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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Old Lakeland High School

other names/site number Polk Opportunity Center Site# 8P02228A-D

2. Location

street & number 400 North Florida Ave. N/ not for publication

city or town Lakeland N/ vicinity

state Florida code FL county Polk code 105 zip code 33801

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 8/19/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Robert Beyer ~~Entered in the National Register~~ Date of Action 9/30/93

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	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	1	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th and 20thCENTURY REVIVALS/
Late Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick, concrete, stucco
roof asphalt, asbestos
other wood, metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1914-1943

Significant Dates

1914

1924

1927

1934-35

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Arch: E.C. Hosford; G.D. and H.D.

Mendenhall; A.J.Poteet

Blder: G.C.Wright Const. Co; Paul Smith

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Old Lakeland High School
Name of Property

Polk Co., Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 2.5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>405800</u>	<u>3102780</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			

3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	
4			

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roy A. Jackson/Sidney Johnston/
Sherry Piland, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date August 1993

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg, 500 S. Bronough telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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POLK COUNTY, FLORIDASection number 7 Page 1

SUMMARY

The Old Lakeland High School, 400 North Florida Avenue, is a significant historic architectural resource in the community of Lakeland. The school consists of a complex of four buildings. Building A, which features the primary facade, was constructed in 1927 to replace an earlier structure destroyed by fire. Building B1 was constructed in 1914 and has a large auditorium addition, B2, that dates from 1924. Building C is a gymnasium, constructed c. 1934-35. Building D, a non-contributing concrete block building, is of recent vintage and was probably constructed for equipment storage. Buildings A, B1, and B2 are constructed of brick. Building C has exterior walls of concrete block covered with stucco. Buildings A and B1 have flat roofs. Building B2 has a low hip roof. Building C has a gable roof. All the buildings have concrete foundations.

Setting

Lakeland, a community constructed around numerous lakes that dot the landscape, is located approximately thirty miles east of Tampa. The Lakeland High School is immediately north of the downtown area. The school fronts onto Florida Avenue (U.S. Highway 98), a major north/south corridor through the community. Lake Wire serves as the western border of the school property. Peachtree and Oak streets border the school on the north and south, respectively. Scattered residential and commercial buildings lie to the north and east, and a vacant lot and church are to the south.

Landscaping was an important part of the complex at one time, although this has deteriorated. Several live oaks were planted in various locations around the building and exterior planters were utilized. None of those elements currently exist. The west side of the property is covered with asphalt and serves as a parking area. It is protected by a chain-link fence.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION**Building A**

Building A, completed in 1927, provides the main facade of the building complex (photo 1). It utilizes the same location and basic orientation of an earlier school (1902), but is much

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larger. The building, in the form of an elongated capital "H," rises three stories and contains a basement. The 54,500 square foot building has an exterior wall surface of buff brick, with cast stone used for window and door surrounds and for decorative inserts. Its Collegiate Gothic styling is expressed by a symmetrical facade with an ornamented central entrance, parapets, string courses, cartouches, and window and door surrounds.

The main facade faces east. The central entrance bay projects slightly and terminates in a decorative parapet (photo 2). The entrance doors are placed within a large segmental arch. A name panel is placed over the arch. The entrance doors contain 18 lights and are embellished by an arched transom with lancet lights. Slender brick piers divide this projection into three bays. Small lancet embellishments of brick and cast stone decorate the piers.

Flanking the entrance, on all three floors, are large window groups consisting of metal awning windows with 6 lights which have the appearance of double hung sash windows. Cast stone enframes the window groups and is used for diamond shaped decoration in panels between the second and third floor windows.

Projecting pavilions mark each end of the main facade (photo 3). Each pavilion has a slight projection which contains a doorway. The double doors have multi-light panels and multi-light transoms. They are set within arched cast stone frames surmounted by a decorated cast stone panel. Metal casement windows with multi-lights are stacked above the entrance. The corner pavilions terminate in shaped parapets.

The north (photo 4) and south elevations are virtually identical. Each has a centrally placed entrance. The parapet, elevated to mark the entry bay, is decorated with a cast stone panel featuring a Gothic arch motif in low relief. On each facade, the entrance is approached by a series of steps. The entry contains four doors with multi-light panels and a multilight transom. A cast stone panel over the entrance is decorated with a low relief diamond pattern. A cast stone panel, decorated with swags, is placed between the paired metal awning windows on the second and third floor windows above the entrance. The grouping and cast stone enframement of the windows on all three floors are identical to that of the primary (east) facade.

The rear (west) elevation (photo 5) also uses the same kind of windows, but the decoration is limited to cast stone string

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courses that serve as lintels and sills. At the west end of the north section of the building is another entrance, set within a cast stone arch. This entrance is approached by a flight of steps and is protected by a flat projecting canopy. A multi-light transom is placed over the door. The west elevation connects by a hyphen with what was a 1913/14 addition to an earlier building on the site of Bldg A. A double entrance door with a wide, flat cast stone lintel, approached by a series of steps, is located at south elevation of the hyphen (photo 6). Next to this is a basement entrance, also approached by a series of steps.

Building B1

When constructed, this was a classroom addition to a 1902 building and extended perpendicularly from the rear of that structure. The 12,500 square foot, rectangular, two story building now connects by hyphens to buildings A, on the east, and B2, on the west (photo 7). It has exterior walls of red brick, a flat roof, and groups of 6-light metal awning windows similar in design to those of the 1927 building. Cast stone is used for window lintels and sills, string courses and coping. The building rests on a raised concrete foundation. At the east end of the south elevation is a flight of steps leading down to a basement entrance (photo 8). A series of recessed windows punctuates the foundation of both the south and north elevations.

Building B2

This building was constructed in 1924 as an auditorium/classroom addition to the adjoining 1914 building. The primary facade of the rectangular, red brick building faces west (photo 9). The two story building has a low hip roof over a corbelled cornice, and a raised basement resulting in an elevated first floor level. The building contains approximately 20,000 square feet. The main entrance on the west facade is approached by a flight of steps. The stairwell has brick side walls pierced by small arches and cast stone hand rails. The double entry door is surmounted by a multi-light transom. The entry has a cast stone surround. Flanking the entrance, on each level, are windows in groups of five. Large cast stone panels with ceramic tile ornamentation separate these bands of windows between the first and second stories on each elevation. The end bays are fenestrated with windows featuring cast stone sills and arched

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~~lintels. The first story windows are rectangular; the basement level and second story windows are square. The original windows have been replaced with fixed and sliding metal frames. On the second floor, above the main entrance, is another door leading to a metal stairway that extends to the north. This appears to be a later addition for fire escape purposes.~~

The north and south facades are similar in design to the main facade. A centrally placed stairway is located on the south facade. On each side of the entry on the first floor are three windows with hopper lights and cast stone sills. The second floor has two panels of windows grouped in five. The basement level on this facade also has this window grouping, although the panel on the east end has been altered with metal grills.

The north facade is similar in design to the other facades (photo 11). It has, however, windows grouped in bands of five on each floor and the basement level. A small one story concrete block addition projects from the east elevation of the building, near the north end.

Building C

The southeast corner of Building B2 abuts a gymnasium built c. 1935 (photo 12). The rectangular gymnasium (building C) has a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles and stucco exterior walls. The building is constructed of concrete blocks and a steel superstructure. The main facade faces west and is divided by pier buttresses into four bays. Two large double entry doors are positioned on this facade, sheltered by shed roofs supported by large brackets. Above the entrances are rectangular, multi-light windows in metal frames.

Another entrance is located at the west end of the south facade, also sheltered by a shed roof (photo 13). Pier buttresses also divide this facade into bays. Just below the roof line of the five interior bays are narrow rectangular 10/10 window panels. The gymnasium is connected by halls and stairs to Building B2.

Building D

The exact construction date of this small non-contributing building is unknown, but falls outside the period of

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significance. It is immediately north of the 1914 building (photo 7). The one-story concrete block structure is fifteen feet square. It has a flat roof and four vented wood doors. It was probably used for storage of equipment.

INTERIOR

Buildings A, B1, and B2 are connected by hallways on each floor. The transition between buildings is made smooth by floors that slope gradually and a continuity in window and door treatments on the interior and the exterior. Original stairwells, which take a variety of designs, are serviceable throughout most of the building (photos 14,15, and 16).

Building A is arranged as a long corridor running north/south with classrooms opening off the corridor. The original entrance doors to the building are located at the north, east, and south elevations. The hallways of the first floor are lined with metal lockers recessed into the walls (photo 17). Stucco covers most walls throughout the building and ceilings rise between ten and twelve feet, depending on the location. Although many rooms have modern drop ceilings, most hall ceilings retain their original stucco surfaces.

Building A contains classrooms on all three floors. The first floor also contains offices, a lounge (photo 18) and a dining hall. The second floor has a library and audiovisual room and the third floor has some storage space. Mechanical systems are located in the basement.

Building B1 is arranged with classrooms flanking a central corridor. Doors at the east end of the corridor connect it with Building A (photo 19). Paneled wood doors to the classrooms, some of which contain frosted glass lights, have their original hardware, and many display multi-light transoms (photo 20). Hopper windows with mullion bars provide ventilation between classrooms and halls. Many original blackboards and chalk trays also remain intact.

The first floor of Building B2 consists of an auditorium with a stage at the south end. The second floor contains classrooms and a band room, arranged along a cross-shaped corridor.

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Alterations

The buildings retain their architectural integrity of design, materials, and workmanship to a high degree on both the exterior and interior. The only significant changes are alterations to some of the windows, with replacement of original sash.

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**OLD LAKELAND HIGH SCHOOL
POLK COUNTY, FL.**

SUMMARY

The Old Lakeland High School fulfills criteria A and C for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Under criterion A, the school is tied closely to the history of Lakeland. The building occupies the site of Lakeland's earliest school and continues to serve the education needs of the area. The lot on which the complex is located has been used for a school house site since the turn of the century. The first building on the site, constructed in 1902, was replaced in 1926. The school has further significance under criterion C for its architecture. The Collegiate Gothic design of the building is consistent with national and statewide trends in architecture. Various prominent local architects and builders were involved in the design and construction of the high school over a twenty year period.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Early Development of Lakeland (1884-1919)

Lakeland, a large community in Polk County named for the numerous lakes that dot the region's landscape, was founded in 1884 by Abraham Munn. Munn purchased several thousand acres in Polk County in 1881. The following year his son, Morris, supervised a survey of eighty acres of that property in an area which became known as the Munn Survey and formed the nucleus around which the settlement of Lakeland emerged. In 1883, when the South Florida Railroad extended its tracks through Polk County, Munn enticed the railroad to construct its tracks through the settlement. Munn was one of the organizers of the Lakeland Improvement Company, which met with almost instant success selling lots to settlers and investors. A post office was established in the village in 1884, and the following year the town of Lakeland was incorporated. A popular site for tourists and settlers, by 1886 the community had six hotels, five saw mills, four churches, several general stores, a newspaper, and a school. By 1890 the population had reached 552.

Lakeland experienced significant growth as railroads continued to expand in the region. In 1885, a second railroad company, owned by the Florida Southern Railway Company extended its rails from Gainesville to Lakeland. By 1890, Lakeland had become an important rail yard and shipping site in Polk County.

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In 1902 these early railroads were merged into the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad.

Phosphate mining also stimulated development in Lakeland. The mineral, an important ingredient for fertilizer, was discovered south of Lakeland in 1883 during a survey conducted by the U.S. Army. In 1887, larger deposits were unearthed east of Fort Meade, and soon a rush ensued. The first commercial shipments from the area were made in 1891.

By 1895, the population of Lakeland had nearly doubled to 1,000, placing it among the fifteen largest cities in Florida. Development during the 1890s included the expansion of the commercial district, and the construction of an electric plant and a new depot. Development was temporarily slowed, however, due to the 1894-1895 freezes, which devastated much of the Florida citrus industry and had a serious negative effect on Lakeland's economy. However, numerous groves were replanted and within a decade Lakeland regained its place as one of Florida's important citrus areas and the community continued to grow. A literary and social society was formed in 1893, and a building and loan association was organized several years later to help fund construction of buildings in town. Local businessmen formed a board of trade in 1897. A telephone system was installed in 1901, street lights were installed two years later, and water mains were laid in 1906. Roads were extended around several lakes and through newly-formed residential subdivisions surrounding the commercial district. Construction activity soared. Lakeland's population steadily increased from 1,180 in 1900 to 3,719 in 1910 and then to 7,062 by 1920, surpassing Bartow, the county seat, which had been the largest city in Polk County for several decades.

The construction boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries attracted a number of architects and builders to Lakeland. Several local firms (Builder's Lumber and Supply Company, Lakeland Lumber Company, South Florida Lumber and Supply Company, and Lakeland Artificial Stone Company) supplied much of the materials used in the construction of buildings.

About 1910, the naval stores industry boomed across much of central Florida. A number of firms were established in Lakeland during the period, and by the early 1920s, over \$3 million worth of turpentine, lumber, and rosin were shipped from Polk County. Citrus continued to play an important role in the economy. In response to the revitalized citrus market and to help regulate

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freight rates and sales of citrus, the Florida Citrus Exchange was formed in 1909 and a Polk County subexchange, with headquarters in Bartow, was created. In 1912, a Lakeland citrus exchange was formed, and several additional packing houses and a juice plant were built by 1916. In 1920, Polk County's share of Florida's \$20 million orange crop totaled \$3.5 million.

Lakeland's early-twentieth century development remained heavily dependent upon rail lines to deliver products to markets, especially citrus and phosphate. Railroads also provided vital passenger service to and from the area. In 1913, the Seaboard Air Line Railroad constructed a line across Polk County, ultimately connecting Lake Wales with Tampa. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad ensured Lakeland's role as an important rail center when in 1914 it invested \$400,000 in yards and facilities.

The Polk County road system, which totaled fewer than twenty miles in 1900, began to expand in earnest in 1914 and became one of the finest systems in the state. The sale of bonds enabled Polk County to build more miles of road than any other Florida county. By 1919, Polk County had 287 miles of asphalt roads. By 1923, Polk County had expended over \$2.5 million on road building, resulting in 340 miles of asphalt roads. The improved road system greatly facilitated communication with neighboring counties and had a positive impact on development throughout the region.

The period between 1884 and 1919 brought significant expansion in Lakeland. By the beginning of World War I, the area contained hundreds of buildings with large concentrations located in the commercial district and surrounding residential neighborhoods. A building ordinance enacted in 1916 prohibited the use of wood shingles on roofs, and provided for a review in the repair of existing buildings. After 1916, subdivision platting and building construction in Lakeland declined as the nation turned its energies toward winning the war in Europe. The extension of roads, water mains, and electricity into residential neighborhoods improved the quality of life and laid a solid foundation for growth during the 1920s. Improvements in educational and cultural opportunities included the expansion of schools near lakes Morton and Wire, and the organization of civic groups and a public library.

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POLK COUNTY, FL.**Florida Land Boom (1920-1928)**

In the 1920s, the nation entered a period of enthusiastic economic expansion. In Florida, a speculative land boom began almost immediately after World War I. Although Miami and Palm Beach are generally regarded as the center of the boom, few communities in the state failed to experience a fever for real estate. By approving a constitutional amendment in 1924 prohibiting either income or inheritance taxes, the Florida Legislature encouraged an influx of wealthy investors. The new capital accelerated an already well developed surge of land purchasing and by December 1924, twenty thousand people were thought to be arriving daily in the state.

Bank deposits swelled, numerous real estate companies were established, and property values rose dramatically. In virtually every city and town new subdivisions were platted and lots sold and resold for quick profits. Polk County and Lakeland shared in the growth. Property assessments countywide jumped from \$15 million in 1917 to \$35 million by 1927. In Lakeland, the population grew from 7,062 in 1920 to 18,554 by 1930. Lakeland became the second largest inland city in Florida behind Orlando. Building construction in commercial and residential districts surged. The City of Lakeland sponsored a road paving program, which resulted in an increase from twenty-five to nearly 150 miles of paved streets between 1922 and 1928. In December 1924, the city limits were extended from four to thirty square miles. Numerous subdivisions were platted, and construction filled many lots in new subdivisions as well as those left vacant from earlier periods of development.

The boom began to deflate in 1925. Bank deposits in the state had risen from \$180 million to \$875 million between 1922 and 1925, but began to decline in the late months of 1925. Bankers and businessmen throughout the nation had begun to complain about transfers of money to Florida. Newspapers suggested fraud in land sales. Large withdrawals followed in early 1926. In 1926, forty Florida banks collapsed. Real estate assessments declined by \$182 million between 1926 and 1928. Devastating hurricanes that hit southeast Florida in 1926 and 1928 killed thousands of people, providing a sad, closing chapter to the land speculation fever.

The effects of the bust were moderated somewhat in Lakeland by the town's diversified economy, which continued to be based on

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citrus and phosphate. Building construction slowly tapered off in 1926 and 1927, yet important public improvements were made, including a municipal complex that included a city hall, fire station, library, civic center, and several other buildings. The Lake Mirror Promenade, completed in 1928 (listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989), was another significant project undertaken after the collapse of the boom. Although the local economy appeared solid, it began to unravel in the late 1920s. In 1927, in a move to cut overhead expenses the ACL removed the bulk of its railroad repair shops from Lakeland, which dealt the community a severe economic blow. Bank failures also rocked the community first with the closing of the Polk County Trust Company in 1926, and then the Central Bank and Trust in 1928.

Great Depression (1929-1942)

The full brunt of the Great Depression made its impact in the early 1930s. Between 1929 and 1933, 148 Florida banks collapsed, including several in Polk County and Lakeland. Deposits and investments fell, and annual income per capita declined from \$510 to \$289. Approximately one out of four Floridians was receiving some type of public relief and assistance by 1933. Nevertheless, Lakeland's population rose from 18,554 in 1930 to 21,017 in 1935. A number of developments in the late 1930s signaled an improved economy. The Detroit Tigers opened a spring training camp at Marchant stadium in 1934. Several large public projects, including the construction of a municipal airport, an armory, and municipal pool were begun under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration, a "New Deal" agency developed by the Roosevelt administration to create jobs and revitalize the economy. By 1940, the population of Lakeland stood at 22,068. That year the City and U.S. Army reached an agreement that established a pilot training school based at the municipal airport, which set a foundation for additional growth in Lakeland during World War II.

EDUCATION IN LAKELAND AND THE OLD LAKELAND HIGH SCHOOL:

The growth of the school system in Lakeland paralleled a statewide interest in improving education. Providing for the educational needs of its youth was one of the goals of the city of Lakeland as it expanded and grew. A system of public instruction was established in Florida under the Constitution of

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1868, but little progress was achieved. In 1875 there were only 600 public schools in the entire state, but rapid growth began shortly thereafter. By the end of 1877 school officials had achieved a longer school term, better qualified teachers, a higher percentage of the school population enrolled in schools, and a total of 1000 schools. The growth in the number of schools began to keep pace with the growth of Florida's population. In 1888 there were 2,249 schools in the state serving a school population of 113,647.

Between 1868 and 1884 educational facilities in Florida were inadequate to accommodate the number of children of school age. Thomas Cochran, an educator writing in the early 1920s, described there early school buildings as "...small, built of indifferent materials, badly constructed, unfavorably located, and almost completely devoid of necessary equipment." Facilities gradually improved as the prosperity of the state increased, as better qualified school boards and school superintendents were selected and as public interest in education increased. By the mid-1890s there was a decided advance in both quantity and quality of school buildings. The buildings were better constructed, more suitably equipped and designed and furnished with more regard for the health and comfort of the students and teacher. Greater attention was given to heating, lighting, sanitation, and ventilation. By 1902 the State Superintendent of Schools stated: "The spirit of school-house building is rapidly developing in the State, brick and neat frame buildings taking the place of improperly constructed and unsightly old structures." This was the year that Lakeland completed a new brick school building.

In 1885, a year after the incorporation of Lakeland, the town's first school was constructed. It was located south of the emerging commercial district near the intersection of Lime Street and Tennessee Avenue. The wood-frame building burned in 1897. Afterwards, classes were held for several years in a commercial building, the Bryant Block. In 1901, a \$10,000 bond was passed for the construction of a new school. This was the first bond issue voted on by the city. W.D. McRae and Robert Bryant, local businessmen and politicians, donated a large tract of land north of town on the east side of Lake Wire for the new school. The two-story brick building was completed in 1902 on the site now occupied by the Old Lakeland High School.

Within a decade, the student population had significantly increased, and the local school board made plans to enlarge the building. In 1914 an addition was placed to the rear of the 1902

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structure to increase classroom space. The firm of G.D. & H.D. Mendenhall, engineers and architects, was commissioned to design of the brick addition (Building B1), which was built by Marshall & Sanders, a local construction firm. Construction costs totaled \$15,363.

In 1924, an auditorium/classroom building (Building B2) was built on the rear of the 1914 extension. A.J. Poteet, a local architect, designed the building. Paul Smith, a contractor from nearby Haines City, supervised construction.

In 1924, a high school student writing for the Highlander yearbook under a pen name asserted that, "...the high school needs a new building. The old one is a fire trap...and the fire escapes are rickety." That assessment was sound, for in 1926, the 1902 building was gutted by fire. A small controversy erupted in the city concerning the location of a new school building. One group wanted an entirely new school in the southern part of the city. Another group favored replacing the main building on the previous site. After considerable public debate, the latter group prevailed. The local school board decided to demolish the burned building and construct a new school on the site. The 1914 addition was left intact. E.C. Hosford, a local architect, was commissioned to design the new building. Construction of the new main building (Building A) of Lakeland High School was supervised by the G.C. Wright Construction Company. Construction of the high school began in November 1926 and it was completed in late 1927 at a cost of \$224,000. The new yellow brick, I-shaped school building dwarfed the earlier structures on the site. Its size and Collegiate Gothic style make it the most dominant building in this area of Lakeland.

About 1934-35, a new gymnasium was built, probably with the financial assistance of the Works Progress Administration, one of several "New Deal" programs created by the administration of Franklin Roosevelt to provide jobs and revitalize the national economy. The gym (Building C), a concrete block building with steel I-beam rafters, was built on the site of an earlier wood frame building that had also served as a gym.

Throughout these various stages of construction, this property functioned as Lakeland's principal secondary educational institution. As the population grew and needs changed, the building was used in various ways. In 1925 it became the

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Lakeland Junior-Senior High School and in 1926, the Junior High students were moved into the rear. The last senior class to graduate from the school was in 1952. The following year a new high school opened and only junior high students were retained in this complex. By 1972 only the 9th grade classes remained. Finally, in 1977 it began its current function as the Polk Opportunity Center, a facility for students with discipline problems.

During these years of service as an educational facility for Lakeland, the High School became deeply intertwined with the community of Lakeland. Both local political leaders and people notable at the state level graduated from the school. Among the prominent graduates of the school are politicians Curtis Peterson and Lawton Chiles, and entertainer Frances Langford. Langford was a radio, film and recording star in the 1940s and performed with Bob Hope's USO tours. Peterson was elected to the Florida Senate in 1972 and served as President of that body from 1982-1984. Lawton Chiles, the current governor of the state of Florida, was elected to the Florida House in 1958 and to the Florida Senate in 1966. He followed this with three terms as a United States Senator. Chiles was elected governor in 1990.

As Lakeland grew and its geographical size increased, other schools were built throughout the community. However, because of its strategic location near the downtown area and because of its imposing architecture, the Old Lakeland High School remained the most visible of Lakeland's schools. The collection of buildings which comprise the Old Lakeland High School were constructed at different times and therefore represent varying but complementary architectural visages associated with the development of the city of Lakeland.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

Collegiate Gothic Style

The Old Lakeland High School embodies Collegiate Gothic styling. The term "collegiate Gothic" was probably first used by Alexander Jackson Davis, the leading American college architect of the early nineteenth century, who used the term to refer to the late medieval styles found at English universities. The Collegiate Gothic style is a derivative of the Gothic Revival, a style which became popular in America around 1830. Gothic architecture initially became associated with schools of specific

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religious denominations, but by the 1850s American colleges had widely adopted the style for its connotations of age and permanence. The style lost popularity after the Civil War but was revived in the late nineteenth century by Ralph Adams Cram and Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue, who between 1895 and 1913, were partners in an architectural firm. Cram conceived of using the English Perpendicular Gothic as a starting point to a new style. Through the influence of Cram and Goodhue, ecclesiastical, commercial and educational buildings were designed with Gothic features.

The term Collegiate Gothic has been used to describe the use of the Gothic style for education-related buildings. It was used to describe the buildings Cope and Stewardson designed for Bryn Mawr in the early 1890s and in 1896 at Princeton. Excellent examples of the style appear on the campuses of the University of Florida in Gainesville and Florida State University in Tallahassee. Reinforced concrete or steel skeletal framing and brick exterior walls usually serve as construction materials. Cast stone coping, cartouches, belt courses, and window tracery are common to nearly all examples of the style. Other features include decorated parapets, towers, and spires; wall surfaces featuring decorative brick work; and a variety of window treatments including lancet, cantilevered oriels, double-hung sash windows, and transoms, often with diamond pane glazing.

Architects and Builders**BUILDING A:****E.C. Hosford:**

The architect of Building A was E. C. Hosford. A Georgia native, he was born in 1883, graduated from the Georgia School of Technology and established an architecture practice in Eastman, Georgia about 1905. During his distinguished career, Hosford designed many large courthouses, most of which embody Classical Revival styling. In addition to several in Georgia, he received commissions for courthouses in Florida, including those in Baker, Hendry, Jefferson, LaFayette, and Polk counties, which were built between 1908 and 1927. In 1920, Hosford moved to Lakeland, where he became one of the leading architects in southwest Florida. His larger school designs in Polk County include the Lakeland High School and Haines City's Central Grammar School. Commercial designs prepared by Hosford in Lakeland include the Oates-Corely,

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Smith-Hardin, and Success Furniture Company buildings. He also designed a number of local residences.

G.C. Wright Construction Company:

Gilbert Wright headed the G.C. Wright Construction Company. The company was responsible for the construction of several commercial buildings in Lakeland during the period. During the late 1930s Wright served as a building inspector for the City of Lakeland.

BUILDING B1:

G.D. and H.D. Mendenhall:

Building B1 was designed by the firm of G.D. and H.D. Mendenhall. George Mendenhall was born in Alabama in 1857. Following the Civil War he moved with his parents to Brazil where he learned engineering from a Russian engineer and did engineering work for the Brazilian government. He came to Florida in 1876 and tried his hand at various occupations over a period of years. He grew oranges, farmed, was in the mercantile business, and was involved in the phosphate industry. He settled in Lakeland in 1912 and founded the firm of G.D. and H.D. Mendenhall, civil and construction engineers and architects. By the 1920s, he had gained a reputation as the dean of surveyors of Florida. His son, Herbert D. was born in Levy County, Florida in 1883. He graduated as a civil engineer from the University of Texas where he specialized in building design. His first professional experience was with the U.S. Engineers in Galveston and Tampa. One of the largest surveying companies in central Florida, the firm employed over 100 field engineers by 1925. Local building designs attributed to the company include the Cumberland Presbyterian and All Saint's Episcopal churches, Vanity Fair Arcade, the Citrus Exchange and Southland buildings, and the Shore Acres and Cleveland Court Grammar schools. The Holy Cross Church in Sanford and St. Paul's Church in Winter Haven were other Mendenhall designs.

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BUILDING B2:

A.J. Poteet:

Poteet established an architectural practice in Lakeland about 1910, and designed numerous buildings there over the following decades, including the Morrell Memorial Hospital (1915) and John F. Cox Grammar School (1928).

Paul Smith:

Building B2 was built by the Paul Smith Construction Company. Paul Smith was born in Georgia in 1894. Smith learned the building trade from his father. He came to Florida in 1910 and worked on projects with his older brothers in New Smyrna, Orlando, Arcadia, and Jacksonville. In 1919 he and his brother William formed a general contracting partnership in Avon Park. In 1921 he moved to Haines City and established his own firm. Among his many projects are an addition to the Polk County Courthouse in Bartow (1927), the Charlotte County Courthouse in Punta Gorda (1928), and the Glades County Courthouse in Moore Haven (1928). School buildings to his credit include an elementary school in Bartow (1929) and those in Arcadia, Auburndale, Haines City, and the Dixieland School in Lakeland. He also built the Lake Wales Municipal Hospital (1930). His volume of business necessitated opening branch offices in Miami and Tampa in 1938, in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1939, in Washington, D.C. in 1940, and in Jacksonville in 1942. Smith moved to Tampa in 1940.

CONCLUSION

The Old Lakeland High School is significant under criterion A for its association with the development of public education in Lakeland and under criterion C as a fine local example of the Collegiate Gothic style of architecture. The three contributing buildings that make up the school reflect the work of several prominent Florida architects and builders.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

McRae and Bryants Add Resub PB 1 PG 44A and PB2 PG 64 Blk 17
lots 1 to 4 less E 20 ft of Lots 1 and 4 and Blk 18 lots 1 to 4.

Boundary Justification:

The nominated property is shown by the dotted line on the
accompanying site plan map and includes the entire parcel
historically associated with the Old Lakeland High School.

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1. Building A, Old Lakeland High School
2. Lakeland, Florida
3. Robert Bennett
4. 1992
5. Historic Property Associates
6. Oblique view toward northwest, showing front (east) elevation
7. Photo No. 1 Of 20

Numbers 2-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

1. Building A, Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing central entrance bay, front (east) facade, view facing west
7. Photo No. 2 Of 20

1. Building A, Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing southeast corner pavillion, front (east) facade, facing west
7. Photo No. 3 Of 20

1. Building A, Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing north elevation, facing south
7. Photo No. 4 of 20

1. Building A on left; Building B1 on right; Old Lakeland High School.
6. View showing rear (west) elevation, Building A; north elevation, Building B1; view facing southeast.
7. Photo No. 5 of 20

1. South elevation, hyphen between Building A, on right, and Building B1, on left; Old Lakeland High School.
6. View facing north
7. Photo No. 6 Of 20

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Section number photo Page 2

1. Building B1; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing north elevation, facing south
7. Photo No. 7 of 20

1. Building D on left; Building B2 in center; Building B1 on right; Old Lakeland High School.
6. View showing south elevation, Building B1; east elevation, Building B2; east and north elevations, Gymnasium (Building D), facing west
7. Photo No. 8 Of 20

1. Building B2; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing west elevation, facing east
7. Photo No. 9 of 20

1. Building B2 on left; Gymnasium, Building D, on right; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing south elevation, Building B2; west elevation, Gymnasium, Building D; view facing northeast
7. Photo No. 10 Of 20

1. Building B1 on left; Building B2 on right; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing north elevations, facing south
7. Photo No. 11 of 20

1. Gymnasium, Building D; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing west elevation, facing northeast
7. Photo No. 12 Of 20

1. Gymnasium, Building D; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing south elevation, facing north
7. Photo No. 13 Of 20

1. Interior view Of Building A; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing entrance hall, first floor, facing west
7. Photo No. 14 Of 20

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Section number Photo Page 3

1. Interior view, Buildings B1 and B2; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing first-floor stairwells, facing southeast
7. Photo No. 15 of 20

1. Interior view of Building A; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing second-floor stairwell and entrance doors to Building B1, view looking northwest
7. Photo No. 16 of 20

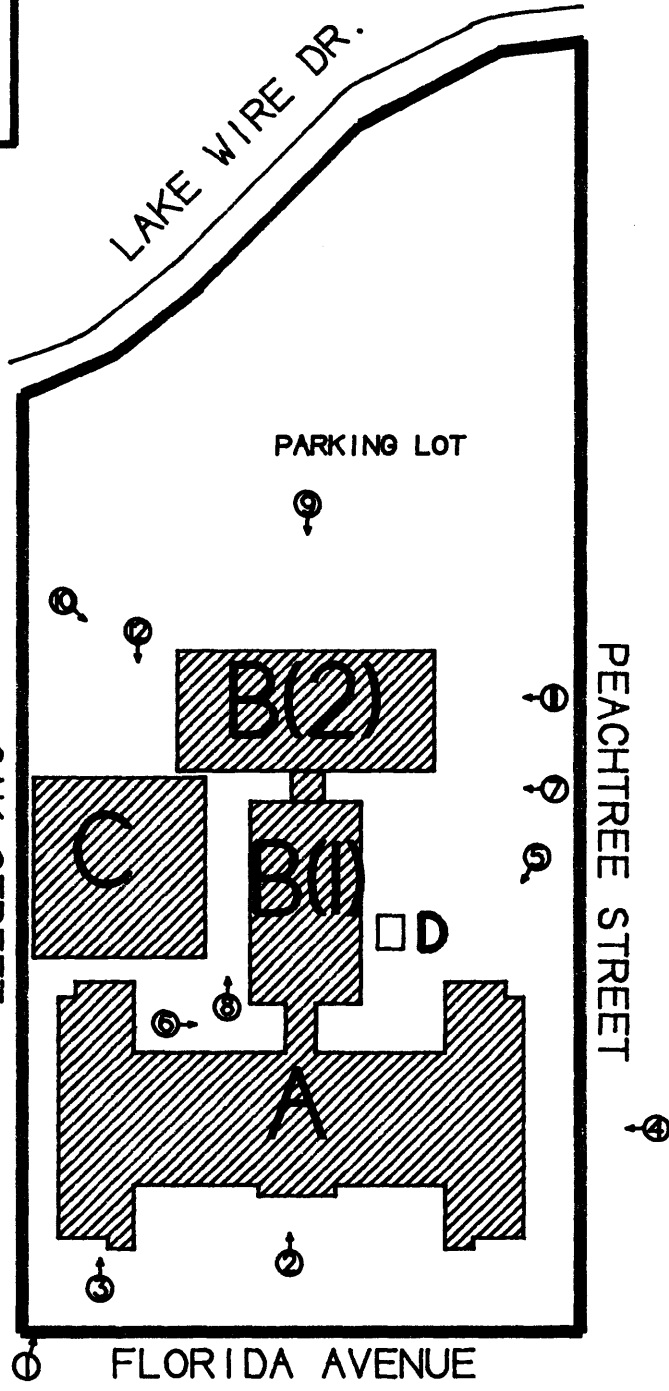
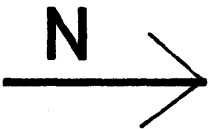
1. Interior view Of Building A; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing central corridor, first floor, facing south
7. Photo No. 17 Of 20

1. Interior view, Building A; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing lounge, first floor, facing south
7. Photo No. 18 of 20

1. Interior view, Buildings B1 and B2; Old Lakeland High School
6. View showing entrance hall, first floor, facing east
7. Photo No. 19 Of 20

1. Interior view, Building B1; Old Lakeland High School
6. Typical first floor classroom, view looking north
7. Photo No. 20 of 20

OLD LAKELAND
HIGH SCHOOL
POLK CO., FL.
SITE PLAN

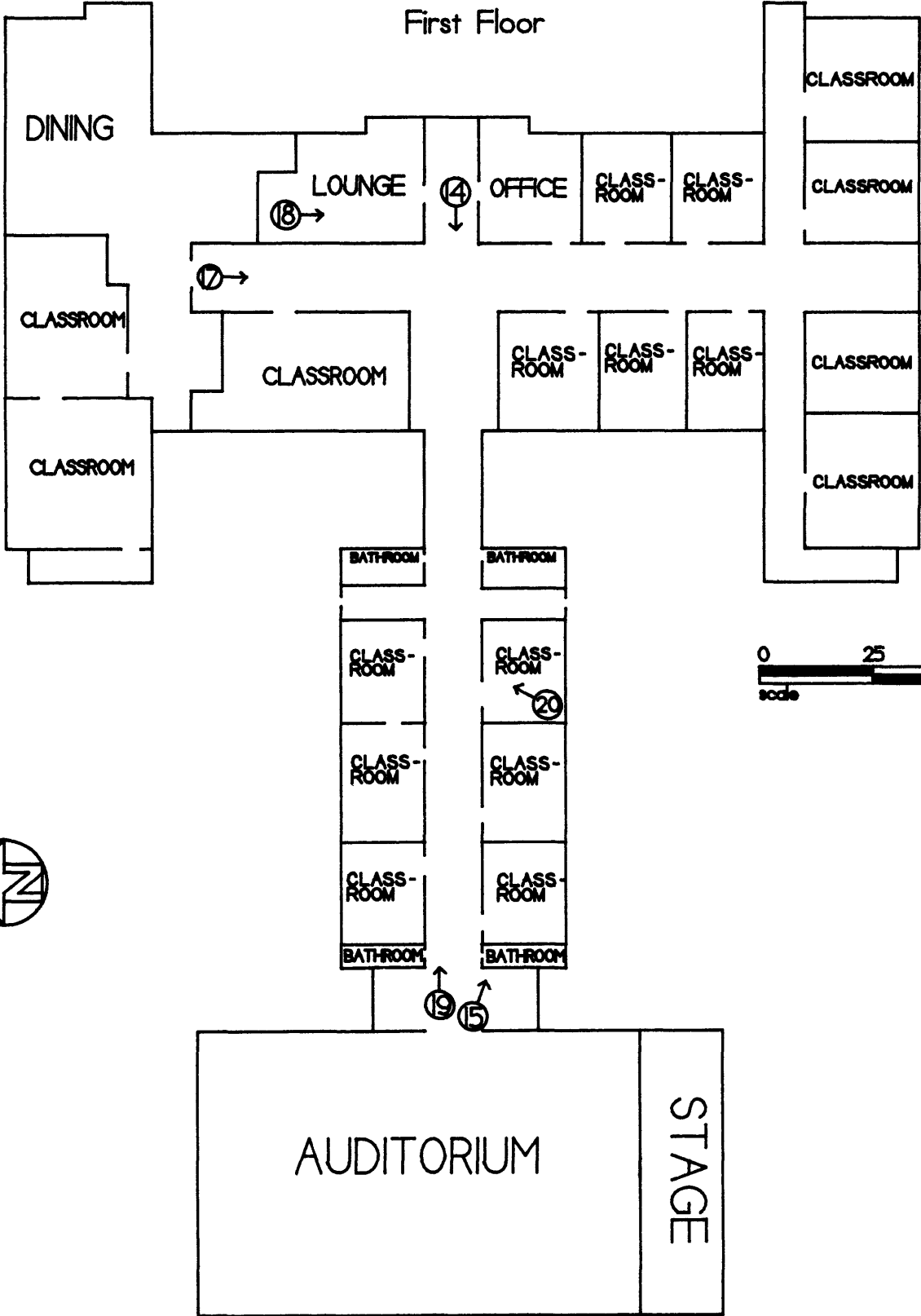


KEY:

BOUNDARY	
CONTRIBUTING BUILDING	
NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDING	
PHOTO LOCATION	

SCALE: 1" = 80'

OLD LAKELAND HIGH SCHOOL
 Polk County, Florida
 Photo Direction ○ →



OLD LAKELAND HIGH SCHOOL
Polk County, Florida
Photo Direction ○→

Second Floor

