

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



1. Name of Property

historic name Elkhorn City Elementary & High Schools

other names/site number PI-346

2. Location

street & number 551 Russell Street

NA	not for publication
NA	Vicinity

city or town Elkhorn City

state Kentucky code KY county Pike code 195 zip code 41522

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

national statewide local

Craig Potts Signature of certifying official/Title Craig Potts/SHPO Date 1-22-15

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
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:

- 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:)

Jim Kelly Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 3-17-2015

5. Classification

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	2	buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
3	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Education: School

Education: School

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not In Use

Vacant/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Industrial

Materials

foundation: Concrete,

walls: Masonry/Brick

roof: Flat/Coping, Asphalt

other:

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Elkhorn City High School (PI-346) stands in Elkhorn City, a town about 20 miles southeast of Pikeville, Kentucky, the county seat. The school was built in 1938 using funds from the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The site consists of 6 features: a 1938 high school, a 1956 elementary school, a 2009 apartment building, a 1956 building used for music instruction, and two non-contributing ancillary constructions. These buildings are situated on a 6.8-acre parcel which is surrounded by State Route 197 and the Elkhorn Creek at its confluence into the Russell Fork.

Narrative Description

Character of the Site

The nominated site sits near the heart of the city. The lot grades slightly, sloping downward from SR 197 toward the Elkhorn Creek. This landscape allowed egress for school buses and automobiles to the rear of the buildings with additional parking spaces (figure 1). The former High School and the former Elementary School stand apart from one another on the site, and a 2009 apartment building infill between them. The apartment building stands on the site of an even earlier school building which stood on the property from 1925 until the early 1980s. The Music building sits at the southernmost edge of the property, adjacent to the former elementary school, a contributing structure. The site is adorned with large trees and bushes along the bank.

Elkhorn City High School, 1938, Contributing Building

Exterior Description

The old Elkhorn High School building stands two stories in height, sitting upon a raised basement partially below grade. Comprised of two main sections, the front elevation (figure 2) has a setback from KY 197 of about 40'. The building is approximately 150' in length and nearly 60' deep. This eastern façade is symmetrical with a central entrance surrounded by carved stone ornamentation. The central bay and each end bay protrude slightly forward, separating the expanse of the façade into equal portions. The building has a solid poured concrete foundation reinforced with steel, on which walls of solid clay block were built, faced with brick and finished on the interior.



Figure 1

The entrance is flanked by a single larger bay filled with twelve-over-twelve sash windows framed in carved stone to either side with a gothic arched doorway with pointed transom, trimmed in stone keyed into the brick. The entrance is approached by concrete steps and raised platform surround. Above the central door is an entablature inscribed with the date 1938 in carved stone. The remaining six bays to either side of the entrance on the main two floors are filled with paired nine-over-nine-light wood sashes while the basement level is comprised of steel fifteen-light fixed-sash windows with the bottom center three panes operable, projecting from the sash. A gothic inspired carved stone scroll crests the building. A belt course of stone rests at the top of the second story window openings. The parapet wall above is crenellated.



Figure 2

At each side a single central bay projects from the main building boasting a central double door with transom to the main level. These entrances are approached by concrete steps and a pair of nine-over-nine-light wood-sash windows above the door. Each story repeats the interior configuration of central hall with stairs at either end, flanked by classrooms, offices, library and restroom facilities. The rear of the structure mimics the lines of the front façade, yet breaks the regular pattern of bays for insertions of smaller six-over-six-light windows for facilities at each end, then returning to paired windows in the remaining bays, as on the front façade. Yet the lines of the building break short for the insertion of a gymnasium attached at the center of the rear of the building. The gymnasium was built concurrently with the main structure and insets into the structure, eliminating the classrooms at the center of the rear for a connection to interior stage and roof line. The gymnasium is rectangular in design, built of masonry matching the rest of the structure. It sits atop a raised basement of concrete with a barrel vault roof profile. The gym features five large six-over-six-light steel windows along both the northern and southern façade (figure 3). The center six lights of the second and third rows from the bottom tilt out for ventilation. The basement level is at grade at the rear of the gymnasium. The basement is lit by six windows which have been filled yet retain fixed twelve-light sashes. Large steel steps at the rear bay of the northern and southern facades raise to a single exit door at the first floor, while an additional single door in the same bay can be found below the stairs accessing the basement level.



Figure 3



Figure 4

Interior Description

The plan of the Elkhorn City school is attributed to architect Walt Merryweather, whose plans were altered to build many schools in other communities around Kentucky. In Merryweather's design, the building would boast two stories of class room space with additional mixed classroom, lunch room and mechanical spaces in the basement level. Each floor was accessed by a long hallway that ran the length of the building on a north/south axis on all levels, with stairwells at either end. The first (main floor) had eight classrooms, two offices and restroom facilities, while the second floor boasted five classrooms, a library, and restrooms. Each classroom was outfitted with a cloak room and featured built-in chalk board at the front of the room, built-in bookshelf flanking one side of the classroom entrance and a framed built-in bulletin board to the other side of the doorway. Interior doors are of wood with five stacked panels, the

second from the top of glass and the remaining raised wood panels. Hallways, restrooms and basement floors are of concrete, while the remaining classrooms and offices have hardwood flooring. The library supported two offices at the end opposite the entrance and the interior walls featured recessed bookshelves. Hallways of all levels featured recessed spaces for lockers, water fountains at both ends and open stairwells. The basement level included a kitchen and cafeteria, maintenance area, boiler room, and additional classroom space.

Merryweather's plan was devised with an option for more classrooms or an attached gymnasium. Local residents pushed during planning for the gymnasium addition. The gymnasium featured a stage area, accessible by the main hall of the school with dressing rooms to either side of the stage. The stage opened onto a large gymnasium with fixed wood bleachers to both sides and a painted basketball court placed on an east/west axis on the hardwood floors. The rafters of the Quonset roof were left exposed, while the basement level housed additional mechanical rooms, as well as dual locker and shower rooms. Originally the upper story was relegated to high school students and the lower stories divided among other grades. A steam heat system warms the building, which held radiators on exterior walls, occasionally recessed into walls. Additionally the building boasted modern toilet fixtures with spacious rooms appointed with porcelain fixtures at both ends of the building's rear façade, and additionally supporting wall-mounted porcelain water fountains located at both ends of the hallway on each story. Though room use was altered through the years, the original interior space arrangement designed by Merryweather is still relatively intact.

Changes to the Building

New wiring and mechanical systems, heaters, and fluorescent lighting fixtures to some rooms have altered the building. Many historic pendant light fixtures still adorn most classrooms, although globes have been vandalized or stolen, as have all the building's original radiators. The building still retains most of its original window frames, though most glass panes have succumbed to vandals, as have some sashes.

The largest alteration of the whole of the structure was the appending of a small wood framed and sheathed gable end addition attached to the northern façade of the gymnasium at the basement level which provided additional sports and maintenance equipment storage. Measuring 8' wide by 12' long by 8' high, the addition does not compromise the structural integrity of the building and is considered a non-contributing addition to the original building (figure 5). An addition of a roofing system was attached to the rear of the gymnasium to provide shelter for students in the late 1990s. This addition spans the width of the rear of the gymnasium and was built of modern dimensional lumber and covered in plastic sheathing, which has failed and fallen from the building. Overall, the structure has survived to the modern day very much as when constructed with only minimal change, and deterioration from vandalism and neglect after being abandoned in 2002.



Figure 5

Elkhorn City Elementary School, 1955, Contributing Building

Exterior Description

The old Elkhorn City Elementary School building stands two stories in height, sitting upon a poured concrete basement below grade on the eastern façade. The front elevation sits slightly askew from KY197 and is approximately 160' in length and nearly 50' deep. This eastern façade is symmetrical, built of brick veneer over concrete block with a central entrance flanked by protruding bays at either end of the structure. The entrance is surrounded by a protruding border at the first story that features a stone cap. Inset are paired doors with 9 lights in the upper portion and a transom. At the apex of the central bay, a carved stone inset reads "Elkhorn City School." The central bay, above the entrance, boasts a single three-by-five-light steel frame window, with the middle and lower six panes that tilt as a single unit. These windows are then spaced along the façade on both levels, to either side of the entrance of four bays, followed by an additional four bays which protrude slightly as a single unit, followed by an additional bay which features smaller six-light steel frame windows raised above the line of the other windows, delineating interior stairwells. The window sills carry across the whole of the seventeen central bays, as a horizontal accent of stone, providing the only additional decorative feature of the façade. The building supports a flat roof hidden by parapet wall which is capped with stone coping. The basement level of the front façade to the left of the entrance grades slightly, allowing three unevenly-spaced window openings, filled with six-light fixed steel-frame sashes (figure 6).



Figure 6

At each side, a single central bay allows access to the interior at the first (main) level accessed by poured concrete stairs. Paired doors access a central interior hallway through these doors which are supported by additional unevenly-spaced window openings of varying sizes with brick masonry sills on the northern and southern facades, culminating with the parapet capped in stone coping. The rear of the structure mimics the lines of the front façade, with identical bays filled with the same steel frame windows and stone sills, which do not connect as on the front façade. A chimney stack rises from the central bay at the rear and the roof slopes to the rear, no longer hidden by parapet, draining into a gutter the length of the building. The basement exits at grade at the rear of the structure and allows unevenly-spaced window and door opening to access interior mechanical systems. An exterior stair climbs the grade to the northern façade covered by a manufactured metal walkway cover. The stair and walk lead to the side entrance of the northern façade and the front entrance (figures 7 & 8).



Figure 7



Figure 8

Interior Description

The Elementary School building's design is very similar to its predecessor, boasting a central hallway on a north/south axis accessed by stairwells to either end of the building. The two end stairs are open and access each level, standing within the front corner of both ends of the building. Between the stairs, four classrooms are divided in the middle by the front entrance hall. The rear of the principal story combines another four classrooms, divided at their center by an office and flanked on each end opposite the stairs by bathroom facilities. Each classroom hosts a cloak room half the width of the classroom. The second story of the school is identical to the first story. The basement again replicated this layout, only altering the configuration of the rooms off the main hall with additional classrooms, mechanical rooms, kitchen and cafeteria. Classrooms are outfitted with built-in chalk boards and feature hardwood floors, while the halls, restrooms and basement floors are of concrete. The building still retains some original steam heat radiators lining exterior walls of each room with individual ceiling-mounted pendant light fixtures and modern porcelain toilet fixtures. Though room use was altered through the years, the original interior spacial arrangement is still intact and easily identifiable. The building was abandoned in 2002.

Changes to the Building

Additions of new wiring and mechanical systems, heaters, and some fluorescent lighting fixtures have altered the building. Many original center steel window sections, which once tilted for ventilation, have been removed and replaced with plywood, which held single-room air conditioners. Yet for the neglect of the building over the last decade, the structure still retains most interior features, having most all original mechanical components and historic ceiling-mounted pendant light fixtures, although globes have fallen victim to vandals, as have many of the building's original radiators and all interior copper wiring. Yet the building retains all original steel windows, less many tilting sections, although most glass panes have succumbed to vandals.

The largest alteration of the whole of the structure was an addition of a wood frame and sheathed modular classroom at the rear of the southwest corner in the 1990s. A door opening cut into the concrete

foundation allowed connection of this additional classroom space, which rests upon a collapsed concrete block foundation, and is non-contributing.

Elkhorn City Schools Band and Choir Room, 1956, Contributing Building

Description

The Elkhorn City Schools Band/Choir Room (figure 9) was built in 1956 at the southernmost edge of the property. Constructed of concrete masonry block, the building sits facing north toward the campus with its side gable facing the street. An asphalt-shingle-covered gable-end roof tops the structure. Chimneys puncture the eaves on the east and west facades; these once vented coal stoves. The center of the principal façade supports a paired door entrance topped with transom. The rear of the structure supports steel frame windows of 25 lights. The interior of the building is a large single room approximately 25' deep by 30' wide and features a stepped/raised floor system which rises from the entrance in a U-shape toward the rear wall. The structure sits atop a stone outcropping/bluff overlooking the Elkhorn Creek to its rear. The continual washing of the bluff has undermined the structure, causing severe cracks in the rear south and side west walls and structural damage which threaten the collapse of the structure. The structure is a simple concrete block box with no identifiable design aside of the exposed roof rafters and overhang and a small gable roof covered porch covering the entrance. The structure still appears much as it did when constructed with addition of a hole cut into the front façade for placement of an air conditioner unit. The building has changed little since its construction and only deteriorated from vandals and abandonment since 2002.



Figure 9

Apartment, 2009, Non-Contributing Building

Description

In 2009 property owners, the Pike County Housing Authority constructed a 12-unit low-income apartment building (figure 10) at the center of the former school complex. The two-story building is accessed by a central entrance on the side of the structure, facing east toward the High School. Constructed of a wood frame, the design of the building is rectangular, built on north-south axes. A large bay protrudes from the building at each end, with smaller bays protruding irregularly along the remaining facades, which are covered in stucco. The front façade and portions of the sides are veneered in brick with the remaining of the building is clad in vinyl siding. The walls are pierced by paired vinyl windows on both levels which are unevenly spaced and delineate interior room configurations. The hipped roof is covered in asphalt shingles with protruding hipped roof structure extending over each end bay. The whole of the structure rests upon a slab concrete foundation, which is excavated into the sloping grade of the site, and measures overall approximately 40' wide and 80' long. Interior halls extend the length of the building on both levels, accessed by an entry hall at the center front façade, on the first floor, ending in a stair. Six apartments are located on each floor, three to either side of the hall. Apartments are comprised of studio style units with open plans including combined living, dining, kitchens, bedroom with closet, bath, laundry, and linen closet.



(Figure 10)

Modular Classroom, ca. 1990, Non-contributing Building

Description

In the 1990s an upswing in the Elkhorn City population saw the addition of five prefabricated modular classrooms to the site. While today only one of these structures remain, a partially-collapsed single room modular classroom stands at the rear southwest corner of the structure. Featuring a flat roof of asphalt roll roofing and pressed wood composite weatherboard siding, the structure sits atop a laid concrete block foundation which has partially collapsed and allowed the structure to begin to cave in. A door opening was cut into the concrete foundation of the elementary school which allowed connection of this additional classroom space.

Dual Storage Building, ca. 1990, Non-Contributing Structures

Description

Located adjacent to the northwest corner of the 1938 High School gymnasium are two single-story prefabricated storage buildings measuring 8' wide by 12' long. These buildings are connected along their sides and were purchased at the same time as prefabricated units. The buildings were moved to the site in the 1990s to store additional sports equipment for football and baseball teams. Constructed of a wood frame with pressed wood composite siding and asphalt shingle gable end roof, they have exposed interior studs and plywood floors and are typical of structures sold through modern retail stores. The buildings rest on wood sills in direct contact with the ground and are slightly inset into the grade at the rear of the High School facing the rear of the property. These structures are considered a single unit for their connection and are non-contributing.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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.

Areas of Significance

Education

Period of Significance

1938-1964

Significant Dates

1938/1956 - Dates of Construction

Criteria Considerations

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.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Merryweather, Walt (architect)

Period of Significance (justification)

The Period of Significance is the period of time from the construction of the Elkhorn City School until the closing of the historic period, 1938-1964. The schools continued to be an important part of local education for all the years they were in operation until closing and abandonment in 2002.

Criteria Considerations: N/A

Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph

The historic Elkhorn City Schools (PI-346) meet the National Register Criterion A for their contribution to education in Elkhorn City and Pike County. These buildings' historical significance is evaluated in the context of "Education in Elkhorn City, Pike County, Kentucky, 1938-1965." The Elkhorn City community has long been associated with and influenced by the economic well-being of the coal mining industry. During the contextual period, coal mining required progressively less manpower, leading many coal companies to downsize their labor force, and to divest themselves of company-owned towns. Despite this pressure on the local economy, Elkhorn City demonstrated its belief in its own permanence, and in the benefit of providing a quality educational plant for its children. The county school board's program of consolidating several small schools into a large new building benefited the nominated property. Thus, Elkhorn City Elementary and High Schools provide a physical connection with the values and decisions made by people in Pike County in the middle of the 20th century, people seeking to make available a quality education to the students in the area, while the largest local employer was curtailing hiring. The Elkhorn City Elementary and High Schools exhibit a high degree of integrity, still exhibiting original design, materials, workmanship, historic association and setting.

Historic Context: Education in Elkhorn City, Pike County, Kentucky 1938-1965

Statewide History of Education during the Contextual Period

This nomination of Elkhorn City Schools drew upon numerous resources including information compiled by Renee Kendrick's unpublished national register nomination draft titled, *Elkhorn City's Historic District* and Kennedy and Johnson's *Kentucky Historic Schools Survey: An Examination of History and Condition of Kentucky's Older School Buildings* (Kentucky Heritage Council, 2002).

In the Kentucky's Historic School Survey, effort is made to review types of buildings constructed, and perhaps was intended as the beginning of a multiple property nomination which was never submitted. However the evaluations of the history of education in Kentucky and of historic school buildings within the study provides a basis for analysis of local schools. The study specifically mentions Elkhorn City High School as one of 132 new schools and 37 gymnasiums built in Kentucky between 1937 and 1939 (Kentucky Heritage Council: 42).

In the study, attention is given to efforts across Kentucky to educate children from the early 1800s until 1965. In this long period, the responsibility for education slowly shifted from the family to the community. At first, families schooled their children at home or, if they had the resources, sent them to private tutors or schools. By the late-19th century, the state had mandated public schooling, but left much of the curriculum and the organization of the school system in the hands of local school boards. Families could take advantage of organized public education in the form of a wide scattering of small school houses. Elkhorn City's history of education fits within the larger findings of the report. The community organized its first school at the turn of the 20th century. Prior to then, education was the responsibility of families. Not until 1907 do state-wide efforts to standardize education begin, giving rise to a consistent means of organizing school systems throughout Kentucky, in both rural and urban areas.

The Kennedy and Johnson study looks further at the transition of education from the smaller organizational efforts to more progressive systems of education during the early-twentieth century. During this period, Kentucky educators attempted to create standards for education, which promoted professionalism among teachers. This called for financial support by local school taxing districts. Prior to the 1920s, Elkhorn City had been a very small town with few amenities. With advances in mining technology, the population began to grow and coal mining operations increased (Torok 87). Pike County school board did not have a functional school district within the county, and so, made ad hoc use of several buildings as schools. A permanent school was built in Elkhorn City in 1925, through the efforts of teacher and principal, W.B. Ward.

During the 1930s, Kentucky underwent attempts to consolidate numerous smaller schools into larger more economical and efficient schools. During this period Elkhorn City would receive a new school to accommodate its growing student base, funded by the Works Progress Administration. This school, built in 1938, would compliment an earlier school building and greatly advance the community's ability for education.

Kennedy and Johnson analyze the progression of historic schools through their life spans and divide them into two groups, those made to evolve with the needs of the school and the community, and those that were replaced, neglected and abandoned. The 1938 school itself was an addition to the site, which held the smaller structure built in 1925. While the High School was maintained and kept up, it grew to become a permanent fixture within the community, to the point that when an increase in population required additional facilities, an additional building was built on the site. Rather than an addition to the existing school, the community and the local school board opted to utilize the large site to locate a new building some 18 years later which would work in tandem with the existing building. Even greater capacity became needed and new structures replaced the historic ones with the construction of the Elkhorn City High School in 1985 which would become Elkhorn City Elementary School in 2002 when the new East Ridge High School was built, leaving the historic structures abandoned. However for the foresight and dedication of the community to the historic buildings they were kept by the Board of Education for hope they might be repurposed rather than sold to individuals or demolished.

Education Efforts in Elkhorn City before and during the Contextual Period

Elkhorn City would fall behind on the state's educational mandates for most of the 19th century (Rogers: 51). After many years without a permanent public school, Elkhorn City built a small log structure to serve as school around 1890, in part due to the increase in local school-aged children whose families settled in the area. This is now referred to as the first Elkhorn City high school, and would be located in the area known as Jacks Boat Landing at the end of Main Street, on the bank at the confluence of Elkhorn Creek at and the Russell Fork (Mullins 9). Within a few years, the number of school-aged children would rise, and at the urging of the newly-organized local school board and through efforts at the state level.

In 1907 the community raised funds to construct a new school building further up the hill from the earlier log structure. The former log building would be adapted to serve as an ice house for its proximity to the stream. This new building would serve the dual purpose of school and church, as the community did not previously have a church building. This school was a single-room gable-end structure with room for 50 students that still stands and is now the Elkhorn City Methodist Church. (Mullins 9) Continual increases in

the community population meant the building was soon too small, and by 1915, a new permanent school building was needed.

At a meeting of the Pike County Board of Education, December 4, 1917, board president G.T. Hawkins ordered that a permanent High School be established in Elkhorn City, now designated Division #4 of Pike County's school districts. Board records state that the city should build the school house and pay for teachers if the county school system would not do so. The March 18, 1919 meeting of the Board saw an agreement that the Pike County Board of Education would pay half the expenses in erecting and equipping a new structure, with construction beginning in 1920. This school stood on the same lot now occupied by the historic Elkhorn City Elementary School and Band Room, and was a wood frame structure with several additions (Mullins, 9). At this period the then-Cumberland High School only served two years of high school classes held in rooms added to the rear of the school building (Mullins 9).

In 1924, W.B. Ward became the principal of the Elkhorn City High School (Mullins 9). Ward was responsible for facilitating much expansion of public school facilities and services in Elkhorn City and Pike County. Principal Ward laid the foundation for Elkhorn City's public schools and development of a modern educational system. Ward's efforts would grow in support of a new structure to better educate the children of the southeastern portion of Pike County. This new building would be built in 1925 on land that would later host the schools included in this nomination (Mullins 9).

In an action taken by the Pike County Board of Education in April of 1925, seven acres of land lying within Elkhorn City, on the Elkhorn Creek, were condemned by the Pike County Court against Consolidation Coal Corporation. That site would serve as the permanent location of a school building to educate the children of Elkhorn City and Pike County. When this structure opened to classes in 1926, it stood as the second organized effort by the community to establish a school. Its name, Cumberland High School, was chosen to indicate that it served the County, rather than just Elkhorn City (Mullins 9). This structure would be used continuously until demolished in the 1980s. The structure was a two-story brick building with colonial revival style details. It stood at the center of the nominated property. Soon after the school's completion, Mr. W.B. Ward would again approach the Pike County Board of Education for funds for lumber and supplies to construct of a gymnasium to be built on the south side of the 1925 school building (Kendrick 12). Community members would again come together to construct the gymnasium, just as they had for the pervious school, demonstrating the community's commitment to promoting education.

Overcrowding of the 1925 school occurred soon after its completion. The population of Elkhorn City increased by more than 21% from 1920-1930, and Pike County's population increased 56.2% from 1910-1920, and another 27.9% from 1920-1930. This growth was due in great part to the increased industries, mainly coal production, but also timber, and agriculture. The 1930s were a very difficult time for public education, after Governor Ruby Laffoon proposed massive cuts in state-funded education due to the Great Depression and loss in tax revenues (Rogers 13). As a result, school boards across the state, including Pike County, looked for ways to cut expenses and create efficient building which consolidated numerous and widespread elementary and high schools into single centralized buildings. Federal programs through the Works Progress Administration (WPA) would aid the construction of many of these schools, including many of the 132 schools built between 1937-1939 in Kentucky, Elkhorn City among them.

In 1937, planning would begin for a new state-of-the-art facility to be located on the land already owned by the Board of Education, adjacent to the 1925 school structure, along its northern side. As Elkhorn City had

advantages of an earlier permanent public educational facility, proximity to roads and rail service, and a centralized location within the eastern portion of the county, the area was ideal for a consolidated county school. The site's location on KY197, a major thoroughfare during the period, allowing access for traffic and proximity to the city permitted modern conveniences of plumbing, electricity and heating. This building would consolidate additional schools in east Pike County with the goal of streamlined cost and efficiencies in education. Built in 1938 with help of the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA), the new building would be the largest building yet constructed in the community of Elkhorn City for the purpose of education, and from 1938 until 1952, would also be known as Cumberland High School, serving the students of Elkhorn City and southeast Pike County.

During the 1950s, Elkhorn City would experience its largest population growth to date, due in large part to an all-time high in coal prices and increased mining. Elkhorn City would grow more than 31% from 1940-1950, and the county's population would rise by another 10,000 people during that decade. In 1955, the Pike County Board of Education approved plans for a new school building to be built, to be placed within the nominated property. Because the 1938 school building had been constructed with a new larger gymnasium, the old gym built during Ward's tenure was demolished and the new Elementary School was built on the same location, adjacent to the 1925 school (Mullins 9). The new school would be completed and named Elkhorn City School. The new building would be used for elementary classes while the former schools were maintained as junior high and high schools.

Beginning in the late 1940's, a band program began to grow in the High School in part due to dedication by the staff, but perhaps also encouraged by the rich musical heritage recognized in eastern Kentucky. The program eventually grew to include more than 50% of the high school age student population from beginning in the 1950s and spanning more than 30 years (Kendrick). This growth spurred the school ca. 1956, to construct a structure adjacent to the new elementary school building whose sole use was as a band practice room (Mullins: 10). In the early 1960s, a vocational school was opened to further train students in practical hands on education, effectively becoming the final development of the school system during the historic period.

Ms. Renee Kendrick, a retired teacher of Elkhorn City schools for more than 30 years, who began her tenure in 1967 just after the end of the historic period, remains one of the only remaining links to the school's earliest period. Ms. Kendrick recalls the schools performed well during their historic period, thought it had its challenges. Constant fluctuation in the coal mining industry created boom and bust years during the historic period. While some school years were periods of growth, many were also filled with budget shortages and fluctuations in the student body. Community meetings began by W.B. Ward in the 1920s continued for many years every Monday evening, engaging the students and parents to become an active part of the educational experience, which continued to be a influence on the educational system through Ms. Kendrick's tenure. While no reports of the school's academic performance during the historic period could be located, Ms. Kendrick recalls that they consistently performed well, thought not far above other schools in the area, and were a source of pride for Pike County for their achievements. Many students from Elkhorn City schools would go on to become prominent lawyers, doctors and businessmen throughout the City, County, and beyond. But, as Ms Kendrick recalls, perhaps the most lasting legacy from the schools is the musical education imparted by the band program which engaged so many students over its 30-year period of growth. Ms. Kendrick recalls that beginning in the late 1940s a series of band instructors built the program, frequently enrolling 150-175 students from an average of student body of 300 high school students. For comparison, the current band program at East Ridge High School only enrolls

approximately 15% of the student body as of 2013. The program grew and continued until 1986 when the school began to enroll junior high school students in band and hired a new teacher. This period saw the beginning of the decline of the band program, following the decline of the community.

Elkhorn City Schools 1964-2002

For most of the history of the Elkhorn City Schools, the school buildings became the center of activity for the community. It would not be until 1966 that the Elkhorn City Schools would officially desegregate, as much of the state's schools made similar moves during the decade. However, the Elkhorn City schools building and grounds would continue to serve as a community center, supporting recreational activities, baseball and football games, concerts, and many events throughout the year. The school's former sports complexes are located near the schools across the road, and as they have been since the beginning, are owned and maintained by the Elkhorn City, for joint use by the community and school system. As the center of activity, the schools played host to community meetings, football, basketball and baseball games, as well as to additional extracurricular activities which included a vocational tech school, academic clubs and the band program—all of which would play large roles in the lives of students and residents. The schools would function with the pride of the community for many years.

The increase in the local population in the 1970s caused over-crowding of the existing schools, which led to the construction of a new school building on land purchased by the Board of Education across the Elkhorn Creek, a few hundred yards south of the old schools. This new Elkhorn City High School opened for classes in 1986, and received students from the eastern portion of Pike County. The former high school became a junior high, while the former elementary school continued in its previous role. However the 1980s saw the abandonment of the 1925 school building and its demolition.

The Board of Education had already begun to plan for new consolidated High School outside Elkhorn City, nearly eight miles north, in the community of Lick Creek. That new school, East Ridge High School, was completed in 2002, becoming one of five modern high schools now operating in Pike County. The former 1986 Elkhorn City High School—outside the area proposed for listing—would be made into Elkhorn City Elementary School, leaving the two historic schools to be abandoned with the start of the 2002 school year.

History of Elkhorn City

Elkhorn City is a small community near the Kentucky, Virginia state line, located in southeast Pike County, Kentucky about twenty miles southeast from Pikeville, Kentucky, the county seat. The community is located in a horse-shoe-shaped bend of the Russell Fork, a stream which flows northwesterly from the town for 9 miles, where it joins the Levisa Fork of the Big Sandy River within the Allegheny mountain range and is less than one mile from the Virginia border and bears the nickname "Gateway to the Breaks." Here Daniel Boone took his first steps into Kentucky on a hunting expedition in 1767 (Harrison & Klotter 107). The community is served by State Routes 80 and 197. The CSX Railroad continues to serve the community today. The town's location and transportation resources made it a convenient point for many coal operations beginning in the early years of the 20th century. Coal mining still provides an important income source for local workers.

Early on, the community was similar to most rural towns, possessing a mix of rural farms and forests, served by a general store and a few other business establishments. Elkhorn City began as just “Elkhorn” when settled by William Ramey of North Carolina in 1810. The community established a cemetery by 1814, supported by William Ramey. Ramey would build the first house in what would become the town, and sold the first lots for additional structures.

A post office was established in 1882, and named Praise, for camp Praise-the-Lord, a tent revival organized by evangelist George Barns in 1881, as another town had claimed the name Elkhorn for its post office. By 1890, a rail line would connect the town with outside markets, allowing exports of timber and coal, and increasing the city’s population. With this rail addition the town soon grew to some 50 families, its largest population to that date (Mullins 4).

In 1907, the C&O Railroad established a station in Praise which the company named Elkhorn City, and the Clinchfield Railroad—connecting Elkhorn City with Spartanburg South Carolina—arrived in 1915. It was not until 1912 that the city was officially incorporated as Elkhorn City. The Post office would remain named Praise until 1952, when its name was also changed to Elkhorn City (Mullins 4).

The first official census of Elkhorn City would not be conducted until 1920, when 821 persons were counted as living within the city boundaries. The rise in population of Elkhorn City at the turn of the century would see the beginning of community institutions, including schools and churches. Officially incorporated November of 1912, Elkhorn City would soon become a center for commerce in eastern Pike County.

The town’s population grew until 1950s, then from 1950-1970, it declined by 20%, due to a depressed coal mining industry. From 1970-1980 it rebounded, increasing nearly 34% after nearly two decades of population loss. By 1990, Elkhorn City experienced a sharp decline in population, as nearly 45% of its residents would leave due to closures of coal operations and a downturn in the local economy. Of the 1449 persons recorded in 1980, only 813 would remain in 1990, the smallest population yet recorded in official census reports. Due the sharp decline, the Pike County Board of education launched an effort to consolidate schools and reorganize within the county.

By the year 2000 the population of Elkhorn City increased by some 247 persons, and has stabilized over the last 15 years. Elkhorn City today is made up predominantly of residential dwellings, with many churches and businesses and active elementary school, all lying within its two mile radius, making it a center for economic activity in east Pike County. Yet along KY 197, still stand the historic former Elkhorn City Elementary and High Schools, adjacent to the current Elkhorn City Elementary School, continuing a lineage of local education which has spanned more than a century.

Significance of Elkhorn City High School and Elkhorn City Elementary School within the context of Elkhorn City, Eastern Pike County, Kentucky 1938-1964

Elkhorn City Elementary and High Schools with the accompanying band building are three of the many facilities which have been built for the purpose of public education in the community of Elkhorn City throughout its history. These buildings remain as a physical reminder of the role education played in the lives of the people of East Pike County and the community of Elkhorn City, in particular District 4. The site

and former school buildings are a display of the efforts of a community to provide a valuable education for their children.

The nominated buildings include the 1938 Elkhorn City High School building, 1955 Elkhorn City Elementary School building, and the ca. 1956 band practice structure. These facilities demonstrate a continual dedication to public education within this rural Kentucky community. Their existence displays a successful development from rural school facilities into a modernized educational system. Although built over a period of development in the community, the buildings are instantly recognizable as schools, exhibiting design features commonly associated with the modern movement, using popular design styles that set the buildings apart from anything else in the community.

For over 60 years, the Elkhorn City High School, coupled with 47 years associated with the Elkhorn City Elementary School, and 46 years of the band facility, these were the leading institution for education in eastern Pike County. Through their doors grew students from varying backgrounds, gaining knowledge to function as citizens of the Commonwealth and beyond. Perhaps the most lasting legacy of the structures is the intangible influence on the students who attended here and who benefited from the dedicated teachers, programs, and community pride which gave rise the educational system. The band program, among many others, were influences in the lives of students, preparing them for the careers and serving as point of pride for the community. The schools served generations of students and the community, who placed value on education, and dedicated themselves to furthering their capacity for education by continually developing facilities and this site to meet ever changing needs. As with many public schools in Kentucky, Elkhorn City served generations of citizens who valued their education and who place a high value on the buildings that contributed as a vital part of their lives and of the community's identity.

Evaluation of Integrity between Elkhorn City School's Significance and their Current Physical Condition.

The historic Elkhorn City schools meet National Register Criterion A, by retaining historic significance in the broad patterns of our history and a physical tie to the **Associations** for eligibility. The schools retain integrity of Association in that they remain as a physical tie to educational institution in East Pike County during the historic period. Additionally the schools are a physical manifestation of the development of the educational system in Elkhorn City and East Pike County, and are a display of the evolving institution required to meet the necessary function of proving education in the community.

The Elkhorn City High and Elementary schools retain integrity of **Location** in that they still occupy their original site. The enduring function of education at this location through a series of developments and structures supports the integrity of location. Though a modern apartment infill has altered the site, the intended use and historic development of the site retain a visually recognizable display of the original educational function.

The buildings retain integrity of **setting** for their retention of the original nearly-seven-acre site first procured by the Board of Education in 1925 to serve as the site of the city's first permanent school. The landscape surrounding the schools, passed by a main highway and circled by the Elkhorn Creek creates a setting that looks much as it did nearly a century ago. The setting helps support an association between the land and the local educational process. The contemporary apartment building at the center of the site

related to the orientation and size of the earlier structures and is compatible with their appearance and scale, nearly mimicking the first school building which once stood where the apartment building now stands. This connection between the buildings and the site communicate a history of the evolution of the site and the history of education within the community at this place.

Both school buildings and the band facility possess integrity of original **Materials**. The foundation to exterior walls, interior configurations, interior finishes, brick and stone decorative features, windows, trim and exterior landscaping features are neglected but in nearly original condition. Obviously, the 2009 building introduces modern materials to the site, yet its effect is compatible through the use of comparable materials.

The buildings maintain integrity of **Design and Workmanship**. The buildings retain their form nearly unaltered from the time of construction. The High School continues to communicate its strong Collegiate Gothic style while expressing minimalist modern influences. The elementary school displays a nearly unaltered design which is a testament to the original choice of design and execution of construction by craftsmen. Each building delivers a visually recognizable display of intended use through the original design. The flat roof, carved stone ornamentation and crenellated parapet of the High School and the linear horizontal stone bands, stone parapet coping and flat roof of the Elementary School, convey the unique features associated with each building and their design influences during their period of construction. Due to their high retention of original materials, rare for structures of their class and vintage, each school is easily identifiable as an instrument of education and relates their original intent through their design and workmanship.

Due to the high degree of integrity of both historic Elkhorn City Schools and ancillary band structure, they remain as reminders of the history and evolution of education within a community. The structures' designs provide a view of the continual process of developments in education and present an opportunity to understand how the buildings functioned to impart education during their period of use. Retention of interior elements and a nearly untouched setting, provide a viewer the understanding of the use of the site.

Due to the retention of integrity factors of location, setting, materials, design, and workmanship, these buildings can be said to have integrity of **Associations**. The Elkhorn City Elementary and High Schools are eligible for including in the National Register.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Carter, Bruce, *Wolfe County High School*, National Register Nomination, 2013

Harrison, L. and Klotter, J., *A New History of Kentucky* (University Press of Kentucky, Lexington), 1997

Kendrick, Renee, *Elkhorn City Historic District*, incomplete National Register District Nomination entitled "Elkhorn City Historic District," Elkhorn City, KY, 2004

Kendrick, Renee, Personal Interview, February 18, 2014

Kleber, John E., *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, (University Press of Kentucky, Lexington), 1992

The site is surrounded on three sides by the Elkhorn Creek and fronted by highway KY197, which clearly delineate its boundaries.

Boundary Justification

The selected boundary was chosen to represent the original tract of land that was annexed by the Pike County Board of Education in 1925. These boundaries best represent the historic area of development associated with Education in Elkhorn City and define the historic period in which the Elkhorn City schools came into being. Encompassed within its boundary stand the structures nominated and the area historically associated with the education movement in Elkhorn City from 1925 until 1964, the historical period, and continuing to the present.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Eric Whisman, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization _____ date 9/1/2014

street & number 304 Green Fields Ln. telephone 502-320-9735

city or town Frankfort state KY zip code 40601

e-mail ericwhisman@gmail.com

Photographs:

Name of Property: Elkhorn City Elementary and High Schools

City or Vicinity: Elkhorn City

County: Pike

State: Kentucky

Photographer: Eric Whisman

Date Photographed: March, 2014

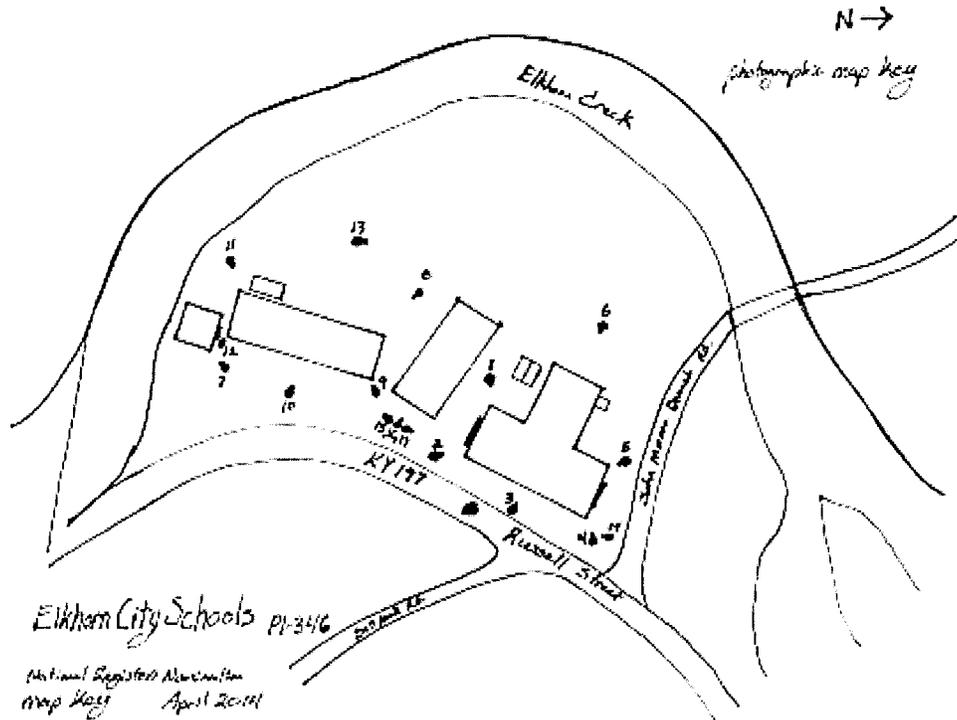
Location of Digital Files: 304 Green Fields Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Photographic Identification

The information is the same for each photograph

See attached map.



Photos 1-7, Elkhorn City High School, built 1938

Photo #1 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0001)
South façades (left) west façade (right), camera facing northeast

Photo #2 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0002)
North façade (left) east façade (right), camera facing northwest

Photo #3 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0003)
East façade camera facing west

Photo #4 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0004)
North façade (right) east façade (left), camera facing southwest

Photo #5 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0005)
North façade (left) west façade (right), camera facing southeast

Photo #6 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0006)
West façade, camera facing east

Photo 7, Elkhorn City High School Band Room, built ca. 1956

Photo #7 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0007)

North façade (right) east façade (left), camera facing south

Photos 8-12, Elkhorn City High School, built 1938

Photo #8 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0008)
North façade (right) west façade (left), camera facing southeast

Photo #9 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0009)
North façade (right) east façade (left), camera facing southwest

Photo #10 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0010)
East façade, camera facing west

Photo #11 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0011)
South façade (right) west façade (left), camera facing northeast

Photo #12 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0012)
East façade (right) south façade (left), camera facing northwest

Photos 13-17, Elkhorn City Elementary & High Schools Setting

Photo #13 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0013)
Rear paved landscape, camera facing northwest

Photo #14 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0014)
Road frontage and buildings front façades and landscape, camera facing south

Photo #15 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0015)
Elementary School east façade, camera facing southwest

Photo #16 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0016)
Infill east façade, camera facing west

Photo #17 (KY_Pike County_Elkhorn City Schools_0017)
High School east façade, camera facing northwest

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name Pike County Housing Authority
street & number 142 Trivette Drive telephone 502-719-9500
city or town Pikeville state KY zip code 41502

Elkhorn City Schools

Pike County, KY

Elkhorn City Quadrangle

Zone 17

NO 23

easting 379899.36

northing 4129039.93

NAD 27

easting 379886.41

northing 4128836.00



360 000 FEET (KY.)



















ELKHORN

SCHOOL

POSTED
NO TRESPASSING
KEEP OUT

















UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Elkhorn City Elementary and High School
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KENTUCKY, Pike

DATE RECEIVED: 1/30/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 3/05/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 3/20/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 3/17/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000085

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT _____ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Automatic Listing

RECOM./CRITERIA *Accept A*

REVIEWER *J. Gibbs* DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments *Y/N* see attached SLR *Y/N*

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



STEVEN L. BESHEAR
GOVERNOR

**TOURISM, ARTS AND HERITAGE CABINET
KENTUCKY HERITAGE COUNCIL**

BOB STEWART
SECRETARY

THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
300 WASHINGTON STREET
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601
PHONE (502) 564-7005
FAX (502) 564-5820
www.heritage.ky.gov

CRAIG POTTS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

January 22, 2015

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye St. NW 8th Floor
Washington DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed are 5 of the 6 nominations approved at the December 9, 2014 Review Board meeting. We are submitting them for listing in the National Register:

Marianne Theater, Campbell County, Kentucky
Lynn Garden Apartments, Jefferson County, Kentucky
Louisville Gas and Electric Company Service Station Complex, Jefferson County, Kentucky
Hellmann Lumber & Manufacturing Company, Kenton County, Kentucky
✓ **Elkhorn City Elementary & High Schools**, Pike County, Kentucky

We appreciate your consideration of these nominations.

Sincerely,

Craig A. Potts
Executive Director and
State Historic Preservation Officer