

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 26 1987

date entered JUN 25 1987

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

1. Name

historic Black Oak School

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 5028 S. Green Bay Road (Hy 41) N/A not for publication

city, town Town of Nekimi  vicinity of Oshkosh

state Wisconsin code 55 county Winnebago code 139

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Thomas A. Fadner - under Land Contract to - Dorothy Fadner

street & number 1084 64th Street

city, town La Grange  vicinity of state Illinois 60525

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number Winnebago County Courthouse

city, town Oshkosh state Wisconsin

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic  
title Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison state Wisconsin

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## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <input type="checkbox"/> ? unknown
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Black Oak School is a one and a half story frame structure, approximately 32' square. Sitting on a newer concrete block foundation, its clapboard walls are framed by pilaster strips with a plain sill course at the water table. The walls are punctuated with double-hung sash windows, single pane over single pane. (Several of these windows had been boarded over to create increased blackboard space.)\* Sash-type attic windows are placed around the building, located just under the eaves. The school's hipped roof features four slopes and a ridge, the joints of which are trimmed with metal and the ridge ends ornamented with metal ball finials. A chimney rises above the roof that is built of red brick. The second course from the top is corbeled and it is crowned with concrete coping. New metal gutters surround the roof edge.

The most ornamented and attractive part of the Black Oak School is its entry porch and bell tower, located on its west side. The porch is more than a third as wide as the main block, and projects about a yard beyond the front wall. It is clapboarded and edged by wood corner strips. Simple brackets support the porch fascia, bisected by a plain strip, and splayed at its base. The entry arch springs from fluted pilaster panels, and is bisected by a narrow keystone. The inner porch surfaces are finished with narrow beveled tongue-and-groove strips. The glass of the front door has been replaced with a jalousie insert. The door is flanked by side lights of three panes above a single panel. The door and side lights are surmounted by a transom of three large nearly square panes. The lower portion of the bell tower is sheathed with wooden shingles. The four posts of the open work tower are connected by double rails with square balusters. The hipped roof of the tower supports a wooden flag pole. A copper lightning arrester is mounted behind the ball finial which caps the flag pole.

The front door opens to a vestibule and stairway. Its plaster walls, ceiling, original maple posts, rails, and balusters are in good repair. The stair's newel and top post have flat tops and brass finials. The stairs to the right lead to the basement. The stairs to the left lead to a landing in front of the single classroom. To the right of the landing is the girls' cloakroom and toilet, and to the left is the boys' cloakroom and toilet. The wood trim in these rooms is mostly intact, although the plumbing has been disconnected. In the southeast corner of the girls cloakroom a stairway has been inserted for an apartment built up in the attic. The classroom retains much of its original size, but its ceiling has been dropped to facilitate the apartment upstairs and it has been paneled. None of the original classroom fixtures remain.

The school sits on a .93 acre lot immediately adjacent to Highway 41. A quonset hut is also located on the property, and is an intrusion.

The school is thought to have been moved at least one time. Any move

\*A number of alterations to the building date to its period of historic use; the most notable is the enclosure of several side & rear windows to increase useable interior space,

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

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



Black Oak School, Winnebago County,  
Continuation sheet Wisconsin Item number 7

Page 1

DESCRIPTION - Item 7

that may have been made was necessary to facilitate construction stages of Highway 41. That possibility notwithstanding, maps from 1889 and 1909 indicate that the Black Oak School, or its predecessor, was located on the current site.<sup>1</sup> Relocation from the highway's right-of-way, therefore, meant that the school was not moved from its original environment.

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Illustrated Atlas of Winnebago County Wisconsin, (1889), p. 83; Map and Plat Book of Winnebago County Wisconsin, (Chicago: Gorman & Soudea, 1909), p. 29.

The nomination includes:

One Contributing Building (School)

One Noncontributing Building (Quonset Shed)

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–1936	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** Circa 1900<sup>1</sup> **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Statement of Significance:

The Black Oak School is architecturally significant as an excellent example of "second generation" rural school architecture in Winnebago County in general, and the Town of Nekimi in particular. There were 20 such schools in the southeastern quarter of Winnebago County at one time. Today only seven of those remain. The original character of six of those have been so destroyed that they are no longer typical examples of this type of architecture. The Black Oak School, however, with its hipped roof, clapboard sides, entry porch and bell tower, and fundamentally original interior, make it singularly representative of this distinctive type of rural architecture.

### Historical Background:

The Town of Nekimi was established on February 11, 1847.<sup>2</sup> The first school in the town was opened that same winter. The second school opened the following winter.<sup>3</sup> By 1878 there were seven schools in the township educating 438 children.<sup>4</sup> A school was operating at the location of the Black Oak School no later than 1889.<sup>5</sup>

On November 21, 1892, County Superintendent of Schools John Harrington reported to the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors that it was necessary to start thinking of building a second generation of schools. His report stated that "many children are attending the same school houses that their father and mother attended when they were children. Twenty-five to thirty years measures the period of usefulness of the average school building. The second series of building must soon take the place of the first. The people are more prosperous at the present than when the first buildings were erected, and it is probable that the buildings to be constructed in the future will be somewhat more elaborate, convenient and comfortable than their predecessors."<sup>6</sup> Among a general list of criteria set forth for these buildings, Harrington suggested a size not less than 24' by 36', with well built floors and walls. The windows should be double hung with weights, and the schools should have separate cloak rooms and toilets for boys and girls.<sup>7</sup>

In 1962 the Black Oak School became part of the Oshkosh Area School District. In 1963 its students began attending the Green Meadow School.<sup>8</sup> The school itself was subsequently used as an antique store

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .93

Quadrangle name Van Dyne

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	3	7	3	0	2	0	4	8	6	6	7	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

**Verbal boundary description and justification** That part of the NW1/4 of the SW1/4 Section 15 T. R16, commencing 179 ft East of the W1/4, East 289.74 ft, then South 140.25 ft, then West 289.74 ft, then North 140.25 ft to the point of beginning except highway, Town of Nekimi, County of Winnebago, Wisconsin

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

state	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John N. Vogel, Consulting Historian & William P. O'Brien

organization N/A

date November 30, 1986

street & number 301 N. 73rd Street

telephone 414-258-6598

city or town Milwaukee

state Wisconsin

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Jeff Hare*

title \_\_\_\_\_

date May 22, 1987

For NPS use only

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

**Entered in the  
National Register**

date

6/25/87

*James Byer*  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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



Black Oak School, Winnebago County,  
Continuation sheet Wisconsin Item number 8

Page 1

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - Item 8

and residence, and, most recently, just a residence.

Architectural Significance:

The Black Oak School is a unique example of "second generation" rural school architecture in Winnebago County. In the southeastern quarter of the county, where once there were 20 such schools, today there are seven. Of those seven, a comparative survey shows that the Black Oak School alone retains a large portion of its original integrity.<sup>9</sup> The six schools compared, along with descriptions of each are as follows:

Jackson School - This story-and-a-half frame building was a "twin" of the Black Oak School. It has been remodeled as a residence, and is sheathed in white aluminum or vinyl siding. The entry porch and bell tower have been removed, and a garage has been built on. In addition, the windows have been altered and replaced.

Red School - This one story gabled, frame building is used as a residence. A south roof dormer, and front and rear porches have been added. Windows have been replaced and it has been resided with white vinyl.

Oak Grove School - This one story frame building is used as a residence. Its hardboard siding has been painted blue. Dormers have been added to the south roof, as well as an addition to the rear. The windows have been replaced and the front wall has been partially veneered with flagstone.

Lincoln School - This story-and-a-half gabled, frame building appears to be used as a residence. It has yellow vinyl clapboard siding, and a garage has been added. The windows have also been replaced.

Maple School - This story-and-a-half gabled, frame building is used as a workshop or storage area. A garage addition obscures the original entry. The building is sided with rabbeted plywood panels that have been painted green. The side windows remain unchanged.

Clairville School - This one-story gabled, frame building is used as a television repair shop. Its windows have been replaced and it has been sided with white aluminum.

The Black Oak School, therefore, is significant because it is the only representative of this distinctive type of rural architecture with its original integrity largely intact.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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

Black Oak School, Winnebago County,  
Continuation sheet Wisconsin Item number 8

Page 2

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE - Item 8

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>The exact date of construction is unknown. It was built after 1892 when the "second generation" schools were proposed to the County Board. Certain stylistic elements, the hipped roof with deep eaves and clapboarded rectangular block for instance, are suggestive of the Prairie and Craftsman types of architecture, both of which were prominent in the early twentieth century.

<sup>2</sup>Publius V. Lawson, History of Winnebago County Wisconsin, (Chicago: C. F. Cooper, 1908), p. 231.

<sup>3</sup>Richard J. Harvey, History of Winnebago County Wisconsin and Early History of the Northwest, (Oshkosh: 1880), pp. 286, 287.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 289.

<sup>5</sup>Illustrated Atlas of Winnebago County Wisconsin, (1889), p. 83.

<sup>6</sup>Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Winnebago County, Wisconsin, (Neenah: 1893), p. 10.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Mary Bergin, "Educators Recall One Room Schools," Weekend Northwestern, September 22-23, 1979.

<sup>9</sup>William P. O'Brien, Survey of Schools in Southeast Winnebago County, 9 August 1986.

**\*\*Criteria Considerations:**

Moved Building. It is believed that the c.1900 Black Oak School building may have been moved from its original site in response to encroachment by STH 41 to the west. The move if any was simply a placement of the building further to the rear of its historic lot. In terms of setting, orientation and overall environment the move would not have had serious impact on the integrity of the site and would not effect eligibility.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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



Black Oak School, Winnebago County,  
Continuation sheet Wisconsin Item number 9

Page 1

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES - Item 9

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