

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **AUG 22 1984**

date entered **SEP 20 1984**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name 5DA342

historic Castle Rock Elementary School

and/or common Cantril School

2. Location

street & number 3rd & Cantril Street n/a not for publication

city, town Castle Rock n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Douglas code 035

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Douglas County School District R.E. 1/Dr. R. O'Connell, Superintendent

street & number 217 Gilbert

city, town Castle Rock n/a vicinity of state Colorado

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Douglas County Courthouse

street & number 301 Wilcox

city, town Castle Rock state Colorado 80104

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date November 4, 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society (Preservation Office)

city, town Denver state Colorado 80203

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Castle Rock Elementary School, of rock-faced rhyolite, looks out over the small community of Castle Rock, Colorado, from the top of "schoolhouse hill." The prominent location, combined with its masonry construction, creates an impressive image on the landscape of the town, located some thirty-five miles south of Denver. This structure, built in 1897, is two story, Italian Villa in its style. It consists of a L-shaped main block, with a three-story tower inset in the right angle of the L. Elements featured in its Italianate design are a round arched entrance on the front (west) facade, brackets under the wide bellcast roof eaves as well as the tower which extends above the roof line.

The first four or five above-ground courses are all matching pink rhyolite.¹ Pink, the rarest in its pure form, was used to form a border and the base of the school. The tan, with some tan/gray blend rhyolite, is used for the remainder of the structure. All stones are squared with rough-cut faces laid in regular, but sometimes broken, continuous courses. The pointing between the stones have tooled beaded joints. In the case of the pink band, the mortar is dyed pink as well.

The forward wing of the original two-story building has six identical bays. Typically the windows are double hung below a stone mullion with transom panels above. The recessed wing, comprising the southern extent of the original building, is three bays wide. Each floor is identical in its placement of windows, with the exception of one window on the second floor that has been converted into a fire escape and for one window at each level that flank the tower.

The tower is set in the corner where the two L wings of the building join. The formal entrance to the school is through this bell tower and is composed of a round arch with a decorated keystone and radiating voussoirs. The arch terminates in foliated imposts. The open arch leads into a small vestibule with the double entry door set into the wall of the recessed wing.

The second floor of the tower has two transomed windows on the front wall matching those of the main block. The third floor is an open bell tower with two arched openings on each side of the tower. It is capped by a bellcast medium pitched roof with bracketed eaves, matching that on the original block.

A one-story stone addition was built in 1930-31 on the north end of the main block.² Many of the features of the original building were incorporated into the 1930 design, such as the use of transomed windows, arched entranceway, and the pitch of the bellcast roof.

¹The rhyolite stone was mined in the quarries of the Castle Rock area. Quarried exclusively in Douglas County, the stone has been used extensively throughout the Front Range region.

²The contractor for the 1930 addition was Benjamin T. Saunders.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Castle Rock Elementary School, Douglas County, CO

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Another one-story addition with raised basement of cinderblock was built on the northeast side in the mid-1950s. A one-story addition used for bathroom facilities was built on the southeast side in 1961.

The interior still retains its original hardwood oak floors, twelve foot ceilings, oak woodwork, and wainscoting. Interior alterations include bathroom remodeling, and modernization of certain areas.

Despite the various additions made over the years, Castle Rock Elementary retains its visual integrity. The school, surrounded by stately cottonwoods and a square block of grassed open space, fittingly crowns the hill overlooking the town and county it has served over the past eighty-seven years.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1896–97	Builder/Architect	Unknown
-----------------------	---------	--------------------------	---------

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Prominently located on a hill overlooking the community of Castle Rock, Castle Rock Elementary School stands as the town's finest example of stone construction and the area's best illustration of the Italian Villa style. Built in 1897, the building is unmatched in the area for its quality of workmanship and design in the use of stone.

When the agricultural and ranching town of Castle Rock became the seat of government for Douglas County in 1874, rhyolite was already beginning to be an important resource for the community. In time, three major quarries would be established: the Madge, the O'Brien/Hathaway, and the Santa Fe. All three had access to the railroads; two to the Denver and Rio Grande, and one to the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe. Shipments were made to an area from Canon City to Cheyenne and as far east as Kansas City. Denver and Colorado Springs made extensive use of the stone in construction of many of their landmark buildings.¹

Many Castle Rock structures were built of rhyolite with it so readily available from the quarries near town. Two public buildings of striking architectural significance were constructed of the material. The first, built in 1889–90, was the Douglas County Courthouse, and the second was Castle Rock Elementary School in 1896–97. The buildings faced each other across the intervening space occupied by the town and visually emphasized the importance of local government and education to the town and county. Of these two important landmarks, only the school remains. (The courthouse burned in March 1978.) Other historic buildings constructed in rhyolite include two commercial structures in the downtown, two churches, and several residences.

When constructed in 1897, Castle Rock Elementary originally functioned as the first county-wide school for Douglas County. It offered grades 1–12 until 1912 when Douglas County High School was built in Castle Rock. At that time, Castle Rock Elementary contained grades 1–8, which it continued to offer until 1961. From 1961 to 1968, it was used for grades 1–6. From 1968 to 1984, the school offered kindergarten through the third grade. In 1984, the building was converted into office space for the Douglas County School District.

The size of the school, along with its public use, age, architectural style and visual impact of its location, make it the most important historic building in the community.

¹J. H. Rose, "Quarries of the Castle Rock Area," Colorado Magazine

