# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900).

## 1. Name of Property

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic name</th>
<th>Washington Grade School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other names/site number</td>
<td>KHRI #051-2390-00018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of related Multiple Property Listing</td>
<td>Historic Public Schools of Kansas</td>
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## 2. Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street &amp; number</th>
<th>305 Main Street</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City or town</td>
<td>Hays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>Ellis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>KS 051</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zip code</td>
<td>67601</td>
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</tbody>
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## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

- national
- statewide
- local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title
Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO
Date

Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official
Date

Title

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper
Date of Action
### 5. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Check as many boxes as apply.)</td>
<td>(Check only one box.)</td>
<td>Contributing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>object</td>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: School

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

### 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commercial Style

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY

REVIVALS: Tudor Revival

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick

Stone

roof: Asphalt

other: __________________________

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______________________________
Washington Grade School, located at 305 Main Street, is situated on the south side of Hays, Ellis County, Kansas. As elaborated in the Multiple Property Documentation Form “Historic Public Schools in Kansas,” Washington Grade School is an excellent example of a City Graded School property type built during the Progressive Era. The school is situated on a 2.8-acre block and consists of four main sections: the original building (1926), two historic additions (1931, 1951), and one non-historic addition (1994). The original portion of Washington Grade School, a two-story I-form building, houses most of the school’s classroom facilities. Like other City Graded Schools constructed during the Progressive Era, this portion of Washington Grade School is a rectangular brick Commercial Style building with modest Tudor Revival references and a symmetrical primary (southeast) facade. 1 Exterior detailing, such as tabbed surrounds around the principal entries, stone belt courses and coping, label molding, and shaped Flemish parapets, lend a touch of monumentality to the school. A brick gymnasium was added to the center of the northwestern portion of the building in 1931. The gymnasium exhibits simpler exterior detailing than the 1926 school. In 1951, a two-story brick addition also was joined to the northwest elevation, affording two extra classrooms and a basement with a kitchen and cafeteria space. In massing and exterior detailing, this addition complements the original 1926 building. The 1994 addition, located on the west side of the school, is a one-story brick building housing office space and two classrooms. The exterior of the addition demonstrates modest stylistic references to detailing found on the 1926 building. In total the nominated property contains one contributing building and three non-contributing resources, a metal storage shed, a gazebo, and a sculpted memorial. The school retains a high degree of historic integrity. The most significant alterations to the school include replacement windows and doors on the exterior, the installation of suspension ceilings, and modifications to the gymnasium’s flooring, proscenium, and balcony. Despite these alterations, Washington Grade School retains its historic integrity, as seen in its massing, fenestration patterning, character-defining exterior and interior detailing, and configuration of interior spaces. 2 These structural characteristics, as well as the property’s location and setting, continue to convey its role as an historic graded school.

ELABORATION:

Located about three blocks southwest of downtown Hays, Washington Grade School was constructed near the Santa Fe Addition of the city. 3 Situated on the southern edge of Hays, the area to the northwest and northeast of the school is zoned as a neighborhood conservation district, which includes minimal traditional residences and a contemporary multi-housing unit across from 4th Street. 4 Because the railroad bisects Hays from southeast to northwest, the historic core of the town is oriented approximately forty-five degrees off of true north (Map 01). As a result, the parcel on which the school is located is also rotated. To the southeast of Washington School, a historic stone bathhouse is still extant and currently fronts a modest-sized aquatic park. A level lot with paved parking is situated across 3rd Street to the southwest of the school. While

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2 Spencer, MPDF, F-38.
the neighborhood presently contains a mix of historic and contemporary buildings, the development is light, reflecting the traditional character of the area’s built environment.5

Washington Grade School is situated on a level parcel encompassing an entire city block. The 2.8-acre property is bounded by Main Street on the southeast, 3rd Street to the southwest, Fort Street on the northwest, and 4th Street to the northeast (Map 02). The school building occupies the southeastern third of the block, and its principal (southeast) facade faces Main Street. Behind the school, a playground area and a recreational field fill the northwestern two-thirds of the property. While the parcel is primarily characterized by grassy expanses and mature trees, concrete and asphalt pavement extends from the playground area to the northwestern side of the school. For clarity, the following description orients the building to the east. Therefore, the primary (southeast) elevation is the east elevation; the southwest elevation is the south elevation; the northwest elevation is the west elevation, and the northeast elevation is the north elevation (Figure 01).

Non-contributing resources on the property include a metal shed near the north elevation, a small frame gazebo situated on the northwestern schoolgrounds, and a sculpted memorial situated on the southwestern corner of the property. This monument, which includes a sculpture of two children, memorial brick pavers, and three benches, was installed in 2003 to celebrate Washington Grade School’s 75th anniversary (Photo 05).6 Although these non-contributing resources are not historic, they do not detract from the historic character of the school.

1. 1926 School Building
The 1926 portion of Washington Grade School is a rectilinear two-story building with an I-form configuration. The 1926 building and its principal elevation are oriented toward Main Street. The building sits upon a concrete foundation, and striated red bricks clad the exterior. A partial basement is located under the northern side of the building and contains the facility’s boiler and electrical utilities. It is topped with a flat roof contained behind a shallow parapet. The exterior is finished with a continuous stone belt course and the parapets are topped with continuous stone coping. Although the windows and doors have been replaced, all of these units occupy their historic masonry openings. Each window has a stone sill; the windows on the first story have rowlock brick lintels and the windows on the second story abut the continuous stone belt course. All of the windows have been replaced, likely in the late 1970s or early 1980s as part of an energy efficiency initiative.7

The east elevation, which is characterized by its horizontality and its prominent shaped parapets, contains the school’s two front entries. Six bays organize this symmetrical façade. The end bays contain no fenestration (Photos 01, 03). These bays each contain a two-story vertical rectangular motif. A stone sill defines the bottom of each motif; stacked brick headers

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7 “School Board Hears Shannahan Report Concerning Sex Film,” The Ellis County Star, April 9, 1981.
accentuate the sides, and the tops abut a stone belt course. A labeled architrave orments the top center of the motif. Approximately three feet above the belt course, the horizontal stone coping caps the parapet.

The second and fourth bays consist of shallow rectangular projections, each containing a double-door entryway (Photos 01, 03). A non-historic concrete stoop with three ascending stairs allows access to the two front entries. Historic knee walls, constructed from brick and topped with a stone coping, flank the stoop. A modern concrete ramp extends from the side of each stairway. Tabbed masonry surrounds and label mold lintels frame both entries. The doors themselves are non-historic replacement units. An etched stone entablature above each entrance reads “WASHINGTON”. The top of each entablature abuts a stone sill, above which is a multi-panel window unit. Each nine-pane unit, defined by two vertical mullions and two horizontal mullions, extends vertically and intersects a stone belt course, creating a hood above the windows. Historically, each of these units contained a network of muntins between each of the mullions (Figure 02). Above the multi-paned windows, a shaped Flemish parapet caps the entry bays. Raked stone coping outlines each parapet, and seven stone finials accent the coping. The faces of both parapets contain a centrally placed slit window indentation. Historically, the sides of each entry bay projection contained rectangular vents. Although these vents have been removed, the masonry openings remain, and wood framing is still visible on the northeast projection.

The central two bays contain a ganged set of five one-over-one windows at each story. (Photos 02, 04). Historically, each of these units contained multi-paned eight-over-twelve windows (Figure 02).

North Elevation
Two uneven bays organize the two-story north elevation of the 1926 building. The primary bay of this elevation contains a ganged set of five one-over-one windows at each story (Photo 05). The dimensions and treatment of the masonry openings match those on the east elevation. To the north of the ganged windows, a single one-over-one window pierces the wall at each story. Directly in front of the north elevation, a flight of concrete stairs descends along the building, allowing exterior access to the basement. A metal handrail is located along the stairwell. A modern covered utility box is situated to the north of the stairwell. The 1951 addition extends to the west of the 1926 building.

West Elevation
The only portion of the 1926 school that is visible from the west elevation is a small, rectangular section of the second story on the southern side of the building. Viewed from the west, this visible portion is situated behind the one-story 1994 addition (Photo 06). It contains two one-over-one windows, one located on the northern end of the visible section and the second on the southern end. The tops of both windows converge with the stone belt course that spans the upper portion of the elevation.

South Elevation
The south elevation of the 1926 portion contains asymmetrically placed openings (Photos 07, 08). On the first story, two small rectangular windows are paired in close proximity to each other on the elevation’s western half. On the eastern half
of the first story, a one-story semi-hexagonal bay projects from the main wall. This bay contains a flat roof behind a parapet. The side walls of the bay each contain a rectangular one-over-one window, and a ganged set of four windows pierce the primary face. A continuous stone belt course spans the projecting bay, forming the top of its windows. Approximately two feet above the belt course, stone coping caps the wall of the semi-hexagonal bay.

On the second story of the south elevation, two one-over-one windows are evenly spaced on the elevation’s western half. A ganged set of five one-over-one windows is centrally located on the eastern half of the elevation directly above the semi-hexagonal bay on the first story.

2. 1931 Gymnasium Addition
The two-story gymnasium addition, built in 1931, is centered on the western side of the 1926 building.8 Today the gymnasium block is situated between the 1951 and 1994 additions. Due in part to its central position and because of later additions to the school, most of the gymnasium’s exterior is not visible. Only the south and west elevations afford an exterior perspective of the gym, and these are only partial views (Photo 06). Striated bricks of variegated color clad the exterior of the gymnasium, closely matching the masonry used on the 1926 school. Stone coping caps the parapet walls; this coping aligns with the belt course of the adjoining additions. The only other ornamentation on this addition is a stone label mold architrave centered in the upper façade of the south elevation. No openings pierce the visible walls.

3. 1951 Classroom Addition
The school expanded to the west in 1951, providing space for two additional classrooms, a kitchen and cafeteria, a west stairwell, and a west entry point. This addition is a two-story rectangular building with similar massing to the 1926 school. The addition’s exterior styling, too, closely matches the 1926 building. Situated on a full concrete basement, the addition is clad in striated bricks set in deeply recessed mortar. It is topped with a flat roof behind a shallow parapet. Imitating the detailing found on the 1926 school, the masonry openings in the 1951 addition contain stone sills and rowlock brick lintels, a continuous stone belt course surmounts the upper story masonry openings, and stone coping caps the parapet. The composition of the windows, which are dominated by historic glass blocks on the 1951 addition, is the most striking stylistic difference between this portion of the school and the 1926 school building. The visible exterior of the 1951 addition is limited to the north elevation, the west elevation, and a narrow portion of the south elevation.

North Elevation
The north elevation of the 1951 addition extends west of the 1926 building. Five irregularly sized bays organize this elevation, which projects slightly past the 1926 school building (Photo 05). Except for the westernmost bay, the first and second story bays are nearly identical. On the first story, an auxiliary entry delineates the western bay. The remaining masonry openings accommodate mixed composition windows, which are defined by metal hopper windows on the bottom and 8” by 8” ribbed glass blocks on the top. The central bays are twice as wide as the outer bays. While the ribbed glass block windows on all these openings are likely historic, the adjoining hopper windows replaced older steel units. The auxiliary entry leads to a lower-level classroom. An exhaust duct is mounted immediately to the left of the entry. To the right of the entry, a brick flower bed projects from the main wall and wraps the corner onto the west elevation.

West Elevation
The west elevation of the 1951 addition, like the north elevation, is fully visible from the exterior. A one-story brick portico covers most of the first story of this addition. (Photo 06). The first story contains a double-door entry, situated slightly off-
center, and no additional fenestration. The entry doors, which are non-historic, are composed of metal and include slit windows. A fixed transom sits directly above the doors and was likely replaced when the doors were updated. The brick portico is centered on this entry. The portico is supported by three rectangular brick columns and an enclosed wall on its north face. The portico’s enclosed wall contains three vertically stacked square openings, each encompassing four 8” by 8” glass blocks. Rowlock brick lintels span the openings between each column, and the portico is topped with a flat roof outlined by stone coping. The brick flower bed which began on the north elevation continues along the west elevation and terminates at its junction with the portico. The second story of the west elevation contains three evenly spaced windows with the southernmost window aligned with the entry. These windows, like the windows on the north elevation, are mixed composition units with historic hoppers.

South Elevation
The exterior of this addition’s south elevation is only partially visible. This section of the wall, which corresponds to an interior stairwell, is largely dominated by its historic ribbed glass block window.

4. 1994 Addition
A 1994 one-story brick addition adjoins the western side of the school. While clearly distinct from the 1926 school, the 1994 addition imitates some of the exterior styling found on the historic building and additions. In overall form, this addition is a rectilinear building with a broad flat roof. Because of its positioning, only three exterior sides of this addition are visible: the north elevation, west elevation, and south elevation. Although the bricks differ slightly in color, the variegation is more muted than the bricks on the other portions of the building. Along the upper portion of the addition, two rows of gray masonry blocks imitate the belt course and coping found on the 1926 school building (Photos 07, 08). The addition contains two main entrances (a double-door northwest entry and a double-door southwest entry) and two auxiliary entrances along its northwest elevation. A shaped parapet above the south entry mimics the historic shaped parapets on the 1926 portion of the school. This entry abuts and is inset slightly from the 1926 building.

Interior
Washington Grade School maintains much of its historic interior configuration. The inside of the school is divisible into four portions: the original 1926 school, the 1931 gymnasium addition, the 1951 classroom addition, and the 1994 extension. The single-loaded corridor that organized the 1926 portion of the school became a double-loaded corridor with the addition of a gymnasium in 1931. Throughout the interior of the 1926 school and the 1931 and 1951 additions, several historic character-defining features are still extant. The stairwells and corridor floors are uniform terrazzo, and plastered walls can be found throughout the first and second floors – common surface treatments for historic graded schools.9 The 1926 school also maintains many historic built-ins, and its corridors are accentuated by multi-lite wood doors with transoms (Photo 14). Several historic elements are preserved in the 1931 Gymnasium addition, such as the historic interior entries adjoining the 1926 school, configuration of spaces, and skylight opening. The 1951 addition exhibits its original single-corridor floorplan, which intersects the 1926 school building perpendicularly. Historic character-defining features in the 1951 addition include uniform terrazzo flooring on the first and second floor corridors and expansive glass block windows.

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9 Spencer, MPDF, F-34.
Washington Grade School
Name of Property

Ellis County, Kansas
County and State

1. 1926 School Building:

First Floor
The 1926 portion of Washington Grade School is an I-form building with a central hallway. Two entry vestibules at opposite ends of the east elevation lead to open stairwells. Non-historic fire doors installed on the side walls of both entry corridors connect to adjoining classrooms. Terrazzo flooring blankets the entry vestibules. Suspended ceilings today cover historic plaster.\(^\text{10}\) The uniform terrazzo flooring found in the vestibules continue into the stairwells. One stairwell connects to the southern terminus of the main hallway, and the other stairwell connects to the northern terminus. The walls of both stairwells are finished in plaster and maintain their historic chair rail and wood hand railings. Terrazzo from the flooring transitions seamlessly onto the stairs. The ceilings underneath the landings and within the main stairway cavities contain glue-on acoustic tiling which, as suggested in the entry corridors, is adhered directly to the plaster ceilings. In each stairwell, two structural beams finished in plaster line the front and back edges of the landing. Decorative plaster scroll brackets nestle underneath the support beams (Figure 03). In each stairwell, a non-historic walled partition, with a fire door, separates the stairwell from the main corridor.

A central corridor runs the length of the 1926 building. This corridor provides access to seven principal spaces on the first floor: four classrooms (one at the southern terminus, two along the eastern side of the hallway, and one at the northern terminus), two restrooms (a girls’ facility at the southern terminus and a boys’ facility at the northern terminus) and access to the 1931 gymnasium. Like the entry corridors and stairwells, the main hallway features uniform terrazzo flooring. Although it retains its plaster walls, a non-historic mural has been painted on both sides of the hall. Historic wood doors punctuate the corridor walls. Each classroom door on the first floor contains six lites arranged above a single panel; above the doors, wood transoms with reinforced glass contribute to the historic character. Wood trim, including wood chair rails and ceiling moldings, line most of the hallway. While the ceiling appears to retain its historic height, acoustic tiling has been applied to the surface.

South Classroom

The south classroom was most likely constructed as a kindergarten area. According to the Multiple Property Document, the kindergarten rooms in Progressive Era schools often included a curved bay and encompassed unique amenities such as a fireplace, storage cubicles, and restrooms.\(^\text{11}\) The southern classroom fits this description well. It contains a rectangular footprint with a projecting bay; a false fireplace is mounted on the room’s eastern wall, and two separate toilet vestibules adjoin the western wall. The fireplace is equipped with a keystone over its opening and is topped with a raked wood mantel. The hexagonal projecting bay dominates the southern side of the room. A built-in wood bench hugs the contours of the projection. Along the room’s northern wall, an open cloak closet recesses into the wall. On the floor, red and green linoleum

\(^{10}\) At one time, older acoustic tiling was likely glued directly onto the historic plaster ceiling.

\(^{11}\) Spencer, MPDF, F-32.
tiles are arranged in a checkered pattern. A unique touch on the flooring are four thematic insets placed near the corners of the room; they depict a duck, a swordfish, a hound dog, and a sailboat (Figure 04). Due to newer suspension tiling and lighting, the ceiling is slightly lower than its historic height.

The remaining classrooms on the first floor share common traits. They are characterized by rectangular layouts with single entry points and recessed cloak rooms. The finishes in these spaces include checkered linoleum floor tiles, plaster walls, and acoustic tiles adhered to the ceiling. Like the south classroom, these rooms also contain thematic tile insets near their respective entries.

The restrooms on the first floor retain their historic layouts. They include terrazzo flooring, plaster finishing on the walls, and plaster ceilings. Apart from modern sinks, the restrooms also retain their historic fixtures.

Second Floor
The second floor of the 1926 building largely mirrors the configuration of the first floor. Two stairwells lead to a central corridor. Non-historic partitions with fire doors separate the stairwells from the corridor (Photo 09). This corridor provides access to six principal spaces: four classrooms (one at the southern terminus, two along the eastern side of the hallway, and one at the northern terminus) and two restrooms (a girls’ facility at the southwestern terminus, a boys’ facility at the northeastern terminus). Two entries located along the western wall of the hallway lead to a defunct gymnasium balcony. The balcony opening is currently enclosed with gypsum board walls, creating a long, enclosed space.

The arrangement and dimensions of spaces on the second level is similar to the first floor. Some differences include the lack of a projecting bay on the southern classroom and two office spaces adjoining the southern terminus of the hallway. Surface treatments on the second floor also reflects the on the first level. Uniform terrazzo flooring and plaster walls clad the corridor, which is finished with a wood chair rail and a thin ceiling crown (Photo 10). Acoustic tile s are adhered to the ceilings throughout the second level, apart from the two eastern classrooms, which contain newer suspension ceilings and lighting (Photo 13). The most significant variation in surface treatments is the classroom flooring, which maintains its historic wood planking.

The restrooms on the second floor continue to retain their historic layouts and finishes, which include terrazzo flooring, plaster walls, and plaster ceilings. Many historic fixtures are extant in both restrooms; however, a stall for laundry hook-ups has been installed over the urinals in the boys’ room.

Basement
A partial basement is situated under the northern side of the 1926 building. The floors, walls, and ceilings of this space are primarily finished in concrete. It contains the school’s boiler, electrical utilities, and an exterior access to the north elevation.
2. 1931 Gymnasium Addition

The gymnasium contains a two-story interior volume. A rectangular space appended to the western side of the 1926 building, the gymnasium encompasses a recreational area and a main stage on the western side of the gym flanked by two side-stage rooms. Four entry points provide access to the recreational area; two double-door entries located along the eastern wall lead to the main corridor in the 1926 school, a single door on the northern wall leads to the main corridor in the 1951 addition, and a single door on the southern wall leads to the hallway of the 1994 addition. The two double-doors are made of wood; the upper half of each door contains six frosted lites and the lower portion is indented with a single panel. Each set of doors retains its historic hardware, speed reducers, and hand-painted lettering displaying the words “Auditorium” and “Gymnasium” (Figure 05). Two entries situated at the opposite ends of the gymnasium’s western wall provide access to the side-stage rooms.

Finishes in the recreation space include plaster walls, wood trim detailing, and acoustic tiles applied to the ceiling. Non-historic safety mats line the perimeter walls, and carpet covers the historic wood floor. A centrally placed skylight is likely an historic opening.12 The stage space appears to maintain its historic wood flooring, plaster walls, and plaster ceilings. From the stage, the proscenium opening is also discernable and reveals plaster scroll brackets situated at both corners of the opening. From the stage, the proscenium opening is also discernable and reveals plaster scroll brackets situated at both corners of the opening.

The gymnasium has experienced some modifications. Gypsum board walls infill the proscenium on the western wall although the historic opening remains discernable due to a slight indentation between the infill and the historic plaster wall, and the historic wood storage drawers underneath the proscenium remain (Photo 015). The infilled balcony opening that formerly spanned the eastern wall also remains discernable due to a wood hand railing that spans the length of the balcony (Photo 016).

3. 1951 Addition:

First Floor

The first floor of the 1951 addition is principally defined by a square entry vestibule, a switchback stairwell, a long corridor, and a single classroom. The addition’s corridor parallels the northern wall of the gymnasium and intersects the northern terminus of the 1926 hallway perpendicularly. The classroom, located along the northern side of the corridor, spans nearly the entire length of the addition. Replicating the finishes employed in the 1926 building, the corridor and the stairwell in the 1951 addition are clad in terrazzo flooring and plaster walls. As on the first level of the 1926 building, non-historic mural art is painted onto the sides of the hallway.

12 Sanborn Map, Hays, Kansas, 1943.
The square entry vestibule, centrally located on the western end of the 1951 addition, provides an exterior entry point at the rear of the school (Photo 12). The entry corridor opens to a switchback stairwell, which provides access to a partial basement and to the second floor of the 1951 addition. A two-story glass block window pierces the southern wall of the stairwell. The opposite side of the vestibule provides access to a utility room and a small service area. The entry vestibule leads to the addition’s main corridor, which provides access to the first-floor classroom and a storage room.

The first-floor classroom exhibits a rectangular footprint with a shallow protrusion along the western side of the room, allowing space for an L-shaped counter, sink, storage cabinets, and two toilet vestibules. An open cloak closet is recessed into the southern wall. Beneath the mixed-composition windows, horizontal wood shelving stretches across the north side of the room. Linoleum and carpeting cover the floor, and acoustic tiling is adhered to the ceiling.

Second Floor
The configuration of spaces on the second floor largely mirrors the first floor. The stairwell leads to an open landing, which provides access to a teacher’s lounge and the corridor. The teacher’s lounge, an irregularly shaped room with an accompanying restroom facility, is tucked into the western corner of the addition. Past the stairwell landing, a single classroom, which nearly spans the length of the addition, is situated along the northern side of the corridor (Photo 11). The classroom occupies a rectangular footprint and contains a grid of large built-in cabinets along the southern wall, reflecting its function as a music room. A single entry near the end of the room contains a three-lite wood door with transom. Under the mixed-composition windows, additional wood shelving extends across the north side of the room. Vinyl tile and carpeting cover the floors, and suspended tiles hang from the ceiling (Photo 17).

Basement
The full basement houses the school’s kitchen and cafeteria areas. The kitchen is situated in the western corner of the basement and occupies a roughly square layout. The kitchen floor is covered in modern industrial tiles and the walls are clad with concrete masonry units and plaster. Although the appliances have been removed from the kitchen, an exhaust hood remains suspended from the ceiling. The cafeteria area is situated to the east of the kitchen and occupies a roughly rectangular layout. While this space preserves its historic floor tiles and plaster walls, it contains a modern suspension ceiling. A door on the north side of the cafeteria provides access to the outside, and another door on the east side of the cafeteria leads to the 1926 boiler room.

4. 1994 Addition
The interior of the 1994 addition contains a central corridor that provides access to administrative offices, two classrooms, and two entry vestibules. An open entry on the west side of the first-floor corridor of the 1926 building leads into the main corridor of the 1994 addition. Finishes in this addition include vinyl floor tile, painted concrete masonry blocks and gypsum board on the interior walls, and suspended ceiling tiles.

Integrity
Washington Grade School retains historic integrity as a City Graded School constructed during the Progressive Era. The building remains in its historic location. Its immediate setting has not been encroached upon, and the surrounding neighborhood remains largely residential as it was historically. The most widespread exterior alterations to the 1926 and 1951 portions of the school are modified windows and doors. On the school’s interior, the most significant alterations include the installation of suspension ceilings, the erection of walled partitions and fire doors between the east stairwells.

and the main hallway corridor, reinforced glass panes in transoms, and the addition of painted murals along the hallway of
the 1926 portion of the school. The gymnasium has experienced the most significant alterations, but still clearly conveys its
historic function. Although the proscenium and the balcony areas have been infilled, their boundaries are still discernable
due to an indentation between the drywall and the historic plaster wall. As outlined in the MPDF, Washington School
continues to express integrity of design, materials and workmanship through its built attributes. The school retains its historic
massing and exterior form, roof configuration, primary exterior and interior building materials, pattern of fenestration,
exterior and interior detailing, and overall arrangement of interior corridors, classrooms, and auxiliary facilities.14 In addition
to its built attributes, the school’s location and setting clearly convey its function as an early twentieth-century City Graded
School.

14 Spencer, MPDF, F-38.
8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [x] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [ ] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)
Property is:

- [ ] A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C a birthplace or grave.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorating property.
- [ ] G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
EDUCATION

Period of Significance
1926-1951

Significant Dates
1926
1931
1951
1994

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Mann and Company (1951)

Period of Significance (justification)
The period of significance, 1926-1951, represents the year Washington Grade School was first constructed as a City Graded School property type during the Progressive era, and extends to 1951 to capture the historic additions.

Criteria Considerations (justification)
N/A
**Narrative Statement of Significance**

**SUMMARY:**

Washington Grade School, located at 305 Main Street in Hays, Kansas, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of EDUCATION. The period of significance is 1926 to 1951, representing the initial date of construction until the completion of the final historic addition. As defined by the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) “Historic Public Schools of Kansas,” this facility is an excellent example of a City Graded School property type constructed during the Progressive Era. Built during a period of rising student enrollment, the construction of Washington Grade School alleviated the growing Hays School District in the 1920s. The building consists of four main sections: the original building (1926), two historic additions (1931, 1951), and one non-historic addition (1994). In Kansas, the earliest graded schools in cities began emerging in the late nineteenth century. During the ensuing Progressive Era (1900 to 1930), education was informed by an overarching philosophy of scholastic standardization and accreditation. This movement even stressed the standardization of school design. As a result, graded schools built during the Progressive Era conveyed an expression of institutionalism on the exterior (usually incorporating classical references and stately entrances) while accommodating specialized spaces on the interior (gymnasiums, auditoriums, and kindergartens). The 1926 portion of Washington Grade School is a two-story red brick structure constructed in the Commercial Style that embodies the era’s penchant toward stylistic standardization. The exterior is modestly embellished with Tudor Revival references such as tabbed surrounds around the main entries and shaped Flemish parapets. The interior includes a kindergarten room and, as part of the school’s 1931 addition, a gymnasium with an integrated auditorium. These specialized spaces reflect the Progressive Era’s emphasis on specialized curriculum as an important component of grade school education.

**ELABORATION:**

**Early Formation of Hays, Kansas**

In the mid-19th century, protective forts began to populate the Great Plains as settlers travelled west. Situated on the Butterfield Trail fourteen miles southeast of present-day Hays, the earliest fort in Ellis County was constructed in 1865. The site, known as Fort Fletcher, changed its name to Fort Hays and served the Butterfield Trail for one and a half years. Following a devastating flood in 1867, Fort Hays relocated near the present-day city. That same year, the Kansas Pacific Railroad was laid in Ellis County, bringing permanent settlers to the area. Soon a community, Hays City, grew up near the fort. The railroad bestowed the deed of the townsite in 1868, and Hays City soon became an important center for cattle and freight distribution in Kansas. Local ranching and farming ventures began in the 1870s along with another early enterprise, flour milling, which increased in the 1880s and 1890s. Around the same time, large numbers of Volga Germans...
from Russia began arriving in the Hays City area. Following increased settlement in the region, formal incorporation of Hays occurred in 1885.

**Early Education in Hays**

Attempts to establish primary education in Hays commenced soon after settlers began populating the area in the late 1860s. In 1869, a settler from New York named John Reece spearheaded one of the earliest efforts to create a local school. Reece’s school, a three-month private institution that met in a building near the railroad, was only a temporary establishment. Around the same time, a settler named Maude Hartley Jones also attempted to form a school in Hays. Creating an educational opportunity in the developing town was a natural objective for Jones, who had been an educator in Chicago. Like John Reece, Jones’ school did not have a venue of its own but was conducted in the Town Land Company building on North Main Street (now 10th Street). This building is no longer extant.

Not long after these individual attempts to create a community school, residents decided to launch a formal school district. The new association, identified formally as District Number 1 of Ellis County, was created in 1872. That same year, constituents within the new school district voted to construct a dedicated schoolhouse for the town. By 1873, Hays had erected its first elementary school, a native stone structure situated at 12th and Ash Streets. The building had two rooms and was fully furnished to accommodate the students and its first teacher. This description of Hays’ first permanent school generally reflects the development of early community schools across Kansas in the nineteenth century. The first formal schools in Kansas were typically frame or stone buildings containing one or two rooms. Even schools in developing towns, like Hays, took on the form and scale of rural schoolhouses and were constructed from local materials.

As Hays grew, the school district developed to meet the community’s needs. During the 1880s, a more formal course of graded education developed in Hays, and by 1886, the district employed seven teachers. In 1915, the district initiated a partnership with the Fort Hays Normal College, a regional teacher’s school. Through this partnership, the Normal School agreed to supervise the district and aid the district’s educational programs. The chair of the Education Department at the Normal School became the “ex-officio” superintendent of the city school district. While under this partnership, the district established a junior high program and erected a new high school in 1916. Still, as late as the 1920s, the Hays School District was using a single building for the city’s grade school population, when the city population was 3,165. This school,

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29 Spencer, MPDF, E-16.
31 “It Pays to Live in Hays,” 16.
which the *Hays Free Press* described as “exceptionally large,” consisted of the original 1873 building with 1879, 1890, and 1907 additions. The facility was demolished in 1938.

**Washington Grade School**

As early as 1922, indications suggest that the city’s growing student population was pushing the old grade school to capacity. “[T]he district must seriously consider additional buildings for the near future,” the *Ellis County News* opined, explaining that “Several of the grade rooms are short of seats, some of the children having to use tables and chairs.” By the mid-1920s, significant increases in the student body population necessitated the construction of new facilities. The school board decided to erect two grade schools, one to serve the north side of Hays and one to serve the south side. The School Board decided that the Union Pacific Railroad, which dissected the center of Hays, would demarcate the enrollment boundaries between the new schools. A committee headed by C.M. Wann and R.S. Markwell selected the parcels and identified a suitable $5,100 tract of land for Washington Grade School along South Chestnut Street (now Main Street). After securing the land, the Hays Board of Education issued $130,000 in bonds for the erection of Washington and Lincoln schools. Construction for Washington and Lincoln began on September 24, 1925.

The Washington School (Figure 06) building itself followed Progressive Era design precedents. During the late nineteenth century, graded school facilities developed, and four-, six-, and eight-room buildings appeared in communities to

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37 McLain, “History of The Development of Education In The Community of Hays, Kansas,” 120.


accommodate increasing student populations. By the Progressive Era (1900-1930), emerging philosophies in education emphasized the standardization of “teacher qualifications, text books, and schools.” New facilities built during this time were generally two-story brick structures adapted to an H, T, I, or U floorplan. Characterized by symmetrical superstructures, Progressive Era schools usually included a stately entrance and Revival-style ornamentation. Following these standards, the 1926 portion of Washington Grade School is a two-story brick facility arranged on an I-form layout. Its symmetrical front facade contains two ornate entrances and is modestly embellished with Tudor Revival details. Progressive Era academic ideals (which stressed the importance of having dedicated spaces for specialized curriculums) undoubtedly influenced the design of Washington Grade School, which contains a kindergarten room, and as part of the school’s 1931 components of Progressive Era schools, it is possible that the district planned to add a gymnasium to Washington School from its inception.

Upon completion, Washington Grade School not only benefitted the children of Hays but also aided the scholastic partnership between the nearby Fort Hays Normal School and the Hays School District. As a designated training and observation center for the Normal School, Washington played an important role preparing future educators during the 1920s and early 1930s. In March of 1926, the School District and the Normal School outlined an agreement “whereby the training work and the observation in the grades would be concentrated in the Washington grade building, the State sharing with the school district in paying salaries of the teachers in that school.” The inter-scholastic partnership continued until the Depression. In 1930, following the recent financial depression, superintendent Dr. Robert McGrath addressed concerns regarding the fiscal health of the district, including its impact to the partnership between the Hays School District and the Normal School. Although Dr. McGrath assured the Board of Education that the partnership would remain intact, the association dissolved in 1931.

Washington Grade School received two significant additions over the next twenty years. The first came in 1931 with the addition of a gymnasium and auditorium space. In his 1930 address, Dr. McGrath declared that “The usual additions to

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40 Spencer, MPDF, E-17-8.
41 Spencer, MPDF, E-18.
42 Spencer, MPDF, E-20-1.
43 McLain, “History of the Development of Education In the Community of Hays, Kansas,” 120.
44 McLain, “History of the Development of Education In the Community of Hays, Kansas,” 120.
school libraries, school equipment, maintenance and up-keep of school property is included in the budget.”

The addition of a gymnasium to Washington School suggests that Dr. McGrath’s assertion held true. In 1951, the district expanded Washington School again, affording it two additional classrooms. This expansion, designed by Hutchison architectural firm Mann and Company, occurred during a post-war surge in civic improvements. The *Hays Daily News* dubbed the phenomenon an “unprecedented building boom,” and optimistically outlined the city’s plans for new housing, churches, and businesses. Among the enumerated civic improvements were plans to upgrade buildings throughout the school district. Undoubtedly, additions to educational facilities reflected post-war enrollment increases in the Hays School District. Enrollment statistics at Washington between 1944 and 1952, for example, indicate a gradual student body increase. The decision to build an addition on Washington School also could have been informed by pre-school censuses conducted by the district. A pre-school census published after the addition was built showed an increase from 1,186 children in 1950 to 1,433 children in 1952.

The school district did not expand Washington Grade School again until 1994, when a one-story masonry block facility was constructed onto the school’s northwestern elevation. Between 1951 and 1994, however, the school experienced some alterations. The most significant modifications occurred in the early 1980s, when the historic multi-pane windows on the school were replaced. The replacements occurred as part of an energy-efficiency initiative that also included insulation improvements. An energy audit in 1981 also suggested additional minor upgrades for the school, but the scope of the recommendations is not specified.

In 2014, members of the Board of Education began discussing the future of Washington Grade School. The Board concurred that Washington students and staff could be better accommodated in the district’s other elementary schools. After nearly ninety years as an educational facility, Washington Grade School ceased operating as an elementary school in 2015 and became an early childhood education center.

**Lincoln School and Other Elementary Facilities in Hays**

The Hays School District secured $4,000 to situate Lincoln Grade School along Ash Street, in Lebold, Allen, and Company’s Addition of the city. The historic portion of Lincoln School also follows the design precedents established during the Progressive Era and is similar in scale and massing to Washington Grade School (Figure 08). The I-form brick building contains a central entrance on its principal elevation (a more conventional arrangement than Washington’s double entry).

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50 “School Board Hears Shannahan Report Concerning Sex Film,” *Ellis County Star*, April 9, 1981.


54 Spencer, MPDF F-34.
Built in the Commercial Style, Lincoln School’s ornamentation is limited to stone pilasters surrounding the central entry, stone belt courses, and coping along the parapet.  

Washington School and Lincoln School were the primary elementary facilities in Hays for thirty years, but during the mid- and late twentieth century, the school district constructed and acquired additional elementary schools. In 1956, the district acquired Jefferson Elementary School from the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. The district also constructed two new elementary facilities, Wilson School in 1959 and Roosevelt School in 1968. Including its rural schools in Catherine, Munjor, and Schoenchen, the Hays School District operated eight elementary schools by 1976. Today, the district contains four elementary schools: Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, and O’Loughlin (formerly Marian High School, which was operated by the Salina Catholic Diocese).

**Conclusion**

Washington Grade School is locally significant under Criterion A for EDUCATION. The school represents free education within Hays, Kansas during the Progressive Era, and it is an excellent example of a City Graded School property type built during this time period in Hays. Its construction reflects the development of primary education in Hays. As an early center for teacher training, Washington Grade School is also a reminder of the unique partnership that existed between the Fort Hays Normal School and the Hays School District in the early twentieth century. The school maintains its historic massing, primary materials, fenestration patterning, character-defining detailing, and arrangement of interior spaces. It also retains its historic integrity of setting, feeling, and association, and continues to reflect its classification as a City Graded School property type.

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56 “Know Your Schools,” 7.

57 “Know Your Schools,” 7.


59 Spencer, MPDF, F-37

60 Spencer, MPDF, F-38.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


Hays, Kansas Sanborn Map, 1943.


“It Pays to Live in Hays,” souvenir booklet, c. 1920, Hays Public Library.


National Register of Historic Places Inventory Form, Washington Grade School, July 30, 1970.


“Post War Building Boom Sets Records in Hays as City "Post War Building Boom Sets Records in Hays as City Expands." The Hays Daily News, April 9, 1950.

“School Board Hears Shannahan Report Concerning Sex Film.” The Ellis County Star, April 9, 1981.


Washington Grade School
Ellis County, Kansas


Tholen, Herman J. *Early History of Ellis County, Rome and Hays*, 1961, Hays Public Library.


Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # __________
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # __________
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # __________

Primary location of additional data:
- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Hays Public Library
- Kansas State Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  2.8 acres

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates. (Place additional coordinates on a continuation page.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84: ______
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1  38.866991   -99.334448  3
   Latitude:   Longitude:

2  
   Latitude:   Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
Washington Grade School is located on a 2.8-acre parcel in Hays, Kansas. The property is bounded on the southeast by Main Street, on the northeast by 4th Street, on the northwest by Fort Street, and on the southwest by 3rd Street. It occupies lots 4 and 5 in Section 4, Township 14 South, Range 18 West (Parcel 026-182-04-0-20-22-001.00-1).

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
The boundaries outlined above reflect Washington Grade School’s historic property demarcations as described in Clerk’s Record of Minutes of the School Board Meeting, August 4, 1924 (reproduced in McLain), and current property specifications provided by Ellis County Assessor’s Parcel database.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Aaron Schmidt (edited by Amanda Loughlin)
organization  Rosin Preservation, LLC  date  July 2020
street & number  1712 Holmes St.  telephone  816-472-4950
city or town  Kansas City  state  MO  zip code  64108
e-mail  amanda@rosinpreservation.com
Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each digital image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to a sketch map or aerial map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photograph Log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Property:</th>
<th>Washington Grade School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City or Vicinity:</td>
<td>Hays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County:</td>
<td>Ellis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State:</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer:</td>
<td>Brad Finch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Photographed:</td>
<td>June 17, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

See Maps 03 & 04 for photo keys.

- **Photo 01 of 18**: Front (east) elevation, northern entry, facing west
- **Photo 02 of 18**: Front (east) elevation, central bays, facing west
- **Photo 03 of 18**: Front (east) elevation, southern entry, facing west
- **Photo 04 of 18**: Front (east) elevation, facing southwest
- **Photo 05 of 18**: North elevation, facing south
- **Photo 06 of 18**: West elevation, facing east
- **Photo 07 of 18**: South elevation, facing northwest
- **Photo 08 of 18**: South elevation, facing north
- **Photo 09 of 18**: 1926 Building, south stair, landing between first and second floors, facing northwest
- **Photo 10 of 18**: Second floor corridor (1926 building), facing northeast
- **Photo 11 of 18**: Second floor corridor (1951 addition), facing east
- **Photo 12 of 18**: First floor vestibule (1951 addition), facing west
- **Photo 13 of 18**: Typical classroom (1926 building), second floor, facing northeast
- **Photo 14 of 18**: Typical built-in cabinet (1926 building) second floor, facing north
- **Photo 15 of 18**: 1931 Gymnasium with view of covered proscenium, facing northwest
- **Photo 16 of 18**: 1931 Gymnasium with view of covered balcony, facing northeast
- **Photo 17 of 18**: Typical classroom (1951 addition), second floor, facing northwest
- **Photo 18 of 18**: Full front (east) elevation, facing west, photo from JRG Architects, Spring 2020

Figure Log:

- **Figure 01**: Washington School layout with modified orientation. Created by author.
- **Figure 02**: 1970 Survey photograph showing historic muntin configuration. Source: Kansas State Historical Society.
- **Figure 03**: Typical plaster scroll bracket. Source: Brad Finch, 2020.
- **Figure 04**: Typical thematic floor tile. Source: Brad Finch, 2020.
Washington Grade School
Ellis County, Kansas

Figure 05: A gymnasium entry on the 1926 corridor. Source: Brad Finch, 2020.

Figure 06: Southeast elevation of Washington Grade School, c. 1920s. Source: “Hays, Kansas: The City of Schools, Churches and Hospitals,” no date, Hays Buildings – General file, Hays Public Library.

Figure 07: Washington School Classroom scene, 1930. Source: Mary Ann Thompson, Hays: The 1930s, Images of America series (Arcadia Publishing, 2010), 30.

Figure 08: 1925 portion of Lincoln Grade School. Source: Google Streetview.

Map 01: Contextual Map. Source: ArcGIS Online Basemap.
Map 02: Site Map. Source: Google Earth.
Map 03: Exterior and first floor photo key. Base map from JRG Architects.
Map 04: Second floor photo key. Base map from JRG Architects.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.
Map 01: Contextual Map, showing location of Washington Grade School within Hays, Kansas denoted by cross. Base map from ArcGIS Online.
Map 02: Site and boundary map, Washington Grade School, Hays, Kansas. Base map from Google Earth.
Map 03: Washington Grade School Photo Map (Exterior and First Floor photos). Base map from JGR Architects.
Map 04: Washington Grade School Photo Map (Second Floor photos). Base map from JGR Architects.