme Court. In 1967, Marshall was appointed the first African-American Supreme Court justice and served on the court until his retirement in 1991.

The Study Process

Special Resource Study (SRS) Completion Pathways



How to Participate

We encourage you to learn more about the SRS process and share your ideas during the SRS process by any of the means listed below:

- For information and updates, visit the study site at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/ps103>.
- Send us your thoughts, comments, and information.
 - ONLINE: Visit the web address above and click the “Open for Comment” link.
 - BY MAIL: Send written comments using the attached comment card or by mailing a letter to:

**National Park Service,
Denver Service Center – Planning Division
ATTN: Carrie Miller, Project Manager
12795 West Alameda Parkway
PO Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-9901**

- BY PHONE OR EMAIL: Contact Carrie Miller (project manager) at 303-969-2575 or carrie_miller@nps.gov

- Given the evolving nature of the COVID-19 guidance from national and local health officials, attend a virtual public meeting to learn about the study process and discuss the study with NPS team members. Information about this virtual public meeting will be posted on the study website when available. If you cannot attend this meeting, please visit the the study website.

In your comments, we are particularly interested to hear your thoughts and ideas about the following:

1. How would you feel about the P.S. 103 building potentially becoming a national park unit that would focus on Thurgood Marshall, particularly his early life?
2. Are there places and historic resources in the neighborhood surrounding P.S. 103 related to the early life of Thurgood Marshall about which the NPS study team should know?
3. Are you aware of documents (letters, diary entries, photographs, newspaper articles, etc.) that are not publicly available that relate to Marshall’s early life or his attendance at P.S. 103?
4. Do you have any other comments, concerns, and suggestions for this study?