

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kansas
COUNTY: Cowley
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Old Arkansas City High School (preferred name)

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Arkansas City High School

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
300 West Central

CITY OR TOWN:  
Arkansas City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
no. 5, Joe Skubitz

STATE: Kansas      CODE: 20      COUNTY: Cowley      CODE: 035

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Cowley County Community College & Vocational-Technical School

STREET AND NUMBER:  
125 South Second

CITY OR TOWN:  
Arkansas City

STATE: Kansas      CODE: 20

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Register of Deeds

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Cowley County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:  
Winfield

STATE: Kansas      CODE: 20

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic Sites Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Kansas State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
120 West 10th Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Topeka

STATE: Kansas      CODE: 20

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Kansas

COUNTY: Cowley

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

035-0210-011

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The old Arkansas City High School, a rectangular three-story Romanesque structure with a full basement, is located in a neighborhood which is residential and also has other educational facilities. It was constructed of white Silverdale limestone set in red mortar. At the time of construction the only red color available for mortar was vermillion, which was not waterproof. As a result of rain and weather, pink streaks soon appeared on the white stone, and the stone absorbed the color. With the passage of time and continual weathering, the entire structure has acquired a rosy hue. The color has led many viewers to the mistaken conclusion that the building was made of pink Colorado sandstone.

The building measures approximately 90 feet long and 55 feet wide. The main entrance is through a massive arched opening on the south, above which a square clock tower rises almost five stories. Directly above the main entrance appear the words "High School" in raised letters and the date 1890 in carved stone insets. The clock tower originally had a four-sided pyramidal roof, which has been removed. Window openings in the tower have been boarded up and the clock openings are empty. From study of old photographs it appears that no clocks were ever installed and the clock openings remained boarded up from the outset until the tower roof was removed.

A second arched entry way is located on the east side. Except for one large arched opening east of the main entrance the window openings on the first floor are simple rectangles. Those on the second floor have flat-arched openings on the east part where offices and classrooms were originally located and large rectangular openings with separated transoms on the west portion, the original auditorium. Third floor openings are generally rectangular except for arched windows in the tower and on the east and west gable. Many of the window openings have been partially or completely closed with wood painted to match the stone.

The building's exterior displays many intricate patterns of carving, particularly on the south front. Above the main entrance on either side of the "High School" letters are carved stone animal heads, apparently lion heads. And above the third floor tower windows under the paired semicircular arches are two stone dragons. Intricate carved leaf decorations appear at a number of places between the windows of the first and second floors.

The wood-shingled hip roof has two intersecting gables on the south, two on the north and one on the east. Massive stone chimneys protrude above the roof line, two on the west, one near the center of the north side and a smaller one on the east side. There are decorative corbeling-like effects at the tops of the three larger chimneys. The proportions of the structure were well balanced.

The general appearance of the exterior is not greatly different from the original. The inside has deteriorated and has been altered over the years to meet the needs of the different occupants. An intersecting gable of all frame construction originally located just west of the tower formed an additional third floor room; that roof and room are gone.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Kansas	
COUNTY	
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(Number all entries)

9.

Rinehart, Mrs. Bennett, and others, The Story of Ark City, Kansas (Newton, Kan., Mennonite Press, 1970-1971), p. 228.

(Additional information furnished the Historical Society by the Community College from annual school reports and interviews with individuals who formerly taught or attended high school in the old high school building.)

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Arkansas City Daily Traveler, October 9, December 5, 1972; March 8, August 6, 11, November 7, 1973; March 21, 1974.  
 Arkansas City Illustrated (Kansas City, Mo, Cornish's Photo Studio, n.d.).  
 Arkansas City Weekly Republican Traveler, April 3, 10, July 10, 1890; March 19, April 16, June 4, July 22, August 20, 1891.  
 "Old High School Building Holds Many Memories for Ark Cityans," Arkansas City Daily Traveler, March 28, 1950.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		37	03	45
SE	° ' "	° ' "		97	02	29
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one acre

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Richard D. Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society DATE: August 14, 1974

STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West 10th Street

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka STATE: Kansas 66612 CODE: 20

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Nyle H. Miller  
 Title: Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society  
 Date: August 15, 1974

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1890**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education      | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering               | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion-Phi-<br>losophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape<br>Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Human-<br>itarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature                | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation           | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                     |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |  |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Construction of the old Arkansas City High School began in 1890 after the board of education on April 9 selected the plans prepared by Charles Sedgewick of Minneapolis, Minn. The cost of the building was estimated at \$29,000. The Arkansas City Weekly Republican Traveler stated, "The plans selected are very fine and will give Arkansas City the most handsome high school building in Kansas."

The contractor for the project was Robert Baird, a well-known area builder from nearby Hackney. Excavation for the structure was almost completed by mid-July and the stonework was beginning. One stone mason who worked on the building was Joseph Bossi, a native of Milan, Italy, who had settled on a farm southeast of Arkansas City in 1871. His neighbor Antonio Buzzi, a native of Switzerland, was also a stone mason and the two had worked together on many local buildings. It is possible that Buzzi too worked on the high school. One tragedy occurred during the construction: a worker named Cronen fell to his death when a scaffold broke as he and a second man were dressing stone near the top of the east side.

In April, 1891, the building was being roofed and the goal was to have part of it ready for the meeting of the county normal (teachers' institute) in late July. The Arkansas City High School was first used by students in the 1891-1892 term which opened September 7. Some accounts relate that the building was not completely finished inside until 1893 and that the final cost was close to \$38,000. Robert Baird, the contractor, reportedly went broke on this job and returned to farming; his expected profits were lost when he had to have the stone used in the basement recut and dressed the same as the outside walls.

The high school classes were held in the building until the fall of 1922 when a new and larger facility was put into use. For a number of years the old high school was used by the combined sixth grades of the city and was known as the Departmental Building. Later it was used by the city's recreation commission, and presently it is used by the Cowley County Community College for carpentry classes. Various community groups have expressed an interest in the building's restoration and discussions of continuing uses have included a museum, a cultural arts center and a meeting site.

The old Arkansas City High School is an outstanding example of the stonecutter's art. The fine detail and workmanship evident on the exterior make it one of the city's architectural landmarks. The building is also significant to the educational development of Arkansas City, having served the community since 1890.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS