

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# 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 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Howardville School [preferred]

Other names/site number East Lilbourn High School; Howardville High School; Howardville Jr. High; New Madrid County Central West Campus; Howardville Multipurpose Center

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number <u>6916 U.S. Highway 61</u>	N/A	not for publication
City or town <u>Howardville</u>	N/A	vicinity
State <u>Missouri</u> Code <u>MO</u> County <u>New Madrid</u> Code <u>143</u> Zip code <u>63869</u>		

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: X A X B     C     D

Toni M. Prawl OCT 05 2017  
Signature of certifying official/Title Toni M. Prawl, Ph.D., Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
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 \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Barbara Wyatt 11-22-17  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Howardville School  
Name of Property

New Madrid County, Missouri  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
1		structures
	1	objects
2	1	<b>Total</b>

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

EDUCATION/School  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

VACANT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
EDUCATION/School  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

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

MODERN MOVEMENT  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

foundation: Concrete  
\_\_\_\_\_  
walls: Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof: Not visible  
\_\_\_\_\_  
other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**X** NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES

Howardville School  
Name of Property

New Madrid County, Missouri  
County and State

**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.)

- 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 commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

EDUCATION

ETHNIC HERITAGE - Black

**Period of Significance**

1958-1968

**Significant Dates**

1958, 1961, 1965, 1968

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Howard, Travis B.

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Architect: Snipes, Haywood

Builder: Ray Clinton Construction Company

Howardville School  
Name of Property

New Madrid County, Missouri  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 8.2 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 36.567855 -89.602732 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

\_\_\_\_\_ NAD 1927 or \_\_\_\_\_ NAD 1983

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (On continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (On continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Amber K. Cox

organization Missouri State Historic Preservation Office date June 21, 2017

street & number 1101 Riverside Drive telephone 573-522-2473

city or town Jefferson City state MO zip code 65101

e-mail Amber.Cox@dnr.mo.gov

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:**
  - A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
  - A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**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 18 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.

Howardville School  
Name of Property

New Madrid County, Missouri  
County and State

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch 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.

## Photo Log:

Name of Property: Howardville School

City or Vicinity: Howardville

County: New Madrid State Missouri

Photographer: Amber Cox

Date  
Photographed: December 15-16, 2016

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

- 1 of 24: South elevation of high school building, camera facing W
- 2 of 24: South elevation of elementary building, camera facing NW
- 3 of 24: East end of high school south elevation, west end of elementary building south elevation, shows canopy connection, camera facing NW
- 4 of 24: West end of high school, camera facing NE
- 5 of 24: West elevation of high school gym, north and west sides of library addition, camera facing NE
- 6 of 24: Library addition, north elevation, and west side of gym, camera facing SE
- 7 of 24: North elevation of shop, gym and music room, camera facing SE
- 8 of 24: South and east elevations of shop, east side of gym, camera facing W
- 9 of 24: West elevation of shop, east elevation of music room, connecting walkway, camera facing SE
- 10 of 24: North and east elevations of high school, east side of gym, camera facing SW
- 11 of 24: North and east elevations of elementary building, camera facing SW
- 12 of 24: Site and south and east elevations of elementary building, camera facing NW
- 13 of 24: Primary high school entrance on south elevation, camera facing NW
- 14 of 24: High school hallway, camera facing NE
- 15 of 24: High school cafeteria from inside of kitchen serving area, camera facing SW
- 16 of 24: High school gymnasium interior, camera facing N
- 17 of 24: High school classrooms with shared wall with windows, camera facing SW
- 18 of 24: High school girls' bathroom, camera facing NW
- 19 of 24: High school library addition, camera facing SW
- 20 of 24: High school music room, camera facing W
- 21 of 24: High school shop, camera facing NE
- 22 of 24: Elementary building hallway, vacant eastern end, camera facing SW
- 23 of 24: Elementary building classroom, used by Head Start Program, camera facing N
- 24 of 24: Elementary building hallway, used by Head Start Program, camera facing SW

Howardville School

Name of Property

New Madrid County, Missouri

County and State

### Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1. Context Map. Pg. 2

Figure 2. Bootheel Context Map. Pg. 51

Figure 3. Boundary Map. Pg. 3

Figure 4. Aerial photograph of Howardville from 1969. Pg. 52

Figure 5. Aerial photo of the Howardville area from 1950. Pg. 53

Figure 6. The DAEOC Head Start sign, a non-contributing object in the resource count. Pg. 54

Figure 7. Façade of school. Pg. 4

Figure 8. High school building. Pg. 5

Figure 9. Howardville High School in 2002. Pg. 5

Figure 10. Photo illustrating expanse of windows with functioning awning windows and fixed panes. Pg. 6

Figure 11. Cropped image of Howardville High School façade in 2002; shows first four bays of windows.  
Pg. 7

Figure 12. Primary high school entrance. Pg. 7

Figure 13. Portions of the south and east elevations of the high school connected to elementary school. Pg. 8

Figure 14. East elevation of the high school building. Pg. 9

Figure 15. Northern elevation of east end of high school and eastern elevation of the two-story gymnasium.  
Pg. 9

Figure 16. The north elevation of the high school, including the western elevation of the shop and eastern elevation of the music room. Pg. 10

Figure 17. North elevation of the high school showing the shop building and the music room behind the gymnasium. Pg. 11

Figure 18. The west elevation of the music room, the north and west elevations of the gymnasium, and a portion of the one story western section of the high school. Pg. 12

Figure 19. North elevation of the western portion of the high school building, including the library addition and the western elevation of the gymnasium. Pg. 12

Figure 20. Showing the full west elevation of the library addition. Pg. 13

Figure 21. Showing the west end of the high school building with the c. 1966 library addition. Pg. 14

Figure 22. Showing the west end of the high school building with the c. 1966 library addition. Pg. 15

Figure 23. Showing south elevation of elementary building, c. 1961, with current use labeled. Pg. 15

Figure 24. The east (left half of photo) and north (right half of photo) elevations of the elementary school building. Pg. 16

Figure 25. The taller eastern half of the north elevation of the elementary school building. Facing southeast.  
Pg. 17

Figure 26. West elevation of elementary building. The left photo shows the north half, the right photo shows the Head Start entrance in the south half. Facing east. Pg. 17

Figure 27. High school double-loaded corridor. Pg. 18

Figure 28. First photo looking out of the kitchen's serving area towards the cafeteria, second photo looking towards the serving area. Pg. 19

Figure 29. Boys' (left) and girls' (right) bathrooms. Pg. 19

Figure 30. Gymnasium. Photo of the bleachers facing northwest, photo of gym and stage facing north. Pg. 20

Figure 31. Library addition interior. Pg. 20

Figure 32. Shared classroom wall with windows still intact. Pg. 21

Figure 33. Yearbook photograph c. 1959 of typing class. Pg. 21

Howardville School

New Madrid County, Missouri

Name of Property

County and State

- Figure 34. Shop classroom, facing northeast. Pg. 22
- Figure 35. Double-loaded corridor in portion of elementary building used for Head Start Program. Pg. 23
- Figure 36. Original cabinetry in elementary building. Pg. 23
- Figure 37. Shows the added wall in the elementary building. Pg. 24
- Figure 38: The music room before cleanup. Pg. 25
- Figure 39: Music room after cleanup. Pg. 25
- Figure 40: Current floor plans and photo log. Pg. 55
- Figure 41. High school building floorplan with rooms numbered and labeled; date unknown, though likely sometime after 1965. Pg. 56
- Figure 42. High school shop building floorplan with rooms numbered and labeled, date unknown, though likely sometime after 1965. Pg. 57
- Figure 43. The original principal's office today; open as it was historically. Pg. 58
- Figure 44. Photograph of black ministers and laymen at a conference held at Lincoln University in the early 1940's. Pg. 30
- Figure 45. Photograph of black high school principals in the Bootheel and nearby. Pg. 31
- Figure 46. Composite of the first graduating class. Pg. 33
- Figure 47. All black schools (not including high schools) in the Bootheel region that consolidated to Howardville or O'Bannon. The red marker is Howardville. Pg. 59
- Figure 48. Known high schools in the Bootheel. Pg. 60
- Figure 49. Remaining building from O'Bannon School in New Madrid. Pg. 36
- Figure 50. Site of Booker T. Washington School with memorial for the school. Pg. 37
- Figure 51. Course offerings at Howardville, 1958-1959 school year. Pg. 40
- Figure 52. Course offerings at O'Bannon, 1958-1959 school year. Pg. 61
- Figure 53. Yearbook photograph c. 1959 of sewing class. Pg. 41
- Figure 54. Home economics class, c. 1959. Pg. 41
- Figure 55. Howardville Hawks basketball team with Coach William C. Jackson in front, c. 1968. Pg. 43
- Figure 56. Shots from the record breaking basketball game between Howardville and Bradleyville. 1968. Pg. 43
- Figure 57. Howardville cheerleaders with the original high school sign, c. 1968. Pg. 44
- Figure 58. Howardville cheerleaders performing their Choo-choo dance, c. 1968. Pg. 44
- Figure 59. North Pemiscot School's all-black school adjacent to the all-white school. Pg. 62
- Figure 60. Steele "Colored" School, c. 1956. This photograph is from the 2002 survey; however it looked much the same in 2008. Pg. 63

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**SUMMARY**

The long, flat-roofed 1-story Howardville School is located in Howardville, New Madrid County, Missouri at 6916 U.S. Highway 61 (Figure 1, page 2). Howardville School, first known as East Lilbourn High School, was built in 1958 with the addition of a library to the west in c. 1966 and the addition of an elementary school wing to the east c. 1961. Both of these additions are within the period of significance: 1958-1968. No other major changes to the school have occurred. It is a combination of steel and masonry frame construction sided with brick; it has little ornamentation and is characteristic of mid-century modern school architecture with many banded windows, a flat form, and wide overhanging eaves. The total square footage is 36,377. The school sits on an 8.2 acre lot. The site also includes a contributing parking lot, a small noncontributing movable shed (not included in the resource count), a noncontributing sign associated with the current Head Start Program (a noncontributing object), and a noncontributing playground site also associated with the Head Start Program (also not included in the count, see Photo 12). This program is located in the west side of the east wing; the rest of the school is vacant. The school maintains integrity, still very much reading as a mid-century school building, with a largely intact floorplan and few alterations. The biggest threat to the school has been periods of vacancy associated with vandalism and deterioration; the roof, in particular, has seen some damage, resulting in portions of the school being open to the elements at times.

Howardville School is counted as a single building in the resource count per guidance provided in the National Register bulletin *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* which states that a building with covered walkways should be counted “as a single unit unless the attachment was originally constructed as a separate building...and later connected.”<sup>1</sup> The school is made up of three separate buildings that are connected via covered walkways. They were connected via these walkways when built. However, for descriptive purposes they are described as three separate buildings. The primary high school building and the shop building were built concurrently in 1957-1958. The eastern building, built to house an elementary school, was built in c. 1961.

**SETTING**

Howardville School is situated in the center of the western half of Howardville (Figure 1, page 2), a small rural town of less than 400 people. Howardville itself, located in the Bootheel region of Missouri (Figure 2, page 52), is surrounded by farmland, with cotton as the primary local crop. Several other small towns are relatively close by: Lilbourn is a few miles northwest of Howardville with a population close to 1,200, the city of New Madrid is approximately four miles northeast with a population around 3,100, and Marston is just under four miles south with a

<sup>1</sup> See page 17. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *How to Complete the National Register Registration Form* bulletin, Accessed May 24, 2017, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/pdfs/nrb16a.pdf>



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

population around 500.<sup>2</sup> Less than two miles southeast of Howardville is a bend in the Mississippi River and on the other side is the state of Kentucky.

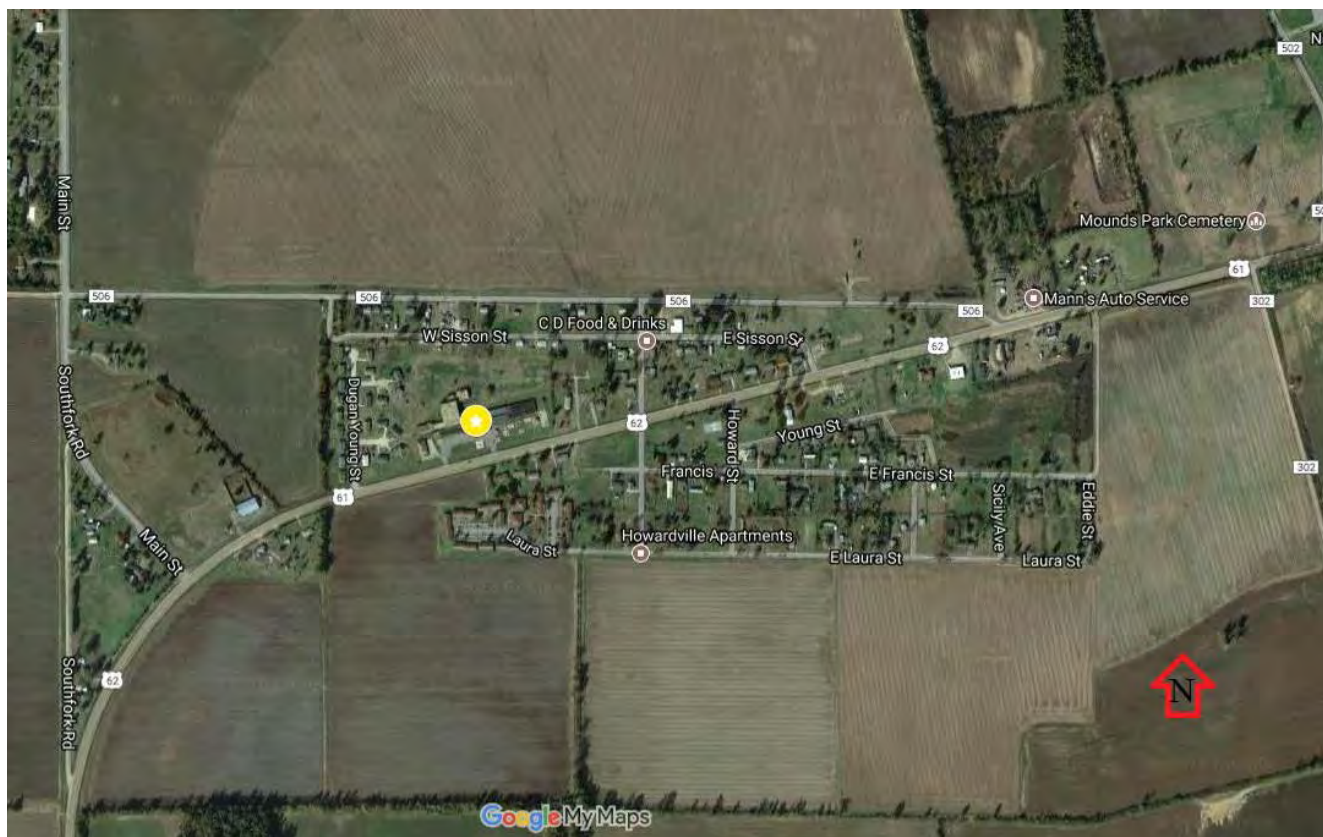


Figure 1. Context Map, shows the location of Howardville School in the city of Howardville. Source: GoogleMaps, 2017.

The Howardville school building is the largest building in Howardville. To the west of the school are residences, built c. 2000, and Dugan Young Street (Figure 1, above and Figure 3, page 3).<sup>3</sup> To the north is a residential community, built prior to 1969, situated along W. Sisson Street that abuts the large green space behind the school. More residences and Bernice Avenue are directly east. U.S. Highway 61 is south of the property and across the highway are more residential properties and farmland. The 1969 aerial of Howardville (Figure 4, page 52) shows that the historic layout of both Howardville School and Howardville itself is very similar to how

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, CPH-1-27, Missouri U.S. Government Printing Office, (Washington D.C. 2012), Accessed May 24, 2017, <https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/cph-1-27.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Construction of the surrounding neighborhoods was estimated utilizing aerial maps located in the Howardville City Records, Howardville, New Madrid County, MO.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

it looks today with the exception of some residential development to the south and to the west of the school. All of Howardville developed in the years after 1950; a 1950 aerial shows nothing but farmland and the curve of U.S. Highway 61 (Figure 5, page 53).

In front of the school is a U-shaped historic parking lot with two entrances from Highway 61 (visible in Photos 1-3). It spans the front of the high school building and about a fourth of the elementary building's west end. The parking lot dates to the high school's period of significance and maintains its original layout (Figure 4, page 52). It is the school's only parking area and is considered a contributing structure.



Figure 3. Boundary map. The star denotes the contributing parking lot; the circle denotes the non-contributing sign. The non-contributing site is immediately to the east of the parking lot.

Lat/Long: 36.567855, -89.602732

Source: Google Maps. Accessed May 24, 2017.

Just east of the historic parking lot is a noncontributing site (not included in the resource count) that is currently a playground for Head Start students. Small sections of the playground are paved or graveled, including part of the east end which houses a basketball hoop, picnic table, and other playground equipment. A noncontributing movable shed (not included in the resource count), raised and resting on wood planks, sits on the east side of the playground (Photo 12).

Immediately to the west of the parking lot and close to the southwest corner of the school is a modern building with a small parking lot, built c. 2000. This building is associated with the

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

c. 2000 residential community to the west. It has never been associated with Howardville School and currently has separate ownership. Because of this it was left out of the boundaries.

There are two signs on the property. One, which is considered a noncontributing object in the resource count, sits east of the east entrance of the school's parking lot and reads "DAEOC Head Start" with cartoon children holding up a cartoon sign (Figure 6, page 54). Under their feet is the property's address and phone number. It is visible from Highway 61 and is held up by two round metal posts. It is roughly four feet high and six feet wide. The other sign is temporary and is thus not included in the resource count. It sits between the two parking lot entrances and in front of the high school building. Held up by two white posts and with an arched top, it points on the property's status as a Brownfield Initiative and cleanup and restoration project (as seen on the left side of Figure 7 below).

**EXTERIOR**

Howardville School is made up of three separate buildings that were connected via breezeways at their time of construction (thus the school is counted as a single building in the resource count). For descriptive clarity, each building will be described in turn. Additionally, the school is situated at a *slight* angle directionally (see Figure 3, page 3); however, for simplicity the elevations are described based on the general direction they are facing (i.e. south instead of southeast for the façade). All windows and doors are original unless otherwise stated.



Figure 7. Façade of school. Source: GoogleMaps Street View, December 2015. Accessed April 21, 2017.

**The High School Building, 1957-1958 and the Library Addition, c. 1966**

The original high school building (1957-1958) was the first built (Figure 7, above, and Figure 8, page 5), along with its associated shop. It is a long single story building with a two story gymnasium; a single story music room is attached to the rear of the gymnasium. It is clad in running bond orange brick with a flat roof (Figure 8; Photo 1). The roofline inclines slightly towards the façade, which faces south. Many of the windows, some with broken panes, have been covered with particle board on the exterior and plastic sheets on the interior to keep the interior safe from the elements. Figure 9 (page 5) offers a view of the windows in 2002 before they were boarded over. Overhanging eaves are clad in metal.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

South Elevation/Façade of the High School

Towering behind the single story façade of the high school is the two story gymnasium. The south face of the gym has three twelve paned fixed windows in the upper west corner. The roofline of the gym is distinguished by narrow metal coping.



Figure 8. High school building. Camera facing west. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.



Figure 9. Howardville High School in 2002. Source: Kremer & Rogers, *African-American Schools Phase IV*.

The single story façade of the high school has nine bays that are dominated by large expanses of multi-paned windows with rowlock brick sills. The windows are tall, nearly stretching from the ground to the roof; most have been covered with particle board and some panes are missing or broken. They are the same height (except where otherwise stated), with original metal frames. For simplicity, large expanses of windows are described by their pane

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

count unless otherwise noted; portions of each of these window expanses have windows with six panes while others have 12 panes but the distribution of these windows within the expanses does not always follow a set pattern. Some window panes function as awning windows while others are fixed (Figure 10, page 6). Those functioning as awning windows typically flank an expanse of fixed panes; see Figure 11 (page 7) for a more detailed image of the windows in bays 1-4 of the high school's façade, taken in 2002.

The first and second bays of windows have 48 lights each. The third bay is larger but also has approximately 48 lights; a small air conditioner hangs out of the bottom of this bay's easternmost window. The fourth bay has one twelve-paned window, again with a small air conditioner in the bottom east pane. The fifth bay of windows has 48 lights.



*Figure 10. Photo illustrating expanse of windows with functioning awning windows and fixed panes. Rear of high school, camera facing southwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Figure 11. Cropped image of Howardville High School façade in 2002; shows first four bays of windows. Source: Kremer & Rogers, African-American Schools Phase IV.*

The sixth bay is the school's main entrance with double metal doors painted a pale pink and a single large light in each door (Figure 12 below; Photo 13). Large single pane sidelights are on each side of the doors. A historic flat roofed metal canopy is held up by two round metal posts, also painted pink. The canopy roof widens as it extends out from two projecting brick walls that reach almost to the edge of the roof's overhanging eave. The canopy is rounded in the front. Above the canopy is a four light transom.



*Figure 12. Primary high school entrance. Camera facing north. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The seventh bay has the largest expanse of windows on the façade with 96 panes; the twelve at either end appear to be functioning awning windows. Some panes have been removed to accommodate three air conditioning window units (Figures 8-9, page 5; Photo 1).

The eighth bay has two small one-over-one awning windows (Figure 8; Photo 3). This section of the building has a lower roof line and less of an overhanging eave; the metal coping of this section of the building is thicker and of a different color.<sup>4</sup> The ninth bay, of the same lowered height, projects out from the main portion of the building (Figure 13 below; Photo 3). There are three small square deeply recessed openings. The openings in this section of the building are open to the elements; this bay served as a covered entrance or a kind of mudroom providing access to the east end of the building.

The East and Rear Elevations of the High School

The first opening on the east elevation of the high school wing is an open doorway with no door leading into the mudroom space (Figures 13, below, and 14, page 9; Photo 10). Inside there is a door that leads to the interior of the building. To the right (north) of the open doorway, is a small one-over-one window. The rest of this elevation is recessed from the southern section that makes up the mudroom. The next bay has original metal double doors each with a narrow light. They are sheltered by the covered walkway connecting the high school to the elementary school to the east. These doors lead into the high school's primary double loaded corridor (see floor plans, Figure 40, page 55). The walkway is sheltered by a flat metal roof supported by four narrow, round metal posts (Figure 13 below and Figure 14, page 9; Photo 3).



*Figure 13. Portions of the south and east elevations of the high school connected to elementary school, camera looking northwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

<sup>4</sup> It is unclear whether this was different at the time of construction or was altered at some point, but the metal here is clearly aged.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Figure 14. East elevation of the high school building, camera looking southeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

The rest of this elevation is blind. The roofline has metal coping, though there are no overhanging eaves and the roof slants gradually upwards towards the north (rear) elevation.

The north elevation of this section of the high school is dominated by the first of three bays of windows (Figures 14-15; Photo 10). The first bay, with a wide overhanging eave, has 96 panes. The 12 easternmost (to the left in Figure 14; also pictured in Figure 10, page 6) panes are functioning awning windows. Window panes at the bottom of the east and west (left and right) windows have been altered for window units. The roofline then drops, and a shorter section of the building with no overhanging eaves has two small one-over-one windows.

The two story gymnasium extends to the north (See Figure 15; Photos 8 and 10). A flat-roofed canopied walkway with narrow metal posts runs along its eastern elevation connecting to the shop building to the northeast (visible on the right in Figure 15 and Photo 8). There are two first floor openings, the first of which, from south to north (left to right), is a double door and the second a single door. In the second story there are 16 windows each with six panes, about a third of which have been broken. They are clustered together towards the south end of this elevation.



*Figure 15. Northern elevation of east end of high school and eastern elevation of the two-story gymnasium. Camera facing southwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Under the covered walkway at the north end of the east elevation of the gym is an entrance to the one story music room, which is situated behind the gymnasium and extends out from the two story structure (on the right in Figure 16, Photo 9). The music room is original to the high school building and was not a later addition. The roofline of the music room has metal coping (Figures 16-17, pages 10-11; Photo 7 & 9). The only opening on the east elevation of the music room is marked by double doors, each with a single narrow light. The canopied walkway over the door connects to the canopy that runs along the side of the gymnasium and to the school's shop, which is directly east of the music room (Figure 16).

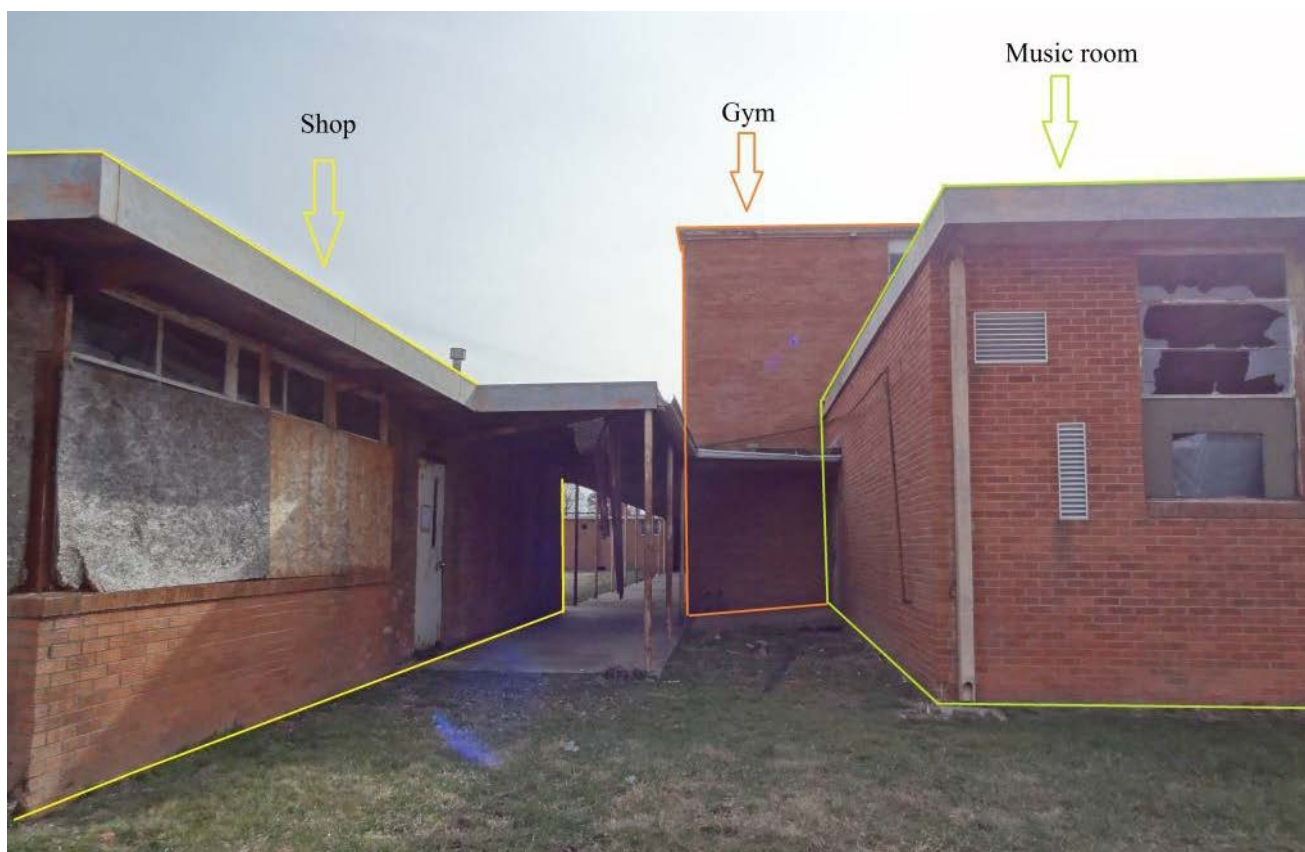


Figure 16. The north elevation of the high school, including the western elevation of the shop and eastern elevation of the music room. Camera facing southeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 17. North elevation of the high school showing the shop building and the music room behind the gymnasium. Camera facing southeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

The north elevation of the music room has a single large expanse of six awning windows each with five panes, most of which have been broken (Figure 17, Photo 7). They are visible from the exterior and covered loosely on the interior with hanging plastic (Photo 20). The eastern and western bottom panes were altered for window units that have since been removed. The two story gymnasium is visible behind and above the music room. On this elevation the upper story of the gymnasium has one large expanse of 12 windows that are centered and close together. The two eastern and two western windows have five panes, while the rest have ten. Most of the panes are broken. Between the top of the windows and the roofline is a metal covering that appears to obscure where the top window panes would be. This covering does not extend beyond the windows.

The west side of the music room has no openings, and, like the east elevation there is no overhanging eave but the roofline has metal coping (Figure 18, page 12; Photo 5). The west elevation of the gymnasium, which partially extends into the one story section of the high school, has eight bays (Figure 18, Photos 5-6). The first is a single metal door with a short, likely historic flat-roofed metal portico held up by two metal poles. The poles attach to the building via two more horizontal poles. To the south is a single window, then four more sets of window pairs, a single window (bay seven), and another single metal door, also with a flat metal-roofed portico. This canopy extends out from where the gymnasium and the one story section of the high school building meet. It is held up by one metal pole. All of these windows have three panes.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Figure 18. The west elevation of the music room, the north and west elevations of the gymnasium, and a portion of the one story western section of the high school (on the right). Facing southeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

In the gym's second story on the north end of its west elevation, but further down than the other second story windows, are two pairs of windows. Each window has four panes, all of which are broken or missing. Further up and closer to the south end of this elevation are 16 narrow windows each with six panes; many are broken (Figures 18-19, Photo 5). The roofline has metal coping.

The north side of the high school building stretching westward (the single story portion of the building in Figure 19) from the gym has two bays of window expanses before reaching the single story library addition. The first bay has 48 panes many of which, in groups of four or in pairs, appear to be functioning awning windows. The bottom panes in the east and west windows have been altered for window units. The second bay also has 48 panes. Some bottommost panes have been altered to accommodate three window units, two of which have since been removed.



*Figure 19. North elevation of the western portion of the high school building, including the library addition and the western elevation of the gymnasium. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 13

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The rest of the north elevation of the high school is the c. 1966 library addition (Figure 19, page 12; Photo 5-6). The easternmost portion of the addition (the portion of the addition outlined in yellow in Figure 19 that has no windows) extends out from the main school building a few feet. This bumped out portion has only one small square opening for an air conditioning unit; the metal coping at the roofline does not extend outwards. The rest of the addition lines up with the original high school structure and is made up of six large window openings with wide overhanging eaves. The metal coping and the eaves are slightly wider than on the original high school building. The west end (to the right in Figure 19) has a brick wall that extends out a few feet. Original windows have not survived and all that remains are the openings, now covered in plastic (Figure 19; Photo 6, exterior, and Photo 19, interior).

West Elevation

The west elevation of the library addition is blind and the metal coping does not extend out (see Figure 20; Photos 4-5). The southern face of the library addition also has no openings (Figure 21, page 14; Photo 4). The addition meets the west end of the original high school building at an original entrance, which bumps out from and is a few feet shorter than the addition. Particle board covers what was once a large window opening on the west facing side of this bump out. The single metal door, with two small lights, faces south but would not be easily visible from the main entrance of the building as it is not flush with the south façade; the door is likely not original. It has a short, flat, metal hood that extends over the doorway; the hood has no supports. There appears to have been two window openings on either side of the door, now also covered with particle board. Cream colored metal panels are below these openings and narrow wood panels painted the same color flank the door.

The west end of the original school building (outlined in blue, Figure 21) extends southward from this entrance, and slants upwards towards the façade (Photo 4). There are no openings except for one small square opening for an air unit.



*Figure 20. Showing the full west elevation of the library addition. Facing northeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 14

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

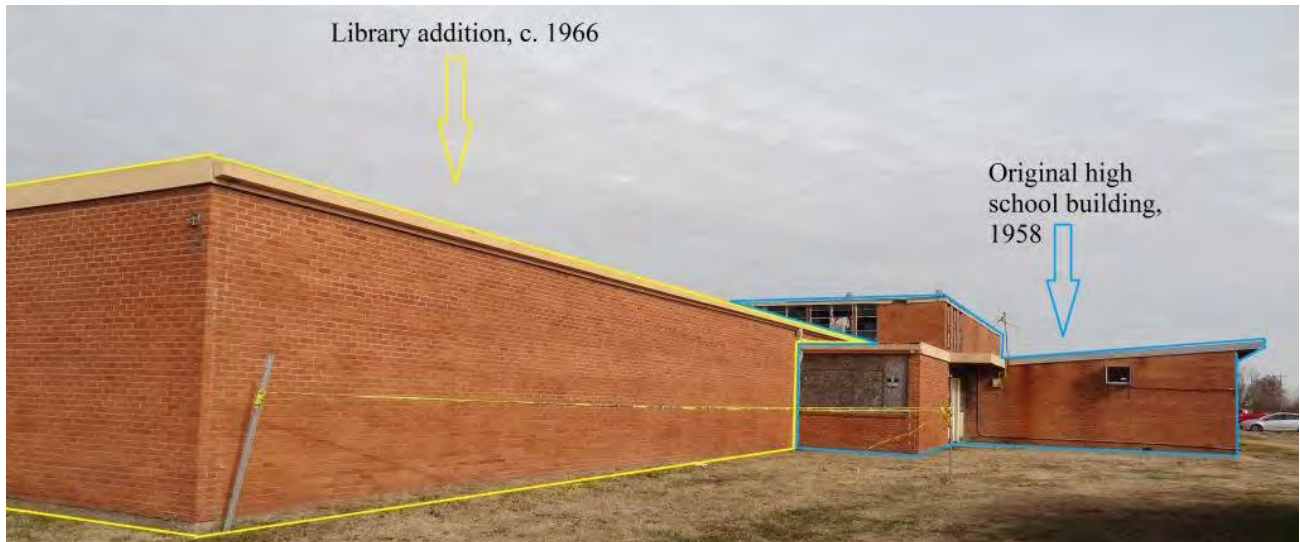


Figure 21. Showing the west end of the high school building with the c. 1966 library addition. Facing northeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

### The Shop, 1957-1958

The shop connects to the main building via the long canopied walkway that runs along the east elevation of the gymnasium (Figure 16, page 10; Photo 8-9). The wide overhanging eaves on the shop's west elevation extend out over the west entrance to connect to the canopied walkway.

The west elevation of the shop has two bays (Figure 16; Photo 9). The first is an expanse of windows with approximately 20 panes, partially covered with particle board. These windows meet the windows on the north side of the building at the northwest corner. The second bay is a single metal door with a narrow light.

The north elevation of the shop has two sections (Figure 17, page 11; Photo 7). The first is taller, making room for a metal garage door. In the first bay is a tall window in line with the metal coping; there are no overhanging eaves on the taller portion of the shop. The window is covered in particle board. To the west (right) is the garage door (which appears original) and west of this door the roof of the shorter second section of the shop extends outwards from the taller section. This is further marked by a small brick wall that protrudes out a few feet, standing between the garage door and another single metal door. The next bay after the single door is made up of an expanse of windows with approximately 32 panes though they have been mostly boarded over on the exterior and partially on the interior (see Photo 21 of the interior).

The east elevation of the shop has four tall windows, boarded over, that are flush with metal coping (Figure 22, page 15; Photo 8).

The south elevation has two tall windows in the taller portion of the shop that are similar to those on the east elevation; they are also covered in particle board (Figure 22; Photo 8). To the west (left) of these windows is another single metal door with a narrow light. The roofed walkway along the east side of the gymnasium extends out here to provide cover for this entrance

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 15

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

to the shop. To the west of the door are two shorter windows which are part of the shorter section of the shop. These are also boarded over and sheltered by the extended canopied walkway.



Figure 22. Showing the west end of the high school building with the c. 1966 library addition. Facing northeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

### The Elementary School Building, c. 1961

The elementary school addition to Howardville High School was constructed in 1961 (Figure 7, page 4; Photo 2). It is quite similar to the original high school building in style and overall appearance. It is in better condition than the high school and its western portion is currently being used for the local Head Start Program (Figure 23). The rest of the school is vacant. Its western (left) portion is slightly taller than its eastern (right) half. Like the original high school building this addition has wide overhanging eaves with metal coping and large expanses of windows.



Figure 23. Showing south elevation of elementary building, c. 1961, with current use labeled. Facing north. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

The south elevation/façade has nine bays (Figure 23; Photos 2, 3, and 12). All of the windows are visible from the exterior. The first four bays have a discernable pattern of six windows each. The two central windows of each bay have 12 panes while the rest have six. The bottom panes of the easternmost and westernmost windows in each bay have been infilled for small air conditioning units.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 16

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Between the fourth and fifth bay the roofline drops a few feet demarcating the shorter section of the building. The fourth bay has an expanse of windows with 12 panes. The bottom two panes of the easternmost window have been infilled for another air unit. These windows directly abut a single metal door (likely non-historic) with transom. The last four bays are expanses of windows with 40 panes each. Air units have altered some of the windows in the same pattern as the first four bays.

The east elevation of this wing has been painted a pale pink color (Figure 24; Photo 11). Unlike all other elevations it appears to be clad in concrete block. The only opening is a non-historic single metal door surrounded by wood planks that are painted red. Metal coping does not extend out except for over the door where it forms a short, flat metal roofed portico without supports. A concrete stoop mirrors the shape and size of the portico above it.

The north elevation is similar to the south elevation (Figures 24-25, pages 16-17; Photo 11). Wide eaves extend out over the windows. The shorter half (eastern half) has two bays of windows with 32 panes each followed by two bays of windows with 40 panes each. Some utility mechanisms stand between the fourth and fifth bays; to each side of these mechanisms are shorter single windows with three panes. The building then becomes slightly taller followed by four more bays of windows. Like the south elevation the two center windows of each bay have twelve panes while the rest have six (Figure 25, page 17). Air conditioning units have altered the pane arrangement in the bottom of each bay's westernmost and easternmost windows.



*Figure 24. The east (left half of photo) and north (right half of photo) elevations of the elementary school building. Facing southwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

The west elevation has a single entrance directly across from the high school's east entrance; they are connected via the covered walkway (See Figure 13, page 8; Photo 3). The rest of the elevation is blind. Like the high school, the roofline slants upwards slightly from a lower centered point towards the north and south elevations. The original entrance door has been replaced with a modern glass door (Figure 26, page 17). To either side of the entrance are wood planks painted red. To the north of the entrance is a small wood partition wall that lines up with the north edge of the covered walkway. Painted white on the side facing south, it has a small sign for the Head Start program. The entrance leads into a double-loaded corridor which is perfectly aligned with the hallway of the high school.

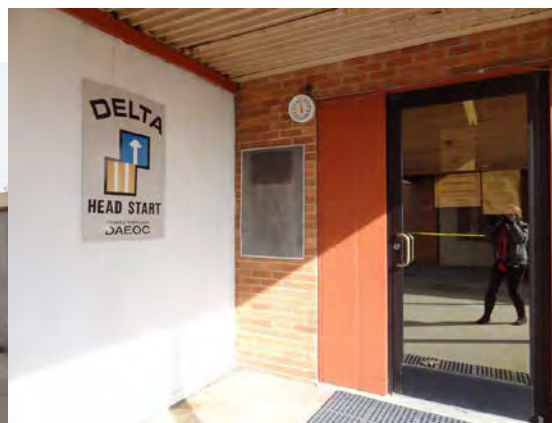
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 17

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Figure 25. The taller eastern half of the north elevation of the elementary school building. Camera facing southeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*



*Figure 26. West elevation of elementary building. The left photo shows the north half, the right photo shows the Head Start entrance in the south half. Camera facing northeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 18

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**INTERIOR**

**The High School, 1957-1958**

There are five entrances to the high school building: a primary entrance on the south elevation along with entrances on the west end of the south elevation, at the east end of the building facing the elementary wing, and on the west and east sides of the gymnasium (Figure 40, page 55). There are separate exterior entrances to the music room (to the right in Figure 16, page 10 and Photo 9) and to the shop. All of the original floor tiles have been removed due to asbestos concerns and damage (see the Integrity subsection on page 23). Concrete block walls were painted in some locations and partially covered in tiles in others. Wall tiling remains, though some may have been removed or never existed. A row of baby blue tiling remains along the baseboard throughout the high school building and in the hallways (Figure 27 below; Photo 14). Bathrooms maintain their wall tiling (Figure 29, page 19; Photo 18). The metal ceiling and support beams are visible throughout (Photo 14, 15, 19, and 20). The large expanses of windows provide ample natural light to the classrooms, library, gymnasium and cafeteria.



*Figure 27. High school double-loaded corridor. Note wall tiling and lockers still largely intact. All lighting is from the expanses of windows located in the classrooms. Camera facing northeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

Through the primary entrance on the south elevation (Figure 12, page 7) is a foyer connecting to the central hallway (see Figure 50, page 55), a double loaded corridor with lockers along its walls (Figure 27; Photo 14). A few small offices are immediately to the west (left) and the cafeteria is to the east (right) behind which is the kitchen and an area for storage. A wall with a large serving window that almost spans its width divides the cafeteria and the kitchen (Figure 28, page 19; Photo 15). Across from the cafeteria are the boys' and girls' bathrooms (Figure 29, Photo 18) and a large classroom that was the home economics room (see Figure 41, page 56). Beyond these rooms to the east is the exit to the covered walkway that connects the building to the elementary wing.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 19

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Figure 28. First photo looking out of the kitchen's serving area towards the cafeteria; second photo looking towards the serving area. Facing southwest and northeast respectively. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*



*Figure 29. Boys' (left) and girls' (right) bathrooms. Camera facing northwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

Turning left (heading west) from the main entrance foyer down the central corridor, the large gymnasium is to the north (Figures 40-41, pages 55-56; Photo 16). Wooden bleachers are along the gym's western wall (Figure 30, page 20). A stage sits at the north end of the gym with stairs leading up to it on each side. The wooden flooring remains but has deteriorated considerably. Basketball hoops are extant at the north and south ends of the gym. The metal ceiling has exposed metal rafters and original drop down lights. Boys' and girls' locker rooms run along the west side of the gym.

Further down the double loaded corridor and to the west of the gym are some smaller storage areas followed by two classrooms. These classrooms are divided by a wall with an open

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 20

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

doorway and a large window (Figure 32-33, page 21; Photo 17). Further west is an exit to the north of which is the library addition (Figure 31, Photo 19). Graffiti marks some of the library walls. At the northeast end of the library was an office; the metal framing separating it from the library proper still exists.

The southern portion of the corridor heading west from the main entrance foyer and after the series of small offices, has another classroom, a small storage room, the principal's office, and an additional classroom. The principal's office was divided with partitions sometime after the bulk of the period of significance; see Figures 41-42 (pages 56-57) for floor plans drawn after the period of significance (date unknown). These added partitions were later removed (see Figure 40, page 55, for current floorplans and Figure 43, page 57 for a current photo of the office).



Figure 30. Gymnasium. Photo of the bleachers facing northwest, photo of gym and stage facing north. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.



Figure 31. Library addition interior. The first photo faces southwest, the second faces north. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 21

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



Figure 32. Shared classroom wall with windows still intact. Camera facing southwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.



Figure 33. Yearbook photograph c. 1959 of typing class. Source: Howardville City Records.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 22

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

### Music Room and Shop

The music room (Figure 39, page 25; Photo 20) is situated behind the gymnasium and connects to a stage located at the gym's north end. It can also be entered via the covered walkway that runs along the east side of the gymnasium. It has a tiered floor. The blue baseboard tiles remain. This room also has original light fixtures.

Across from the music room, to the east, one can enter the shop via the covered walkway (Figure 34). There are entrances on every side of the shop except its east elevation. A garage door on the east end of its north face opens into a large workroom. To the east of the workroom are three small classrooms (Figure 40, page 55; Figure 42, page 57).



*Figure 34. Shop classroom, facing northeast. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.*

### The Elementary School, 1961

The elementary school's double-loaded corridor is aligned with the high school's corridor (Figure 40, page 55). It can be entered on the west or east end. A non-historic single door also allows entry from the south elevation (Figure 23, page 15; Photo 2).

Nine classrooms line the south side of the corridor. Eight more classrooms line the north side. After the first three classrooms on the north side are the bathrooms followed by a janitor's closet. The west side of the building is currently in use by a Head Start Program (Figure 35, page 23; Photos 23-24). The floor tiles have been preserved here, and are the same 9x9 type of tiles that had been located in the high school. Wall tiling remains, including the baby blue baseboard tiles with white tiles above it. Two thirds up the corridor walls the tiling stops and concrete block walls have been brightly painted, as have the classroom walls. The metal ceiling with exposed rafters is in good condition.

A wall with a single metal door has been added in recent decades blocking the corridor and dividing the eight vacant classrooms on the east end of the building from those currently in use by the Head Start program (Figure 37, page 24). These classrooms are vacant and have not

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 23

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

yet been refurbished. The floor tiling in this end of the building has been removed but the wall tiling remains (Figure 37, page 24; Photo 22). Original chalkboards and cabinetry remain (Figure 36). The dropdown ceiling is different than the rest of the school (which has exposed metal ceilings) but it appears to be original or early, though it has been painted.<sup>5</sup> The date of this ceiling's installation is unknown.



Figure 35. Double-loaded corridor in portion of elementary building used for the Head Start Program. Facing southwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2017.



Figure 36. Original cabinetry in elementary building. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2017.

### INTEGRITY

Historically, the school had its own water recapturing system for the toilets and hand washing that utilized a cistern located in a cluster of trees and growth behind the school. A more modern sewer system was installed in 1974.<sup>6</sup> A wall with a single metal door was added in recent decades to the hallway of the elementary building (Figure 37, page 24). It currently separates the in use western part of the building from the vacant eastern portion. Other than a few non-historic secondary entrance doors, a potentially altered ceiling in the east end of the elementary building, and the removal of some floor and wall tiling, few other changes have been made to the school.

<sup>5</sup> Vanessa Frazier, email correspondence with the author, August 29, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Vanessa Frazier, interview with the author, December 15-16, 2016.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 24

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

The biggest threat to Howardville School's integrity has been periods of vacancy and vandalism. This contributed to a relatively quick deterioration of the property after 2002. Some windows were broken, walls painted with graffiti, lockers damaged, and some areas exposed to the elements (due to broken windows and a deteriorating roof) and taken over by natural growth. In recent years the community has been extremely active in attempting to curtail the damage done during and as a result of this period. The natural growth has been removed (see Figures 38-39, page 25, for a before and after of the cleanup of the music room), the windows covered to prevent further deterioration from the elements, and the roof repaired in places where there was substantial damage and leakage.

The gym floor is in disrepair, but the original bleachers and basketball hoops remain (Figure 30, page 20; Photo 16). Floor tiling in the high school and part of the elementary school has been removed due to damage and asbestos both in the floor tiles and the tile adhesive.<sup>7</sup> The lockers remain in the hallways of the high school though many are missing doors.

Overall, Howardville maintains its historic location and, though some residential development has occurred to the west of the school, its setting is very much intact. It maintains the distinct feeling and association of a midcentury school located in a small, rural community. Though some original materials have been lost due to vandalism, damage and environmental concerns, it still maintains integrity of feeling, design, materials, and workmanship.

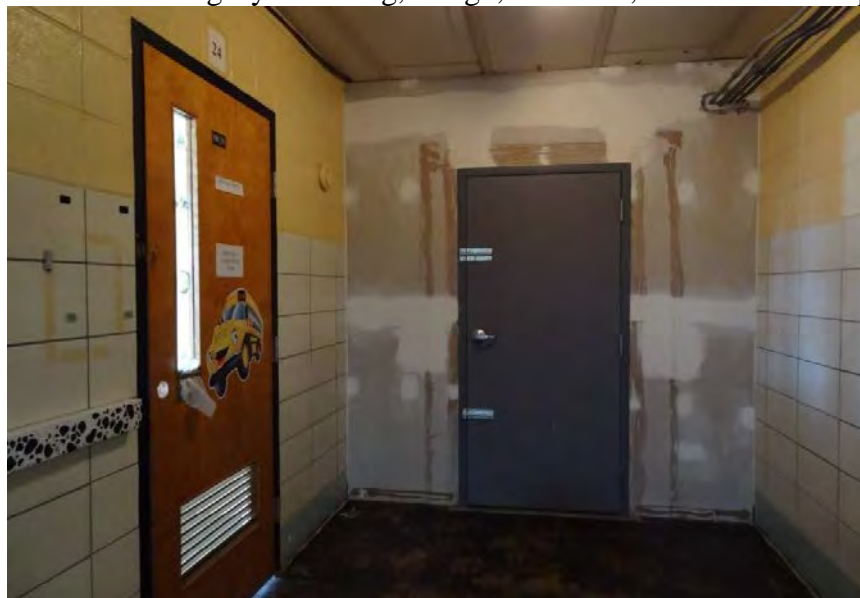


Figure 37. Shows the added wall in the elementary building. Photo taken from vacant side. Facing southwest. Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

<sup>7</sup>This was found primarily in the main high school building and parts of the east addition. Lead-based paint was found on materials in the library, gymnasium, kitchen, lunch room, and girls and boys restrooms. These and other findings have led to the current Brownfield project. Source: Tetra Tech, Inc. Phase II Targeted Brownfields Assessment Report Howardville Multi-Purpose Center Site, Howardville, Missouri. Kansas City, MO: Tetra, Inc. February 17, 2017. On file in Howardville City Records.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 25

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



*Figure 38: The music room before cleanup. Camera facing west. Source: Howardville City Records.*



*Figure 39: Music room after cleanup. Camera facing west. Source: Photograph taken by the author, December 15-16, 2017.*



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 26

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**Summary**

Howardville School is locally significant under CRITERION A for ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black and EDUCATION. The school is also significant under CRITERION B for its association with community founder Travis B. Howard. Howardville School<sup>8</sup>, first referred to as East Lilbourn High School<sup>9</sup>, was purpose-built in 1957-1958 to function as an all-black school. It opened its doors in 1958, four years after the Supreme Court's ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* that segregating schools was unconstitutional. In 1961, an all-black elementary wing was added to the school. The school is comparatively large, well-built, and modern in appearance. Spurred by community founder, Mayor, and school Principal Travis Howard, the school sought to provide well-rounded, quality education and educational facilities to black students in Howardville and the surrounding areas.

Located in Missouri's Bootheel region, Howardville itself was established in 1953 by Travis Howard as a rural, African American community. In founding the community Howard also planned to establish an associated school that would be accessible to African American students in the area and that would provide them with a better quality of education than they could obtain elsewhere. He purchased and set aside the land for Howardville School, which he later sold to the school district. He was as instrumental in the school's development as he was in the development of the Howardville community as a whole. He served as high school principal and taught classes until 1965. Howardville School remains a resource that is closely associated with Travis Howard. His office within the school served as his primary place of business that best reflects his significant activities; it retains integrity. The office is extant as are all the classrooms.

Prior to the opening of Howardville's high school, black students had been relegated to small schools scattered throughout the county that primarily provided education for the first through eighth grades. Many of these schools lacked standardized high school curriculum and facilities such as gymnasiums and libraries. High schools for black students were comparatively rare and to attend students often had to travel many miles. The opening of Howardville High School consolidated black students in New Madrid County to Howardville or O'Bannon School in the town of New Madrid a few miles northeast of Howardville. However, Howardville's school was much more modern than the school in New Madrid. With its five classrooms, including one for home economics, large gymnasium, cafeteria, music room, shop and library it stands out as a modern school where rural African American students could obtain a modern, higher quality education, though one that still separated them from their white neighbors. The 1961 elementary wing, connected to the high school via a canopied walkway, had 17 classrooms,

<sup>8</sup> Howardville School is the preferred name of the school as it reflects the preferred historic name of the high school – Howardville High – and encompasses the elementary wing which was added in 1961. It is also frequently referred to as Howardville School as it is the only school located in the city.

<sup>9</sup> Travis Howard and the local community sought to have the name of the school changed when it was realized that integration, which they had suspected was imminent when the school first opened, was still several years off. They succeeded in 1965. Howard retired soon after. Source: Howardville City Records. Howardville City Hall, Howardville, New Madrid County, Missouri.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 27

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

a boys' and a girls' bathroom and a janitor's closet. This further consolidated African American schools in the region to Howardville. In c. 1966 a library addition was added to the west end of the high school. The school became known statewide in the 1967-1968 high school basketball season right before it finally integrated. Its period of significance is 1958-1968 for the ten years it operated as a segregated school. Significant dates mark the school's opening in 1958, the addition of its elementary wing in 1961, its name change to Howardville High School in 1965, and its desegregation in 1968.

### Post-Civil War Segregation and Education for Black Students in Missouri

Segregation was well established in Missouri after the end of the Civil War. Separate schools for black and white students were allowed in Missouri's constitution of 1875.<sup>10</sup> Steps towards integration were often met with resistance. At times schools that had once been desegregated were re-segregated.<sup>11</sup> In 1889, the Missouri legislature officially ordered that black and white students attend separate schools. In the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that segregation was not unconstitutional, which further cemented current practices in Missouri. "Separate but equal" was the general doctrine of Missouri education in the ensuing decades, though "equal" was poorly defined and hardly enforced. Greene, Kremer and Holland point out that in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century African Americans continued to hope "that education would be the key to winning first-class citizenship. But nowhere was discrimination more firmly entrenched than in education."<sup>12</sup> Black teachers were paid less than white teachers (typically by about 25%).<sup>13</sup> They had fewer resources and facilities that were often outdated, inadequate, and in poor condition.

In the early 1920s a Negro Inspection of Schools was established and plans made to found black high schools (which were comparatively rare) in Missouri counties that had populations over 100,000. However, one of the greatest challenges occurring during this time was attempting to finance what were essentially two separate educational systems for black and white students; Missouri did not have the adequate funds to do so. As early as 1924, Inspector Nathaniel C. Bruce wrote that "Missouri's poor school districts cannot maintain separate race schools except

<sup>10</sup> Lorenzo J. Greene, Gary R. Kremer, and Antonio F. Holland, *Missouri's Black Heritage*. Revised and updated by Gary R. Kremer and Antonio F. Holland (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1993), 107.

<sup>11</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 107. In 1887 a white teacher would not admit black students into a Grundy County school that they had previously been able to attend. A lawsuit followed and in 1890 the Missouri Supreme Court ruled in favor of the teacher's decision with the judge "declaring that 'color carries with it natural race peculiarities' which justified the separation of blacks and whites."

<sup>12</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 147.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* See Section 8, page 33-34 for specific information related to the pay rate of black teachers in New Madrid County, specifically the pay of Travis Howard as compared to a nearby principal for a white school.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 28

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

at great disparity and inequality.”<sup>14</sup> In the 1940s black schools were still inferior both in terms of quality and location. Further, children were bused long distances to maintain segregation.<sup>15</sup>

A major challenge to segregation in Missouri occurred in the 1938 Supreme Court case of *Gaines v. Canada*. S. W. Canada was the Registrar of the University of Missouri at the time.<sup>16</sup> Lloyd Gaines was a black student who attended Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, graduating in 1936. He sought admission to the University of Missouri law school but was denied. The Supreme Court ruled that the school either had to admit Gaines or provide black students with separate but equal facilities. Rather than integrate, the university chose to open a separate black law school.<sup>17</sup> This case set the precedence for the idea that schools would either need to build separate schools or integrate.<sup>18</sup> Building separate schools would be costly and at the graduate level this was quite rare.

Newspapers, students, and the interested public advocated for the integration of the University of Missouri throughout the 1940s. The university finally admitted, under court order, its first black students in 1950.<sup>19</sup> This ushered in a wave of cases attempting to open the doors of other public education institutions to black students; some were denied but others were successful. In Kansas City black students attempted to integrate to a white school that had an auditorium and gymnasium. They argued that these facilities were important to a modern education and that black schools without them were therefore unequal. They lost the case. The court stated that facilities did not have to be identical but that educational opportunities had to be “substantially equal.”<sup>20</sup>

Finally, on May 17, 1954 in the case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the U.S. Supreme Court found segregation in public education unconstitutional. As stated by Chief Justice Earl Warren “We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.”<sup>21</sup> Subsequently, in June of 1954 the Missouri attorney general stated that “Missouri’s school segregation laws were null and void”; the next year the Supreme Court ordered that integration proceed “with all deliberate speed.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 147.

<sup>15</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 166. For example high schoolers in Fulton attended school in Jefferson City, 25 miles away.

<sup>16</sup> Chicago-Kent College of Law at Illinois Tech. “Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada,” Oyez. Accessed June May 30, 2017 <https://www.oyez.org/cases/1900-1940/305us337>

<sup>17</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 155. Gaines mysteriously disappeared shortly after this ruling and thus there were no appeals or separate law school built. Instead, a law school for black students was established at Lincoln University in 1940. It was however, “poorly funded, understaffed, and ill-equipped,” (also page 155).

<sup>18</sup> PBS. “Jim Crow Stories: Gaines V. Canada (1938),” The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow, 2002. Accessed April 21, 2017. [http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories\\_events\\_gaines.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_gaines.html)

<sup>19</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 167.

<sup>20</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 169.

<sup>21</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 173; “Jim Crow Stories.”

<sup>22</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 174.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 29

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

When Howardville School, initially East Lilbourn High School, was built it was an anomaly in multiple arenas. It was purpose built as an all-black school years after de-segregation had been made the national, and state, rule. Additionally, it was a modern facility with a large gymnasium, shop, specialty classes, and, eventually, a library. It was added onto and invested in throughout its decade of use as an all-black school to provide a quality of education that had previously been quite difficult for rural, African Americans in Missouri to obtain. It filled a great need in the region for a quality school accessible to African American students.

### **In Brief: African Americans in the Bootheel**

A total of approximately 297,000 Missouri residents were black in 1950, of whom 76.9% lived in either Kansas City or St. Louis. Most of the rest lived in the Bootheel region of Missouri and along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers (see Figure 2, page 51 for an image of the region).<sup>23</sup> Many of those individuals were poor farmers and sharecroppers. It has been noted that desegregation occurred later in the Bootheel than anywhere else in the state.<sup>24</sup> Further, the African American population grew quickly in this area, and then subsequently declined as African Americans continued to migrate further north and into cities for more opportunity, due, at least in part, to the mechanization of farming.<sup>25</sup>

Sharecroppers in the Bootheel were hit especially hard by the Great Depression (1929-1939). Sharecroppers were both black and white, though there was a disparity in what they made: in 1936 white sharecroppers made around \$400 a year, white laborers approximately \$264 a year, and black sharecroppers and laborers alike approximately \$250.<sup>26</sup> Most of these sharecroppers, of both races, lived in poorly constructed shacks lacking basic amenities such as plaster and insulation.<sup>27</sup> In January of 1939 they were evicted from their shacks, resulting in the Missouri Sharecroppers' Roadside Strike of 1939. This was a mass protest consisting of an estimated 1,200 individuals and some 250 families, situated along U.S. Highways 60 and 61.<sup>28</sup> Approximately 90% of these sharecroppers were black, though 10% were white.<sup>29</sup>

Eventually removed from the roadside by state and county officials, some sharecroppers were able to return to the farms from which they were evicted while others were housed in

<sup>23</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 161.

<sup>24</sup> Gary R. Kremer and Brett Rogers. Report. African-American Schools Phase IV. 2002. Survey # SWAS024. On file at the State Historic Preservation Office and accessible online: <https://dnr.mo.gov/shpo/survey/SWAS024-R.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Kremer & Rogers, Report, 65.

<sup>26</sup> Greene, Kremer and Holland, 151; "Missouri Negroes Between the Two World Wars, 1914-1939," OFFICIAL MANUAL State of Missouri, 1973-1974: The Role of the Negro in Missouri History, accessed April 21, 2017. <https://law.wustl.edu/staff/taylor/manual/betwww.htm>

<sup>27</sup> "Missouri Negroes Between the Two World Wars, 1914-1939."

<sup>28</sup> Bonnie Stepenoff. *Thad Snow: A Life of Social Reform in the Missouri Bootheel* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2003).

<sup>29</sup> Tim O'Neil, "A Look Back: Evicted sharecroppers live on roadsides in 1939," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. January 22, 2012, accessed April 21, 2017, [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/a-look-back-evicted-sharecroppers-live-on-roadsides-in/article\\_2bacbc2a-7f52-539b-8e64-185f587d918f.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/metro/a-look-back-evicted-sharecroppers-live-on-roadsides-in/article_2bacbc2a-7f52-539b-8e64-185f587d918f.html)

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 30

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

temporary camps. Some were put up in buildings such as dance halls and churches. As an example, by June of 1939 a camp of over 500 displaced sharecroppers began to develop into a settled if impoverished community: Cropperville.<sup>30</sup> Most of these families were black (97) though eight white families lived here as well.<sup>31</sup> This protest and its displaced sharecroppers set the stage for the need and founding of the soon-to-be small town of Howardville.

**Travis B. Howard, CRITERION B and the Development of Howardville**

Howardville was established by Travis B. Howard in the late 1940s and early 1950s as a rural, African American community. Its location and founding was partially influenced by the 1939 Sharecroppers' Strike coupled with Travis Howard's desires to develop a well-educated, cohesive African American community in the area.

Travis B. Howard was born to a wealthy family on January 15, 1896 in Penola County, Mississippi, though he spent some of his early years in Memphis, Tennessee.<sup>32</sup> He attended Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri and Kansas State University in Kansas after graduating from the Tuskegee Institute in Tuskegee, Alabama.<sup>33</sup> Howard was active in Missouri's African American community even prior to his interest in establishing his own community and school. For example in the early 1940s he attended a conference for black ministers and laymen at Lincoln University (Figure 44). He also attended a meeting of principals of all black schools in the Bootheel region (Figure 45, page 31).



*Figure 44. Photograph of black ministers and laymen at a conference held at Lincoln University in the early 1940's. Travis Howard is in the front row, second from left. Source: The Howardville News Reporter, February 1976.*

<sup>30</sup> Stepenoff, *Thad Snow*. Cropperville was a short-lived community; families eventually dispersed for work elsewhere. A stone monument currently marks its location. See O'Neil, "A Look Back," January 22, 2012.

<sup>31</sup> Stepenoff, *Thad Snow*, 98.

<sup>32</sup> Vanessa Frazier, e-mail message to author, May 19, 2017. Howardville City Records.

<sup>33</sup> As noted in the State Department of Education, Division of Instruction and Planning. Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, New Madrid County, MO, 1957-1958 and email from Vanessa Frazier, May 19, 2017.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 31

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Howard eventually moved from Memphis, Tennessee to New Madrid County, Missouri where he would ultimately obtain land and establish a community for African Americans in the area.<sup>34</sup> Howard was inspired to form a community and establish a school for African Americans in the region by the events that had surrounded the 1939 sharecropper's strike. Combs writes that "Howard believed the philosophy of Booker T. Washington – that a black man's way to freedom was ownership of land and business" and that Howard hoped to "free [African Americans in the Bootheel] from the trapping of their sharecropper heritage."<sup>35</sup> Further, Arlene Howard has written that Travis was influenced to establish a cohesive African American community and associated school by violence he had witnessed against African Americans.<sup>36</sup> Howard sought to establish a quality of education – and quality of life – for African Americans that was difficult for them to obtain in the Bootheel during this time period.



*Figure 45. Photograph of black high school principals in the Bootheel and nearby. From left to right in the back row is Mr. Gravett from Cape Girardeau, Mr. Bouden from Charleston, and Mr. Travis Howard (wearing the darker suit). In the front row is Mr. Corsey for Poplar Bluff and Mr. Brody for Hayti. The name of the sixth man is not noted. Unknown date. Source: The Howardville News Reporter, February 1976.*

Howard first taught at O'Bannon School, an all-black school in the rural town of New Madrid beginning in the 1930s. The city of New Madrid was just a few miles northeast of what would become Howardville. Howard hoped to build a newer, better school for local African

<sup>34</sup>James Leon Combs, *Bradleyville Basketball The Hicks from the Sticks: A True Story* (Bradleyville, MO: Beaver Creek Publishing, 1999); Arlene Howard with Ralph Wimbish, *Elston and Me: The Story of the First Black Yankee*. (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2001).

<sup>35</sup>Combs, 111.

<sup>36</sup>Howard with Wimbish, *Elston and Me*, 2001. Arlene Howard was married to Elston Howard, Howard's son (and only child) from a relationship prior to his marriage to Laura. Elston was the first African American to play for the Yankees.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 32

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Americans but was unsuccessful in his attempts to do so in New Madrid. He ultimately purchased approximately 200 acres of farmland in New Madrid County in c. 1947 and sold plots to former black sharecroppers, forming what was initially dubbed a village known as Howard's Park.<sup>37</sup> Howard set aside 16 acres of this land for the development of a school. Twenty-eight people, representing two-thirds of the village's residents, incorporated the "Town of Howardville" on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1953. The farmland north of Highway 61 was originally owned by the Young family while the land south of 61 had been owned by the Sisson family, both African American farming families.<sup>38</sup> Both farms grew cotton<sup>39</sup> and a few of Howardville's streets are named for them (see Figure 1, page 2); they also lived in Howardville as it became a town.<sup>40</sup> Howard was not only the town's founder and organizer but also its first Mayor.<sup>41</sup> Many of Howardville's first streets were named after Howard's family: there is Howard Street and Laura Street for Travis's wife. There are also streets names for his parents, Franklin and Francis, and his siblings, Bernice, Maryland, Sicily, and Eddie.<sup>42</sup> Howardville's streets maintain these names and their historic layout.<sup>43</sup>

Travis and Laura Howard sold the land that Howardville School would be built on to the New Madrid County Board of Education of Consolidated School District #11 in May of 1957 for \$8,000.<sup>44</sup> Funding for the purchase of the land and the building of the school is not entirely clear, though it was funded at least in part by "boosters" provided by local farmers and other residents for the school.<sup>45</sup> "Boosters" refers to a type of fundraising; in this case locals provided donations for the construction of the school. Construction began in the fall of 1957 and classes began in the fall of 1958.<sup>46</sup> The school graduated all black students from 1959, the end of its first school year, until 1968. Figure 46 (page 33) shows a composite of the first graduating class; Travis Howard is also pictured. Composites have been made for each graduating class; all of these are on display in Howardville City Hall. All of the students were black.

Data for Howardville do not appear in the census records until 1960 but Howardville was incorporated as a fourth class town by 1958, the same year East Lilbourn High School, soon to be known as Howardville High School, opened.<sup>47</sup> In the 1960 census Howardville is recorded as a

<sup>37</sup> Howardville City Records; Combs.

<sup>38</sup> Howardville City Records.

<sup>39</sup> Howardville is still surrounded by fields that are often filled with cotton crops.

<sup>40</sup> "In the Beginning." Howardville City Records. Information obtained from Ms. Alice Johnson and Bea McCoy, both retired school teachers from New Madrid.

<sup>41</sup> Howardville City Records.

<sup>42</sup> Vanessa Frazier e-mail to the author, May 19, 2017.

<sup>43</sup> Further investigation is needed to determine if there might be an eligible historic district in Howardville.

<sup>44</sup> Warranty Deed, May 16, 1957, Howardville City Records; "City of Howardville, Missouri" Howardville City Records. City Hall, 105 Howard Street, Howardville, New Madrid County, Missouri.

<sup>45</sup> Vanessa Frazier 2013 Interview, Part IV; Howardville City Records.

<sup>46</sup> "City of Howardville, Missouri," Howardville City Records.

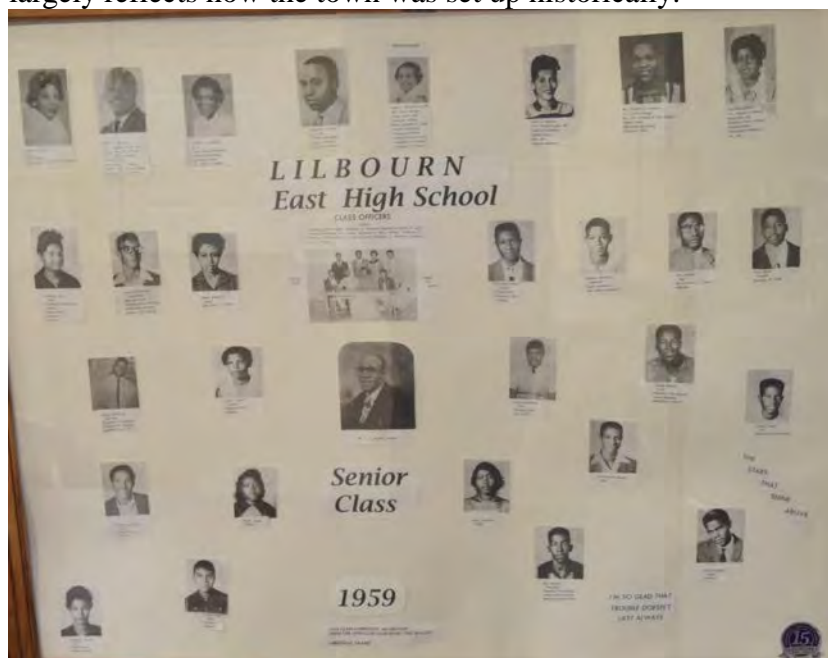
<sup>47</sup> Howardville Assessment and Community Profile, I., Howardville City Records.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 33

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

village with a population of 190<sup>48</sup> people. For comparison purposes, Lilbourn and New Madrid (the two communities closest to Howardville) had populations of 1,216 and 2,867 respectively. At the time of this census Lilbourn had a population of 1,024 white residents and 192 black residents. New Madrid had a population of 2,048 white and 819 black residents. Rural areas of New Madrid County had 20,788 white residents, 15,894 black residents, and six noted as other races.<sup>49</sup> While specific numbers by race are not provided for Howardville at this time, the town was predominately if not entirely African American. Today, Howardville's population still largely reflects how the town was set up historically.<sup>50</sup>



*Figure 46. Composite of the first graduating class. Travis Howard is pictured in the center, wearing a black suit. Source: Howardville City Hall, wall hanging.*

In 1957-1958, when Travis Howard was still principal at O'Bannon, he was making more than most white teachers and the same as the white principal in the area at \$4000 a year. Comparatively speaking however, he made less as Howardville's principal than the white principal in Lilbourn, with an increasing pay gap over time. For Howard's first year at East Lilbourn High he made \$4,500 per year, while the white high school principal in Lilbourn made \$5,500. By 1963-1964 he was making \$5,100 but the white high school principal was making \$6,500. During his last year he made \$5,200 versus \$6,850. J.D. Washington replaced Howard as

<sup>48</sup> According to City Records [Howardville, Lilbourn, and North Lilbourn, Child Health Champion] this census missed much of the population of the town; per their estimates the town's population was over 200 by 1954.

<sup>49</sup> Census of Population: 1960 Missouri – Volume I. 1960 Census of Population. Vol. I. Characteristics of the Population. Accessed December 22, 2016. <https://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.html>

<sup>50</sup> For modern context: the vast majority of Howardville's residents, 92.4%, are African American and 5.7% are white. Lilbourn has a population just under 2,000 and is approximately 64% white and 34% African American. The city of New Madrid has a population of just over 3,100 people, 72% of whom are white and 25.5% African American. Marston has a population just over 500, 80.1% of whom are white and 17.7% African American. U.S. Census Data, 2010.



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 34

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

principal of the high school for the 1966-1967 school year making \$6,000 compared to \$7,350.<sup>51</sup> J.D. Washington had been principal for Howardville's elementary school prior to his appointment as the high school principal.

Travis also taught while serving as principal; he typically taught math or agriculture courses.<sup>52</sup> Travis was known as a prominent and important educator in Missouri; Arlene Howard wrote that he "was a man who believed in education. It was his life."<sup>53</sup> This is certainly reflected in how Howardville and its school were established, with the school as the focal point and largest building in the town, even today. The school remains strongly associated with Travis Howard, its founder and high school principal until 1965. School reunions and the rehabilitation of the school have been framed in terms of Howard's legacy. A brochure for the Howardville School Restoration Committee reads "A Dream of Mr. Howard; A Community Blessing; A Legacy for All Students; This is our Legacy, We begin Restoration!"

Howardville's school, and Howardville itself, would not have existed were it not for the concerted efforts of Travis Howard, who sought to improve the quality of life for African Americans in the area. Howard's home in Howardville on Highway 61 still stands, just east of the school.<sup>54</sup> He also constructed a building near his home that was used for mail drop off, where he would sometimes meet after school with students for additional education, and where he printed the local newspaper, *The Howardville News Reporter*, for many years after his retirement.<sup>55</sup> This building is no longer extant; it was destroyed in a fire and many records for Howardville were lost during this time.<sup>56</sup> While he spent more years working at O'Bannon School as principal and teacher, Howardville's school represents Howard's major accomplishments, goals, and his primary extant workplace during his working years in Howardville. It remains strongly associated with him and best reflects his significant activities. Additionally, little of the original O'Bannon School remains. Howard's office space remains extant in Howardville School (see Figure 40, page 55). This space was at one point, after Howard's tenure, divided with temporary partition walls (see Figure 41, page 56) for smaller offices. These walls have since been removed.

### **EDUCATION & ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black: An All Black School Opens in 1958**

In order to attend high school after the Civil War but prior to desegregation (which occurred gradually throughout the 1950s and 1960s), many African American students would have had to travel long distances or find ways to live with someone while attending school in Kansas City, St. Louis, Sedalia, or Jefferson City. By the 1930s smaller towns might offer some

<sup>51</sup> State Department of Education, Division of Instruction and Planning. Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, New Madrid County, School years 1957-1958, 1958-1959, 1959-1960, 1960-1961, 1961-1962, 1962-1963, 1963-1964, 1964-1965, 1965-1966, 1966-1967, 1967-1968. Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City, MO.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Howard with Wimbish, 3.

<sup>54</sup> Combs, 112; Vanessa Frazier e-mail to the author, June 13, 2017.

<sup>55</sup> Vanessa Frazier e-mail to the author, June 13, 2017.

<sup>56</sup> Vanessa Frazier e-mail to the author, June 13, 2017.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 35

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

high school education “as needed” and in the 1940s state-funded buses began transporting students as far as 75 miles away to regional high schools.<sup>57</sup>

Black students in the Bootheel had few quality education options, even by the 1960s. Howardville School is and was the only school located in Howardville. Prior to the opening of Howardville’s high school, African American students in New Madrid County typically attended various small schools in nearby local towns until the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There were schools in the towns of New Madrid,<sup>58</sup> Lilbourn, Parma, Catron, Gray Ridge (near Essex in Stoddard County) and Portageville (a small town located in both New Madrid and Pemiscot counties), most of which are no longer extant.<sup>59</sup> The Carver School was located in Portageville, approximately 14 miles south of Howardville. It was a small, two-room school built c. 1940 for grades one through eight (it replaced the original school building which was destroyed by fire in the late 1930s).<sup>60</sup> Carver was closed c. 1964. In 1959 a former two-classroom white school, Scott School, to the east of Portageville was utilized as an all-black school for first through eighth grade. Catron had an elementary and junior high school.<sup>61</sup> Parma had a modern, concrete six room school by 1960 for black students up to the eighth grade; Parma desegregated in 1966.

Howardville’s elementary school was built in 1961 at least in part to consolidate many of these all-black area schools, including but not limited to Parma, Catron, Canalou<sup>62</sup>, Gray Ridge, Lilbourn and the surrounding rural areas. See Figure 47 (page 59) for a map noting the location of known all black schools in this area (for a figure denoting high schools see Figure 48, page 60). Howardville School was the only school in Howardville and this remains true today.<sup>63</sup>

Kremer and Rogers’ completed their statewide four phase survey of extant rural and small town African American schools in 2002. Few other schools surveyed are comparable to Howardville. Among these schools Howardville was one of the (if not the) latest known purpose-built African American schools, though several others were built shortly before, in the mid-1950s, and others were added onto later. None match Howardville in size and few have as many modern features. The closest comparisons are located in Pemiscot County near Portageville where all-black schools were built in the 1950s adjacent to all white schools in preparation for integration (and in fact they had the same names as the all-white schools). For example, North Pemiscot School, an elementary school, was constructed in 1954 with a building for all-white

<sup>57</sup>Kremer and Rogers, “Report,” 2002.

<sup>58</sup> All towns and schools are located in New Madrid County unless otherwise noted.

<sup>59</sup> Vannessa Frazier interview, December 15-16, 2016 and e-mail to the author, May 19, 2017. See Kremer and Rogers’ 2002 survey for documentation of African American schools that were at least partially extant in 2002. Only five were documented in New Madrid County, including Howardville. The others were Carver, O’Bannon, Parma, and Scott.

<sup>60</sup>Kremer and Rogers, “Survey,” 2002. Information on these schools was obtained from this survey, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>61</sup> Howardville City Records.

<sup>62</sup> This town is mentioned in in Howardville City Records as one that consolidated to Howardville School; no other information on a black school located here has been found.

<sup>63</sup> Today, New Madrid County Central High School and New Madrid County Central Middle School are located just outside the city boundaries of Howardville.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 36

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

students and a building for all-black students; it is extant (see Figure 59, page 62, for an image of the all-black building). Steele “Colored” School in Pemiscot County was built in c. 1956 and likely served elementary students; it is also extant (see Figure 60, page 63). Howardville is also one of few schools that was purpose-built to serve as a high school for African American students; the vast majority of other schools surveyed were elementary or served first through eighth grade.

Prior to the opening of Howardville School, black students in the area went to grade school in Lilbourn or the town of New Madrid. They attended O’Bannon School in New Madrid for high school. Travis Howard and his wife Laura Howard taught at O’Bannon School which offered all grades; Laura remained there after Travis became principal at Howardville. O’Bannon School received high school students from all over the county and beyond which, prior to the opening of Howardville, resulted in major overcrowding (see page 38 for more on this).<sup>64</sup> For example, Applications for the Classification of Schools records shows that for the 1957-1958 schoolyear Lilbourn bused 25 black high school students to the school in New Madrid. Morehouse, Parma, and Matthews also noted in their reports that they sent black high schoolers to O’Bannon. See Figure 48 (page 60) for a map demarcating the location of known all black high schools in the region.

O’Bannon School was established in 1933 offering first through eighth grade education to all-black students.<sup>65</sup> According to Howardville city records, O’Bannon was the closest school for most black high schoolers in the county, which began offering high school classes c. 1950. A brick Victorian style building, built c. 1900, it offered grades one through twelve. In c. 1950 a concrete building was constructed for an auditorium and some elementary classrooms. The original school building has since been demolished but the auditorium building remains (Figure 49, below). O’Bannon School was desegregated in 1966. It operated concurrently with Howardville School until then.



Figure 49. Remaining building from O’Bannon School in New Madrid. Source: GoogleMaps Street View, October 2012.

<sup>64</sup> Howardville City Records; Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, 1957-1958.

<sup>65</sup> Mayme L. Hamlett "Place Names Of Six Southeast Counties Of Missouri." M.A. thesis., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1938. Accessed May 31, 2017. [http://shsmo.org/manuscripts/ramsay/ramsay\\_new\\_madrid.html](http://shsmo.org/manuscripts/ramsay/ramsay_new_madrid.html)

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 37

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Starting in the 1950s African Americans in Portageville wanting to attend high school were sent to Hayti Negro School which was fifteen miles from Portageville and located in Pemiscot County; 28 miles southwest of Howardville. This was also where students from Parma attended high school, around 34 miles from home (Parma is approximately 15 miles northwest of Howardville). Desegregation began in Portageville in 1965. It appears that this school is no longer extant.<sup>66</sup>

Booker T. Washington High School in Caruthersville (also in Pemiscot County) was one of the few other all-black high schools located in the Bootheel. It had several buildings; three existed by 1933 and the last was built c. 1962. Students were bussed from all over Pemiscot County and parts of Dunklin County to attend Washington. Desegregation occurred here in 1967. The school's music building still stands, with some alterations, and a large stone historic marker commemorates the school (see Figure 50, below). Caruthersville, located in Pemiscot County, is 32 miles south of Howardville.

No other all black schools in the area were purpose-built with facilities as characteristically modern or substantial as those at Howardville, which included a large gymnasium, cafeteria, shop, music room, boys' and girls' locker rooms with showers and, later, a large library addition (c. 1966). Additionally, in 1961 an elementary building with 17 classrooms was added, attached to the high school's east end, further consolidating all-black schools in the area to Howardville.



Figure 50. Site of Booker T. Washington School with memorial for the school. Source: GoogleMaps Street View, October 2012.

Records during this time show that school districts in the region were struggling to provide adequate education to their students, especially to their black students. Districts were told by state officials to remedy a variety of issues to maintain a good classification. For example, classrooms were often noted as overcrowded, teachers classified as not properly certified, and

<sup>66</sup> Kremer and Rogers mention Hayti's school in their survey when discussing the history of other schools; however, it was not surveyed and therefore was likely demolished prior to 2002.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 38

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

required, standardized classes not offered.<sup>67</sup> At the end of the 1957-1958 school year, prior to the opening of Howardville, state records noted that an all-black two-year high school near Lilbourn was “very inadequate.”<sup>68</sup> The report also noted, however, that a new building was under construction in the Lilbourn area and that when completed it would be a “very usable facility for good classrooms and auxiliary uses.”<sup>69</sup> This likely refers to Howardville’s school, but it is not noted that it would be an all-black school.

O’Bannon School in particular faced overcrowding issues that drew the attention of state commissioners. Records for the 1957-1958 school year show that O’Bannon School had seven teachers, including Travis Howard who was Principal. On March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1958 L. L. Schuette, superintendent of schools for New Madrid, wrote a letter to the State Supervisor of Public Education, Mr. Carleton Fulbright, attempting to explain the very large class numbers at O’Bannon School. He noted 46 students in American History, 62 in General Math, 76 in Citizenship, and 57 in World History. He wrote that they did not expect such large numbers but that “[t]hese people came to us from over two counties” and they had not known they would receive so many.<sup>70</sup> He goes on to note that the issue had been remedied for the next year and that O’Bannon School would have about half as many students. It is not explicitly stated, but this is presumably because of the planned opening of the new, purpose built all-black school in Howardville. Regardless, in an April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1958 letter to Schuette, State Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Instruction and Director of Vocational Education Floyd Liley wrote “You will note...the number of advisements, practically all of which relate to the operation of your Negro high school. These advisements, we think, are quite important.” He goes on to note the high enrollment in 11 of these classes (ranging from 119 in girls P.E. to 40 students in Algebra I) and points out that “the Negro enrollment is larger than the white enrollment on the secondary level, yet the curricular offering is not as great in the Negro school...We feel that for the coming school year we could not feel justified in giving the A classification to your total school program when such differences exist...”<sup>71</sup> The new high school slated to open in Howardville therefore filled a great need in the area to accommodate large numbers of black high schoolers who were being bussed from all over the Bootheel region to New Madrid.

When Howardville was incorporated and the doors to the new high school opened, other black schools in the area offering high school classes consolidated to the nominated property. It served African American students from Howardville, Lilbourn, North Lilbourn, Catron, Marston, Conran, Gray Ridge, Parma and the surrounding rural areas.<sup>72</sup> Black students in New Madrid, however, continued to attend O’Bannon. In its first year Howardville, then still “East High” or East Lilbourn High, is noted as serving 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades, with a large freshman class. See Figure 51 (page 40) for the number of students recorded per class. Howardville had slightly

<sup>67</sup> Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, for schools years spanning 1957 through 1968.

<sup>68</sup> Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, 1957-1958.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> More specifically, these districts had no black high schools and so sent them to the nearest school, O’Bannon.

<sup>71</sup> Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, 1957-1958.

<sup>72</sup> “In the Beginning.” Howardville City Records.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 39

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

different course offerings than O'Bannon School, which continued to operate until 1966.<sup>73</sup> These course offerings evolved slightly over time.

During this first school year surrounding areas reported sending black high school students to Lilbourn (East Lilbourn High or Howardville); for example 36 students were sent here from Parma. For the 1958-1959 school year, it was noted that the pupil-teacher ratio in elementary schools exceeded 30 to 1, indicating a need for additional elementary school teachers and facilities. Overcrowding was also noted in the 1959-1960 report. These reports referred to Howardville's school as "East Side School." While other schools were noted as "Negro" schools, East Lilbourn was not, even though it operated as such.

By the 1960-1961 school year, Classification of Schools records indicated that there were 12 faculty members at Howardville, including Principal Howard. Howard taught a General Agriculture course during this time (he also spent time farming when not teaching<sup>74</sup>). Records also noted the completion of the East Elementary School<sup>75</sup>; this was the eastern addition to Howardville High School. This addition allowed for the consolidation of some all black elementary schools to Howardville and helped to alleviate some of the overcrowding at other schools, particularly at O'Bannon School, again filling a major need in the area for quality education and quality facilities for African American students.

Meanwhile, O'Bannon, with six faculty members, received advisements that the high school curriculum did not meet Class A standards in the 1958-1959, 1959-1960, 1961-1962, 1962-1963, 1963-1964, 1964-1965, and 1965-1966 classifications. This is indicative of the difference in the quality of education African American students could receive between schools only a few miles apart; Howardville stood out as a particularly high quality African American school. O'Bannon no longer operated as a high school after the end of the 1965-66 school year.

Even though Howardville's facilities were of a relatively high quality compared to other all-black schools in the Bootheel, the resources and facilities were still not entirely equal compared to the white high schools in the area. As touched on above, the faculty at Howardville was paid considerably less than the faculty at all-white schools. Additionally, while the school itself was very modern – with a large gymnasium, music room, shop, etc. – they did not have the same quality of educational materials. One former student wrote that "I use [sic] to go to Essex, MO (bused) in 1959. I was sent to this school (Howardville) for ¾ qtrs. I was in shop & at the white school, they had 12 welders but Howardville only had a saw (hand saw) & claw hammer. Prof. Howard taught this class. All we did was draw blue prints."<sup>76</sup>

However, time at Howardville had an impact on its students. One former student wrote that "99.9% of classmates were nice. School gave me incentive to work for what I want."<sup>77</sup> The

<sup>73</sup> See Figure 52, page 61 for comparison with O'Bannon School.

<sup>74</sup> Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools, 1957-1958. Farming noted in Combs, 111.

<sup>75</sup> Most of the details of these reports focus on high schools; this is the only specific mention of Howardville's elementary school.

<sup>76</sup> Howardville City Files.

<sup>77</sup> Howardville City Files.

National Register of Historic Places  
 Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 40

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

school still has regular reunions and the community is actively involved in the school's cleanup and rehabilitation.

<b>Classes</b>	<b>Number of Classes</b>	<b>Students per Class</b>	<b>Grades</b>
English I	2	39 & 17	9
English II	1	48	10
English III	1	30	11
Literature	1	20	12
Social Studies I	2	32 & 30	9
Social Studies II	1	28	10
Am. History	1	12	11
Am. Problems	1	37	11 & 12
Mo. History	1	20	11 & 12
Gen. Math.	2	26 & 33	9
Algebra	1	24	10
Plane Geometry	1	7	10 & 11
Gen. Science	1	40	9
Gen. Biology	1	38	10 & 11
Chemistry	1	9	12
Mixed Chorus	1	34	10, 11 & 12
Band	1	27	All
Glee Club – Boys	1	19	9
Glee Club – Girls	1	26	9
Personal	1	27	11
Typewriting			
Typewriting II	1	15	12
Gen. Business	1	30	10
Bookkeeping	1	17	12
Shorthand I	1	13	11
Secretarial Practice	1	3	12
Voc. Home Ec. I	2	15 & 14	9
Voc. Home Ec. II	1	19	10
Voc. Home Ec. III	2	16 & 19	11 & 12
Physical Ed. Boys	2	32 & 36	All
Physical Ed. Girls	2	40 & 43	All
Physical Ed. Health	1	8	10

Figure 51. Course offerings at Howardville, 1958-1959 school year. Source: Author compiled data from Classification of Schools Records.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 41

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Lilbourn East High School (Howardville School) graduated its first class on May 28, 1959 with 18 students and a class motto of “Henceforth to higher standards.”<sup>78</sup> Travis B. Howard was the principal and superintendent and there was one faculty member for each of the following: Girls PE, English, Science and Math, Music, Home Economics, Coach and Boys PE, Social Studies, Business Education, and Social Studies and Civics<sup>79</sup> (see Figures 53 and 54 for photographs of home economic classes from the 1958-1959 yearbook, the only yearbook ever published for Howardville High School).<sup>80</sup> Professor Howard recruited teachers from out of state; the basketball coach, for example, was recruited from Arkansas.



*Figure 53. Yearbook photograph c. 1959 of sewing class. Source: 1958-1959 Yearbook. Howardville City Records.*



*Figure 54. Home economics class, c. 1959. Source: 1958-1959 Yearbook. Howardville City Records.*

<sup>78</sup> Hawks Courier May 2009 Special Edition. Howardville City Records.

<sup>79</sup> Combs; Missouri Applications for Classification of Schools.

<sup>80</sup> According to “City of Howardville, Missouri” (Howardville City Records) this was the only yearbook printed because “It was thought that because of the school being all black, during de-segregation, that it would disturb the tranquility of peaceful living.”



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 42

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Investment in the school continued throughout its decade of use as an all-black school. Little official information is available concerning the elementary school which was added to the east end of the high school building in 1961. However, current residents of Howardville recall attending the school and have verified that, during this time, the elementary school also operated as an all-black school that consolidated other smaller all black elementary schools in the surrounding areas to the larger, more modern facility at Howardville.<sup>81</sup> In c. 1966 a substantial library addition was added to the high school's west end (see Figure 40, page 55). Travis Howard was principal until 1965, the same year he finally succeeded in having the school's name changed to Howardville High School. When the school was initially built and named, it was expected that it would very soon after be integrated. When it was clear that integration was not going to happen so promptly, Howard, believing the school name should reflect the local community which helped found and support the school, fought to have the name changed from East Lilbourn to Howardville High School.<sup>82</sup> That school year was the school's first year with its preferred name and Howard's last year as principal. With declining health, he retired and ultimately returned to Memphis, Tennessee where he died and was buried.<sup>83</sup> Today, the school is referred to as Howardville School, encompassing both the high school and elementary school and reflecting the historic name preferred by the community.

### 1967-1968 Basketball Fame and an End to Segregation

Travis Howard believed that sports in the local school would be beneficial not only to the students but to the larger community as a source of both entertainment and local pride.<sup>84</sup> Basketball was the only sport the school could substantially fund, and Howard hired William C. Jackson from Arkansas who had a record of 151-49 to coach the Howardville Hawks boys basketball team (see Figures 55-58, page 43-44 for images of the basketball team and cheerleaders).<sup>85</sup> In their first season (1957-1958), the Howardville Hawks had a record of 22 wins and only 3 losses. According to a former student, it was also well known throughout the region that Howardville had a large gym in which the coach had the players do a considerable amount of running (which made them hardy players).<sup>86</sup> In the 1967-1968 basketball season Howardville High School achieved statewide recognition when they took second place in the Class S state tournament. They were the only team from an all-black school to play for the Missouri state championship during the state's many years of gradual integration.<sup>87</sup> On March 2,

<sup>81</sup> Vanessa Frazier, interview December 15-16, 2016 and recorded interview, October 23, 2013. Frazier attended the elementary school. Howardville City Records.

<sup>82</sup> E-mail from Vanessa Newson to Lauryn Coombs and Yolanda Bouchee-Cureton, May 11, 2016; Howardville City Records.

<sup>83</sup> "City of Howardville, Missouri." The citizens were named honorary pallbearers at his funeral.

<sup>84</sup> Coombs, 111.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 111.

<sup>86</sup> Vanessa Frazier recorded interview, October 23, 2013. Frazier also recalls listening to the state tournament on the radio.

<sup>87</sup> Coombs, 112.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 43

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

1968, at least 6,000 fans attended the game in Brewer Fieldhouse at the University of Missouri; a space meant for 5,500. Bradleyville had won 63 games in a row. Already set up to be a historic game, it became an even bigger game for the history of high school basketball. According to Combs,

When Howardville took the lead with only 14 seconds left the crowd went hysterical, rocking the old fieldhouse. Everyone stood, yelling, screaming, holding their breath. Some people hid their faces, unable to stand the excitement. Cheerleaders wrung their hands. One of the cheerleaders from Howardville fainted at court side, then another.<sup>88</sup>

The game went into four overtimes, “the longest state title game in Missouri history.”<sup>89</sup> The Eagles ultimately won the game 76-73. The Howardville Hawks did not go home empty handed however; they won the sportsmanship award. That was the last chance Howardville High School had to win the state championship. They were integrated the next fall. While it is not historically clear, it is likely that the attention brought to the school during the tournament – with its clearly all black team and all black cheerleaders – drew attention to the fact that the school was an all-black school, which had not been explicitly noted in state records (the Classification of Schools), and expedited integration at Howardville.



*Figure 55. Howardville Hawks basketball team  
With Coach William C. Jackson in front, c. 1968.*



*Figure 56. Shots from the record  
breaking basketball game between*

<sup>88</sup> Combs , 115.

<sup>89</sup> Combs, 117.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 44

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Source: Combs.

Howardville and Bradleyville. 1968.  
Source: Howardville City Records.



Figure 57. Howardville cheerleaders with the original school sign, c. 1968. Source: Howardville City Records.



Figure 58. Howardville cheerleaders performing their Choo-choo dance, c. 1968. Source: Howardville City Records.

After 1968 black higher schoolers in the area began attending previously all white schools, including Lilbourn High School (in Lilbourn). The Howardville school became a junior high school until 1980. From 1980-1985 it was used as New Madrid County Central West Campus. It was subsequently used as a storage site until c. 1993. It was ultimately deeded to the City of Howardville in 1991. From c.1993 to 2003 it was used as the Howardville Multipurpose Center. It then sat vacant from 2003 to 2011, when rehabilitation of the building was considered and the Head Start Program moved into the west side of the elementary building. Plans for the school include a full historic rehabilitation and utilization of the school by and for the local community.

### Conclusion

Howardville School is locally significant under Criterion A for its association with EDUCATION and ETHNIC HERITAGE/Black and under Criterion B for its association with Travis Howard. Constructed as a modern high school for black students in Howardville and the surrounding areas, the school came into existence due to the efforts of Travis B. Howard who was the founder of Howardville and the school's champion and principal until his retirement at the end of the 1965-1966 school year. Howardville School remains closely associated with Travis Howard, and is the resource that best illustrates his significant activities. When built, and throughout its period of significance, the school stood out not only as a modern, purpose-built

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 45

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

all-black school constructed after desegregation was expected, but as a quality all-black school with comparatively modern facilities, a full faculty, and a highly successful basketball team. It has been highly valued by the local community from its early history to today.

## TIMELINE

1947-1948 Travis Howard purchases approximately 200 acres of land.

1952 Ongoing mechanization of farming continues to impact local African American farmers. Howard divides the land into lots to be sold to displaced farm families.

1953 Howardville incorporated as a town. Its population reaches over 200. Many were migratory workers.

1957 Travis Howard sells 16 acres of land to the New Madrid County Board of Education of Consolidated School District #11 for \$8,000. Construction of the high school began that fall.

1958 East Lilbourn High School opens for its first school year in the fall.

1959 The first class graduates and the school's only yearbook is published.

1961 An elementary school is added to east of the high school building.

1965 Travis Howard succeeds in changing the name of the East Lilbourn High School to Howardville High School.

1966 Travis Howard retires as principal.

c. 1966 the library addition is completed.

1968 Howardville High School comes in second for the state high school basketball championship. Howardville School is desegregated.

c. 1968-1980 The Howardville school becomes Howardville Jr. High.<sup>90</sup>

1980-1985 The school is utilized as New Madrid County Central West Campus.

1985-1993 The school is used for storage of school supplies.

<sup>90</sup> And below from Vanessa's May 11, 2016 email correspondence with Lauryn Coombs and Yolanda Bouchee-Cureton and phone conversation with Vanessa on March 30, 2017.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 46

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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1991 The school is deeded to the City of Howardville.

c. 1993-2003 It is utilized as the Howardville Multipurpose Center.

2003 Howardville school is closed and sits vacant. Theft and vandalism occur c. 2011.

2013 The school receives an EPA clean up grant.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 47

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 48

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Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 49

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 50

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of Howardville School is shown on the accompanying map, Figure 2, page 3.

**Boundary Justification**

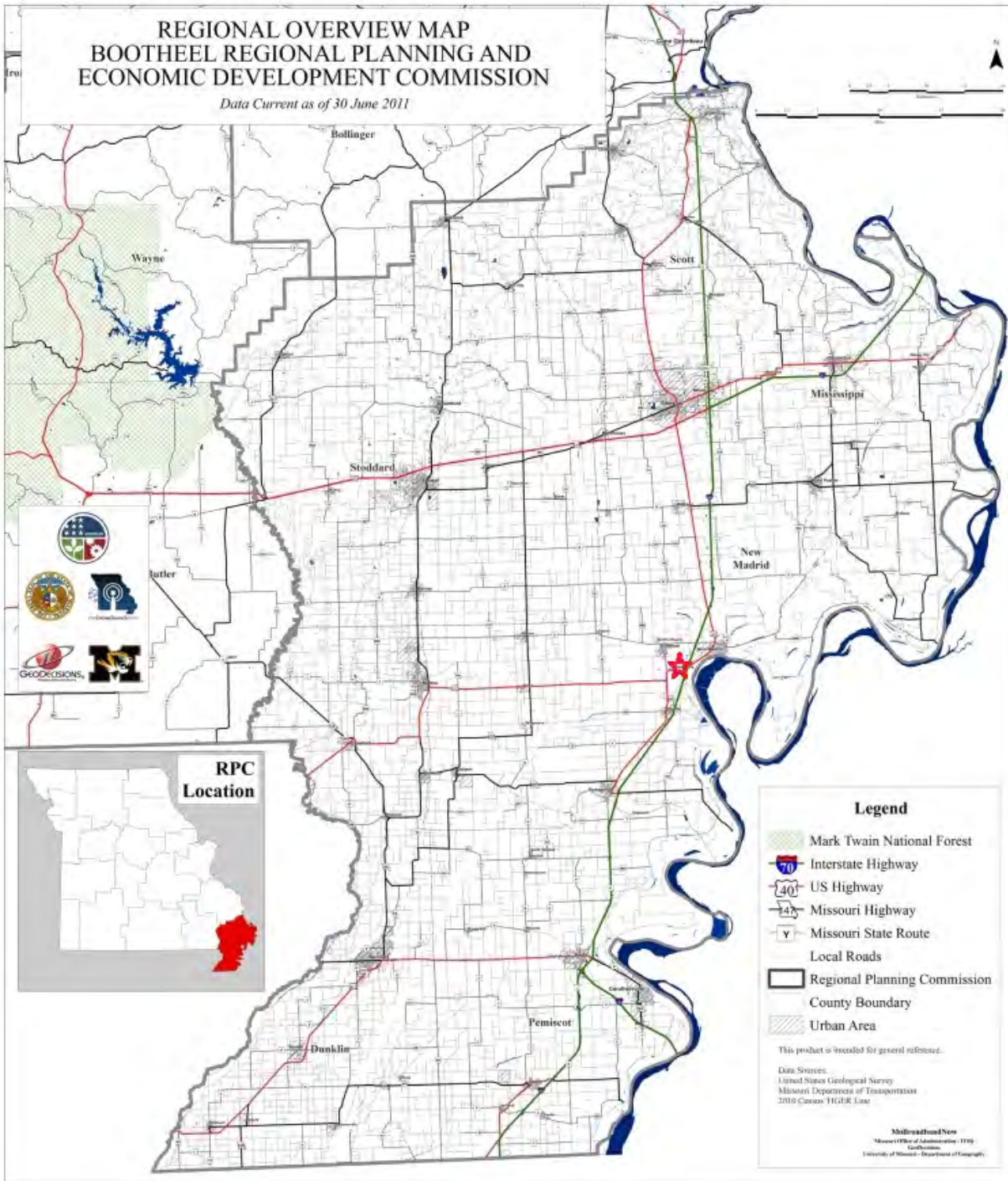
This boundary includes all of the historic property associated with Howardville School excluding the land that was taken over by the residential development to the west.

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 51

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 2. Bootheel Context Map. The red star marks the location of Howardville. Source: "Regional Overview Maps," mobroadbandnow, accessed April 21, 2017, <https://mobroadbandnow.com/maps-and-data/regional-maps-2/regional-overview-maps/>



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 52

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 4. Aerial photograph of Howardville from 1969. Source: Seagull Environmental Technologies, Inc.



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 53

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 5. Aerial photo of the Howardville area from 1950. Source: Seagull Environmental Technologies, Inc.



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 54

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 6. The DAEOC Head Start sign, a non-contributing object in the resource count. Source: Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

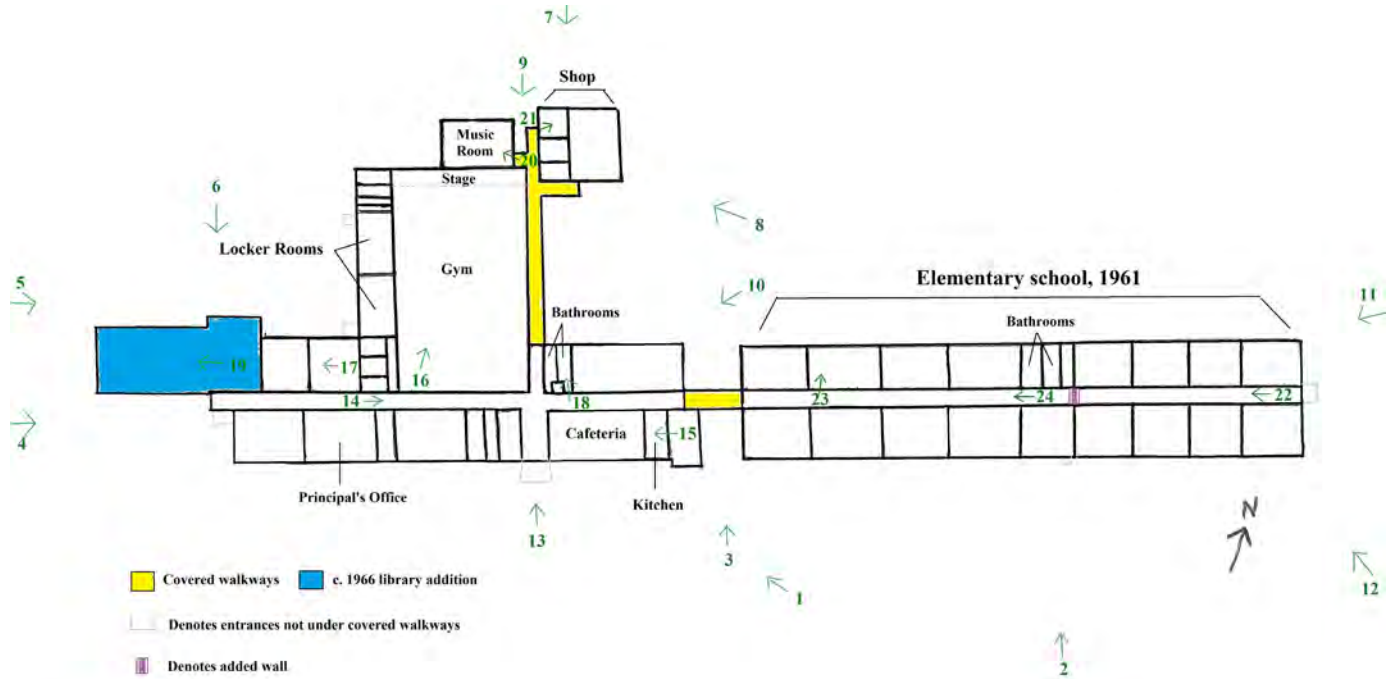


National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 55

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 40. Current floor plans and photo log. Drawn by the author, 2017.

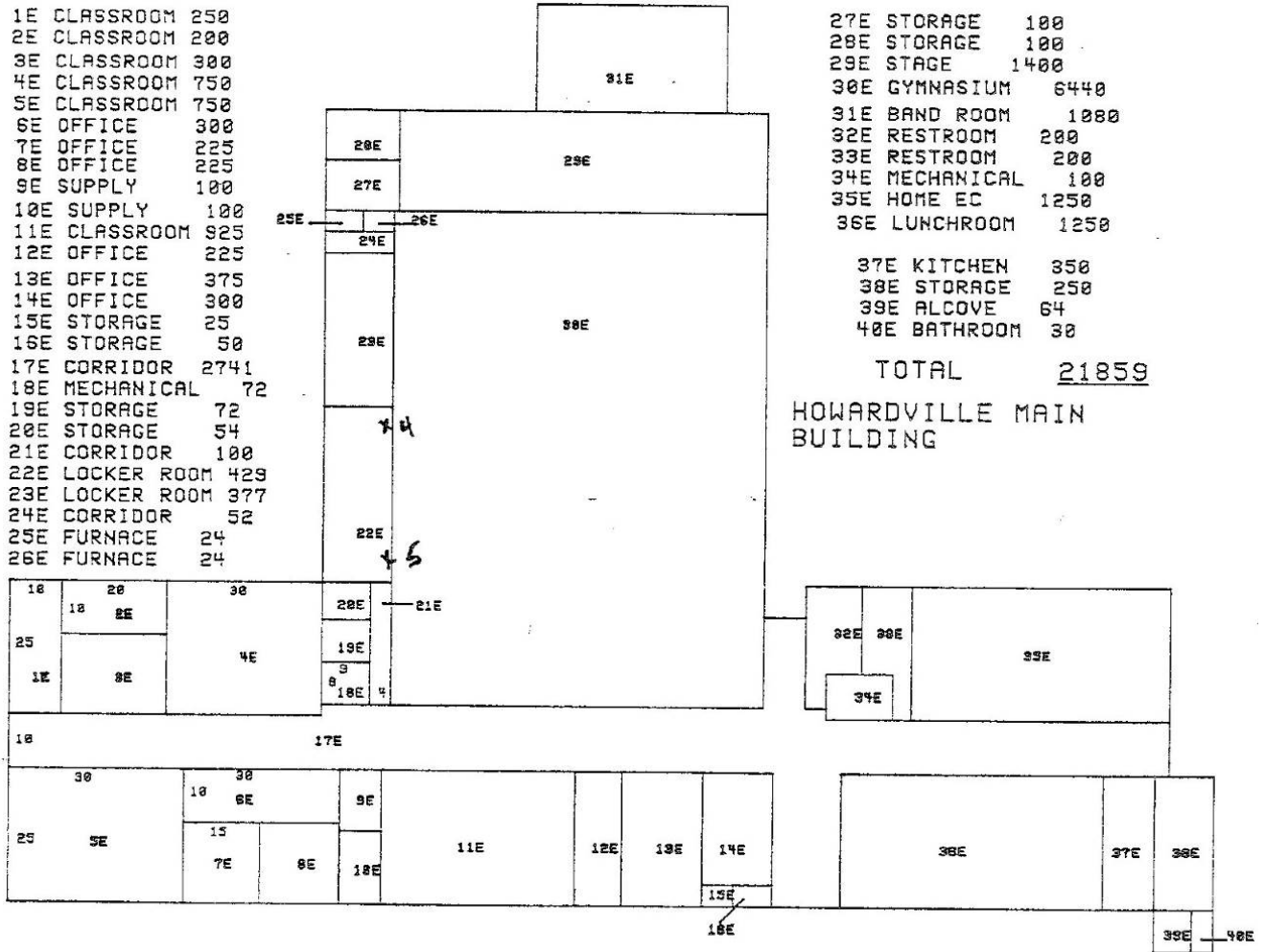


National Register of Historic Places  
 Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 56

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 41. High school building floorplan with rooms numbered and labeled; date unknown, though likely sometime after 1965. Accuracy of scaling unknown. Source: Howardville City Records.

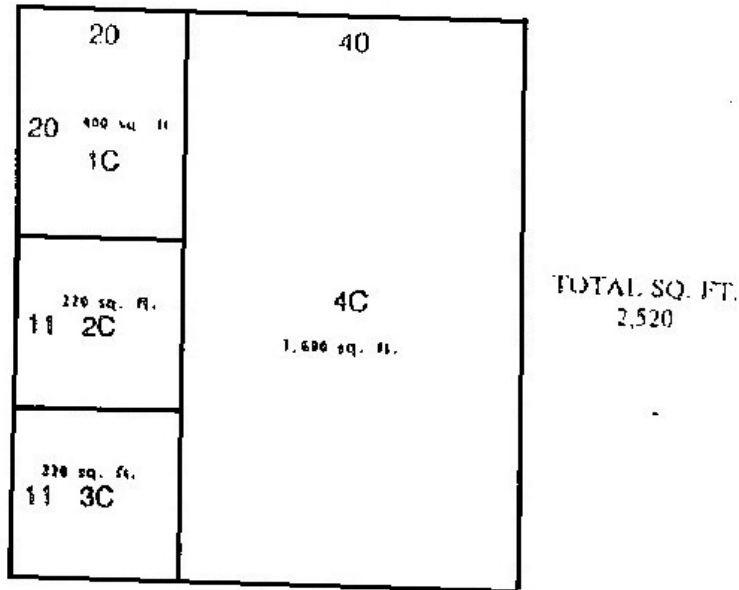


National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 57

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 42. High school shop building floorplan with rooms numbered and labeled, date unknown, though likely sometime after 1965. Accuracy of scaling unknown. Source: Howardville City Records.





National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 58

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 43. The original principal's office today; open as it was historically. Source: Photographed by the author, December 15-16, 2016.

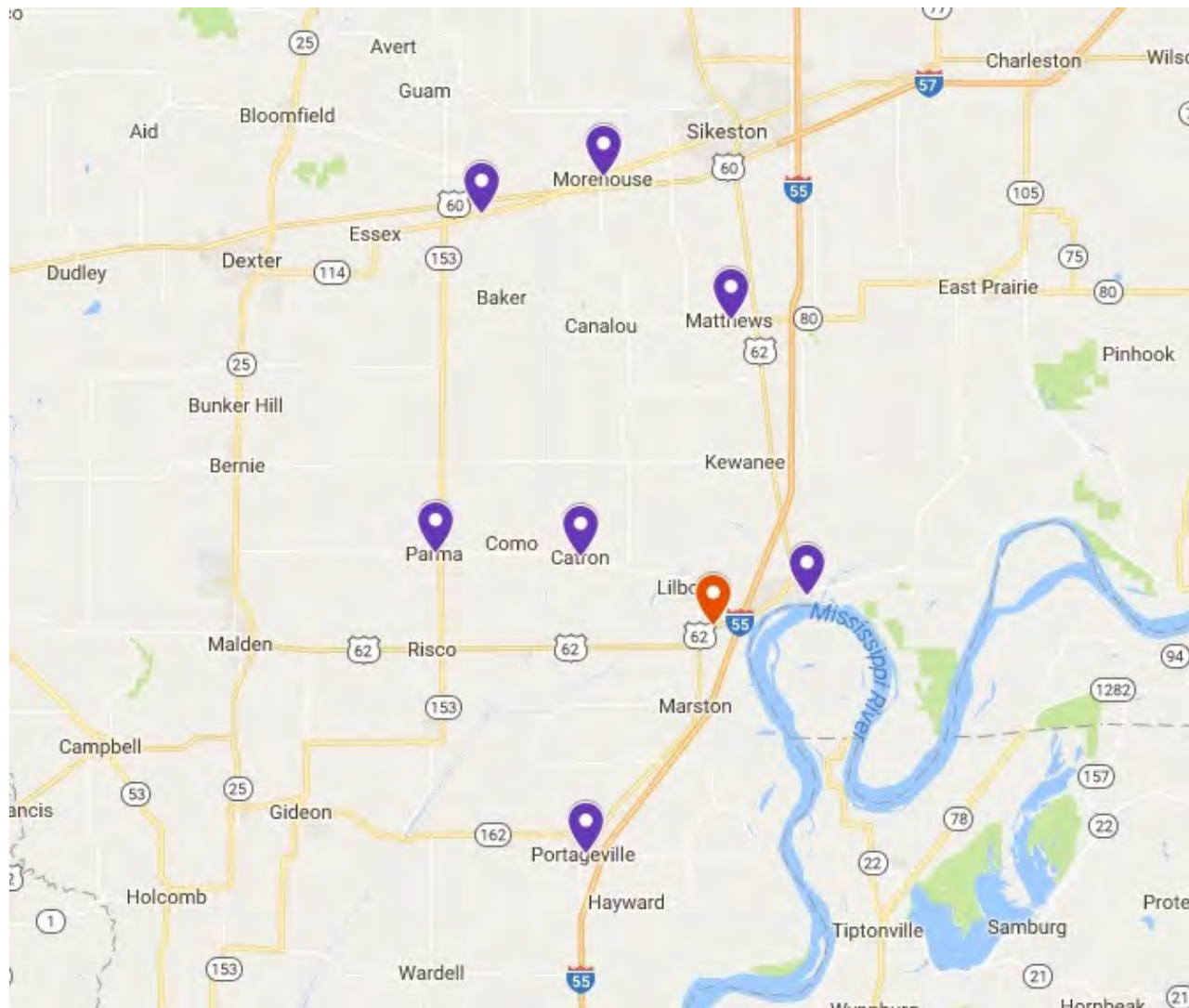


National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 59

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 47. All black schools (not including high schools) in the Bootheel region that consolidated to Howardville or O'Bannon. The red marker is Howardville. The purple markers indicate Portageville, Catron, Parma, New Madrid, Morehouse, Matthews, and Grayridge. Source: GoogleMaps, 2017.

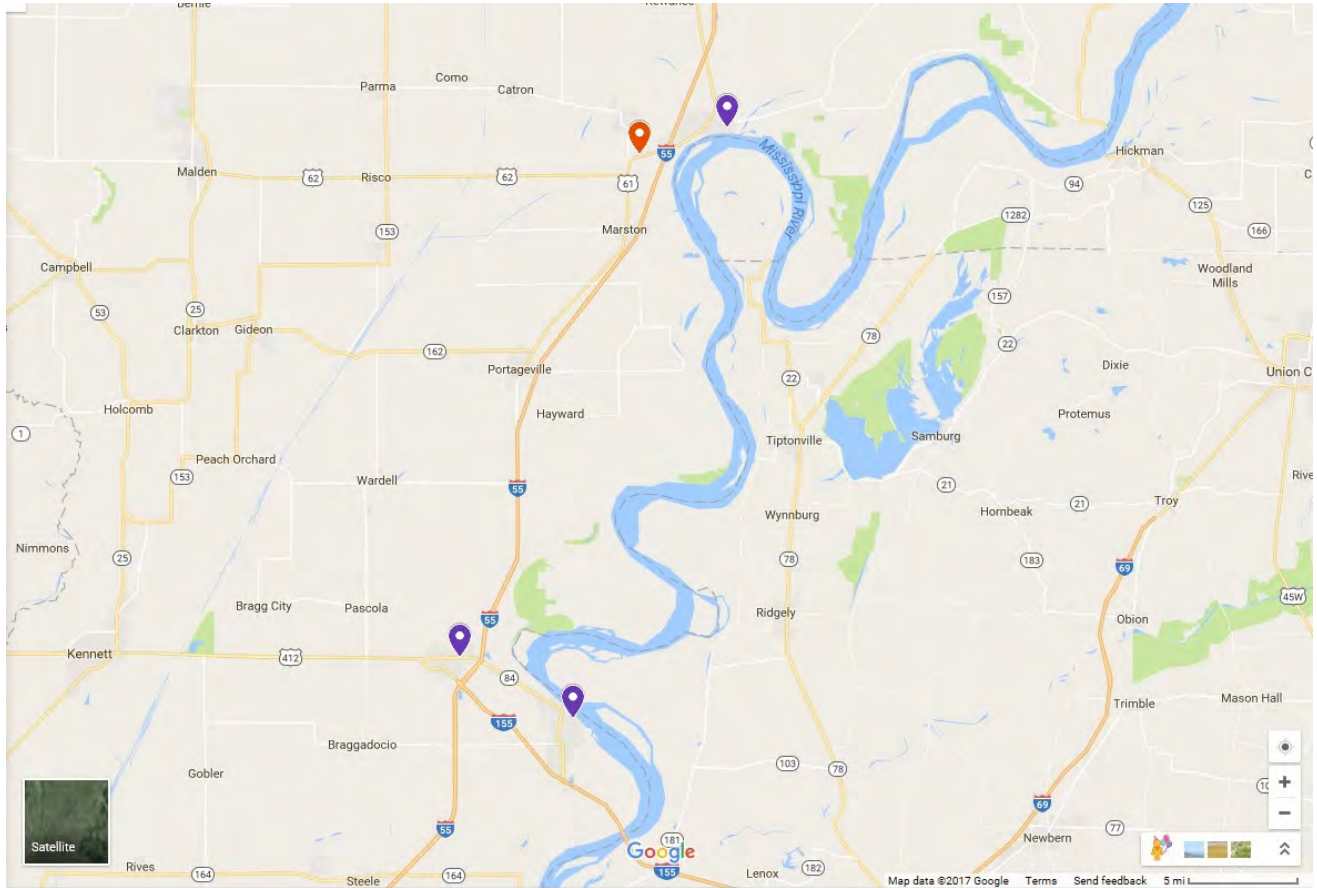


National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 60

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 48. Known high schools in the Bootheel. Source: GoogleMaps, 2017.



National Register of Historic Places  
 Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 61

Howardville School
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 52. Course offerings at O'Bannon, 1958-1959 school year. Source: Author compiled data from Classification of Schools Records.

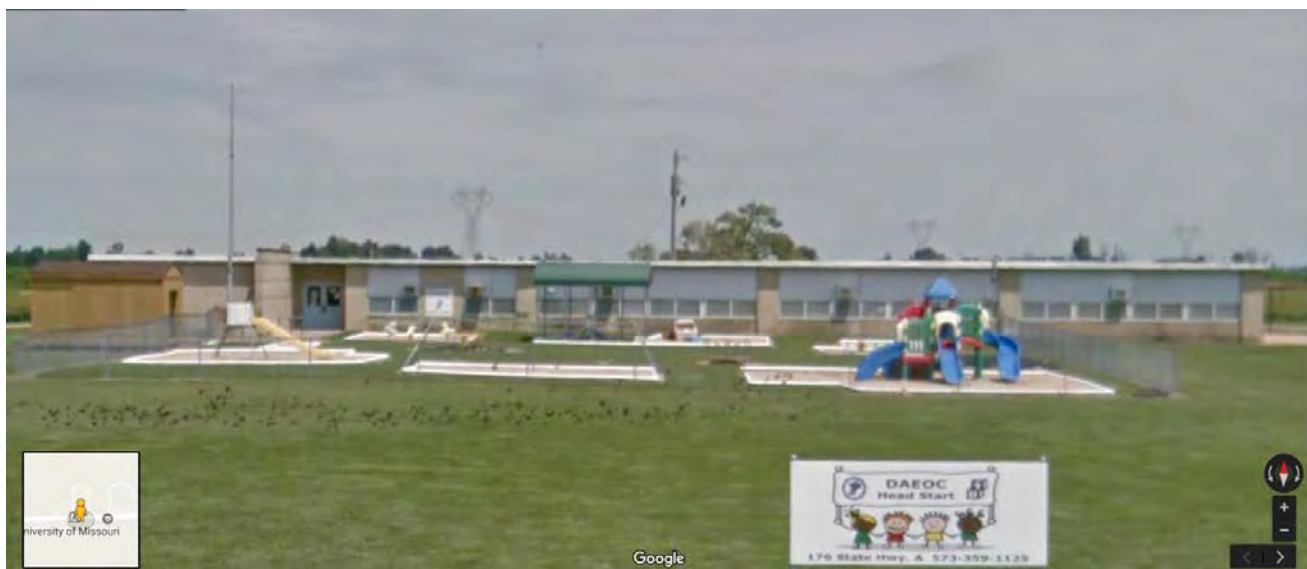
<b>Classes</b>	<b>Number of Classes</b>	<b>Students per Class</b>	<b>Grades</b>
English I	2	24 & 20	9
English II	1	28	10
English III	1	30	11
Literature	1	21	12
Social Studies I	2	24 & 20	9
Social Studies II	1	28	10
Am. History	1	32	11
Geography	1	21	10, 11 & 12
Gen. Math.	1	23	9
Algebra	1	21	9
Adv. Algebra	1	8	11
Gen. Science	1	19	9
Gen. Biology	1	29	10
Physics	1	5	12
Mixed Chorus	1	30	All
Glee Club – Boys	3	Not noted; 41 total	All
Glee Club – Girls	3	Not noted; 50 total	All
Personal	2	15 & 15	11 & 12
Typewriting			
Gen. Business	1	27	10
Bookkeeping	1	21	12
Shorthand I	1	20	11
Voc. Home Ec. I	1	Not noted	9
Voc. Home Ec. II	1	Not noted	10
Voc. Home Ec. III	2	Not noted	12
Related H. E. Art	1	10	10
Physical Ed. Boys	2	Not noted; 54 total	All
Physical Ed. Girls	2	Not noted; 69 total	All
Physical Ed. Health	1	30	10 & 11

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 62

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 59. North Pemiscot School's all-black school adjacent to the all-white school. Source: Google Street View. July 2014.



National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number Figures Page 63

Howardville School
-----
Name of Property
New Madrid County, Missouri
-----
County and State
N/A
-----
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Figure 60. Steele “Colored” School, c. 1956. This photograph is from the 2002 survey; however it looked much the same in March 2008 (the date of the current Google Street View). Source: Kremer and Rogers, “Survey”, page 173.

































POSTED  
NO TRESPASSING  
KEEP OUT

POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS















**SUPER  
MEN**

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EXIT



PARENTS

CHILLING FOODS SAFELY

CHILLING FOODS SAFELY  
The following information is provided to help you understand the importance of chilling foods safely. It is intended to be used as a guide and is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice. For more information, please contact your local health department.





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 10/10/2017      Date of Pending List: 11/14/2017      Date of 16th Day: 11/29/2017      Date of 45th Day: 11/24/2017      Date of Weekly List: 11/24/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      11/22/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



**Memorandum**

**Date:** October 4, 2017  
**To:** Paul Loether, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places  
**From:** Toni M. Prawl, Ph.D., Deputy SHPO and Director, Missouri SHPO *TMP*  
**Subject:** Howardville School [preferred], New Madrid County, Missouri, National Register Nomination

Our state review board, the Missouri Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, approved the above nomination on **August 4, 2017**. All owners and appropriate elected public officials were notified and provided at least thirty (30) days to comment on the above proposed nomination in accordance with Section 36CFR60.6, interim regulations, using the exact notification format recommended by the National Register. **The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.**

Please find enclosed the following documentation:

- 1   CD with original National Register of Historic Places registration form
- Multiple Property Documentation Form
- Photographs
- 1   CD with electronic images
- Original USGS map(s)
- 2   Piece(s) of correspondence (cover letter and signature page)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

- Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do        do not        constitute a majority of property owners.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_