

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bacon County School
other names/site number Bacon County Elementary School

2. Location

street & number 504 North Pierce Street
city, town Alma () **vicinity of**
county Bacon **code** GA 005
state Georgia **code** GA **zip code** 31510

() **not for publication**

3. Classification

Ownership of Property:

- () private
- (X) public-local
- () public-state
- () public-federal

Category of Property:

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

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing

Noncontributing

buildings	1	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet.

Richard Coates
Signature of certifying official

11-06-07
Date

er W. Ray Luce
Historic Preservation Division Director
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

() entered in the National Register

Wilson H. Beal 12-26-07

() determined eligible for the National Register

() determined not eligible for the National Register

() removed from the National Register

() other, explain:

() see continuation sheet

[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions:

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Colonial Revival

Materials:

foundation	brick
walls	brick
roof	asphalt shingle
other	N/A

Description of present and historic physical appearance:

The Bacon County School is a T-shaped, brick, Colonial Revival-style school building. The school is located in downtown Alma in Bacon County in south Georgia. It fronts Pierce Street (U.S. Highway 1). Construction began in 1933 and was completed the following year. The five-part plan of the school contains a central two-story main block with entry portico, one-story classroom wings, and one-story pavilions at each end. A large auditorium extends back from the central block, creating the stem of the "T."

The gable-roofed main block of this red brick building is two stories in height, containing three bays, with the larger, central bay including the slightly projecting entry porch (photographs 1 and 2). Concrete steps lead up to the three arched openings on the porch. These openings contain decorative concrete surrounds with keystone motifs. Entrance from the porch into the school is via three double doors with fanlights. Single window openings are located above and beside the entry (photograph 6). Brickwork in the form of stylized quoins and string courses adorns the main façade. A brick dentil cornice provides ornamental relief on the gable ends (photograph 5).

The hip-roofed auditorium has arched window openings on the north and south facades with original windows (photograph 12). West façade window openings have been bricked in or covered over (photograph 10).

One-story, flat-roofed, symmetrical classroom wings flank the main block of the school (photographs 3-5). The wings are divided into three bays, each containing four window openings. Brick quoins divide each bay. The string course from the central portion of the school continues the length of each wing. A row of bricks placed vertically provides decorative relief below the windows. Some of the window and door openings have been infilled with brick or air-conditioning units. The existing

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7—Description

windows are metal sash (photograph 5). At the end of the north wing, due to slope, the wing rests on a full basement (photograph 10).

The hip-roofed pavilions contain original arched windows with concrete keystones. A brick apron with herringbone pattern under the arched windows provides further ornamentation to this façade (photograph 7). Entry to these pavilions is by way of an arched opening on the north and south facades (photograph 15). Three single window openings are located on either side of the entryways (photographs 9 and 14). The window openings on the north pavilion have been filled with brick (photograph 9). The west or rear facades of these pavilions have no window openings (photograph 10). The corners of the pavilion are detailed with brick quoins.

The main block of the T-shaped building features offices on either side of the front doorway (photograph 16), an auditorium with stage and balcony (photographs 18 and 19), and two classrooms on the second floor (photographs 25 and 26). The front offices retain plaster walls, wood ceilings, original wood doors and moldings. Bathrooms and closet areas are located in the offices (photograph 16). Wood single-run stairs, located behind one of the offices, lead to the second floor classrooms. The stairwell contains a wood ceiling, handrail, and moldings (photograph 20). The upstairs classrooms appear to have retained most of their original finishes including wood doors, trim, ceilings and slate blackboards (photographs 25 and 26). The original materials and finishes including plaster walls, wood ceilings, floors, doors and door surrounds, wide moldings, bull's-eye medallions, and balcony with metal railing have been preserved in the auditorium. The original stage and dressing rooms are also intact (photographs 18 and 19).

The classroom wings, with central corridor, contain a total of 16 classrooms, many with built-in shelves and closets. Most of the walls are covered with a fiberglass-type panel. The extent of plaster remaining under these panels is unknown. Original wood trim and blackboards have been removed from the first-floor classrooms. Flooring in the classrooms is linoleum tile (photographs 22-24). Restrooms, with tile floors and walls, are located at the end of the corridor.

During a 1978 rehabilitation, the original boiler was removed from the basement and gas heating systems were installed in the corridors. Original restrooms were replaced or updated. Most of the windows were removed and replaced with metal windows or window air-conditioning units. Some of the floors were covered with linoleum and walls were covered or replaced with fiberglass-type panels. Suspended ceiling tiles were also installed in some areas.

A complex of school buildings occupied the site including a junior high building and a high school building constructed in the 1940s, a 1953 cafeteria, and two buildings constructed in 1969 for kindergarten and Head Start. These 1969 buildings remain to the northwest of the school, outside of the National Register boundary, and will become part of the new Bacon County Board of Education complex. The 1940s and 1953 buildings were demolished in 2003. The proposed National Register site includes only the 1934 school and immediate surrounding area with a few trees and a paved parking area.

The current owner, the Bacon County Commission, has plans to rehabilitate part of the school for use as a senior center. The school received a Georgia Heritage Grant in 2007 for this interior renovation.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):

Architecture
Education

Period of Significance:

1933-1957

Significant Dates:

1933 – date of construction

Significant Person(s):

N/A

Cultural Affiliation:

N/A

Architect(s)/Builder(s):

Douglas, Alexander – general contractor, 1933

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

Statement of significance (areas of significance)

Construction of the Bacon County School began in 1933 due to an increase in the school-age population and the merger of the town of Alma and the Bacon County school systems. When opened in 1934, the Bacon County School served grades one through eleven until the 1940s when new junior and high school buildings were built behind the school. A cafeteria was constructed in 1953. In 1957 and 1958, new junior and high schools were built elsewhere in Alma and the buildings remained in use as an elementary school. In 2003, the 1940s junior and high school buildings and the cafeteria were demolished. From 1991 through 2003, the 1934 school was used for Head Start and pre-K through third grade. The 1934 elementary school building is the only historic building on the property today. This school was built as a result of school consolidation and is a good example of a Colonial Revival-style school in Georgia.

The Bacon County School is significant in the area of architecture as an excellent example of a small-town "Consolidated Public School" building with minimal Colonial Revival-style details built during the period of school consolidation in Georgia. As documented in the historic context *Public Elementary and Secondary Schools in Georgia, 1868-1971*, the Consolidated Public School was a new type of school that was built throughout Georgia starting in the 1920s. It replaced smaller city schools and scattered rural schools. Floor plans in the shape of a letter – T, H, L, or U – were commonly used for consolidated schools. The massing of these schools was more elongated than urban schools with classrooms oriented along double-loaded corridors. The buildings were generally one-to-two stories high; most were one story. Amenities included a large auditorium, offices, and bathrooms. The Bacon County School reflects this design with its corridors, large windows for light and air, and consolidation of various school functions. Stylistically, the Bacon County School reflects the Colonial Revival style. Popular throughout Georgia from the 1890s to the early 1940s, the Colonial Revival style expressed a renewed interest in American colonial architecture based upon European precedent. The Bacon County School is a good example of a Colonial Revival-style design with its five-part Palladian plan in the form of a villa or Palladian-style dwelling. The school retains its original exterior finishes, massing, form, details, and pattern of openings.

The Bacon County School is significant in the area of education because it represents the efforts of the city of Alma and Bacon County to provide a modern school for the local white community during a period of statewide consolidation in which larger, modern schools replaced many one- and two-room schoolhouses. Changing transportation technology, especially the use of the automobile and school buses, made it possible to consolidate several schools into one larger and improved school building. A statewide effort in Georgia at consolidation began in 1919 with the passage of the Barrett-Rogers Law that provided funds for consolidation. By 1928, the idea of consolidation proved so widespread in its appeal that increased state funding was needed to provide money to all of the schools that qualified and by 1936 every county in Georgia had an accredited high school. Many schools evolved into campus-like settings with separate gymnasiums, auditoriums or cafeterias. The results of consolidation were better school buildings and uniform educational policies for most of Georgia's white school students. Bacon County's efforts reflect state and national trends toward greater involvement by state boards of education in local school systems.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

National Register Criteria

A - The Bacon County School is significant in education because it represents the efforts of the county to provide a modern school for its white community during a period of statewide consolidation.

C - The Bacon County School is significant in architecture as a good example of a Colonial Revival-style consolidated public school-type school building in Georgia.

Criteria Considerations (if applicable)

N/A

Period of significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the date of construction in 1933 and ends in 1957, the end of the historic period, during which time the building was continuously used as a public school. The building remained in service until 2003.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)

The nomination includes one contributing building, the main school building (1933-1934).

Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)

Schools played an important part in the life of the town of Alma almost from its inception. Alma began as a stop on a logging railroad, constructed by the Offerman and Western Railroad Company sometime after 1887. Farming and timbering provided the primary means of occupation in the area, and the rail offered a means to ship these goods. A turpentine distilling company formed by C.W. Deen and A.M. McLaughlin began operations around 1899 near present-day 12th and Wayne streets in Alma. To take advantage of the many pine trees in the area, the Yaryan Company, set up operations next to Deen and McLaughlin to load and ship pine tree stumps for gum extraction to a Brunswick company that made gunpowder. These two enterprises resulted in an increase in population and the need for housing for the many workers.

With an increasing population, Alma's first school opened c.1902 in two rooms of the Turner house, just south of the turpentine operation. As Alma grew, residents took steps for its incorporation in 1904. Many cotton farmers, tired of the rocky north Georgia soil, migrated to the Alma area around 1906 for better farming opportunities and new businesses including the Alma Trading Company, the Alma Mercantile Company and the Alma Gin and Milling Company sprang up.

The Alma Land and Improvement Company, formed from local citizens, bought 200 acres of farmland owned by Jack Rigdon for \$7,000. The company also purchased 1,500 acres north of Alma, known as the Fending tract. The company surveyed, then platted the town, laying out several blocks north and south of the railroad tracks. Nearly 500 lots sold for \$10 to \$50 in two days in February 1907.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

On March 25, 1907, the Alma Land and Improvement Company executed a warranty deed to the town of Alma conveying a parcel of property bounded on the west by Baker Street, on the south by Seventh Street and on the east and north by the Fending tract of the Alma Land and Improvement Company. The company built a two-story brick school building on the property and deeded it to the town. Called the Alma Polytechnic School, and later Alma High School, the first principal was F.A. Moss. This school was located at the corner of Baker and 7th streets and served the community for many years.

Bacon County, named after Augustus O. Bacon, a U.S. Senator, was created in 1914 out of Appling, Pierce and Ware counties. Alma became the county seat. Then in 1918, Alma was rechartered as a city. By 1930 the population had increased to 1,235. The city expanded west and north of the original planned limits of the Alma Land and Improvement Company. This expansion tied into the construction of the railroad depot west of town and the building of Highway 1. By 1930, the center of commercial activity was located at Pierce Street (U.S. Highway 1 and 12th Street).

With growth, a new school was needed. When the Board of Education of Bacon County met on November 7, 1933, the minutes reflect that “. . . bonds in the sum of \$20,000.00 have been voted and validated by said Alma High School District for the purpose of erecting a new schoolhouse for the said district, and the Board of Trustees of said District and the above named authority, in the exercise of a sound discretion have decided to erect said new school building on part of a certain tract of land owned by Mrs. John Johnson, of said County, located in the City of Alma.”

On November 13, 1933, a deed was filed from Mrs. John Johnson selling 7.82 acres to the Board of Education of Bacon County, Ga., and their successors for \$159.11 with the boundaries being stated as:

“... fronting Eight Street a distance of Three Hundred Fifty (350) feet, and running back and even width of Nine Hundred Eighty Four and One Tenth feet (984.1) and bounded as follows; On the South by Eighth Street, East by lands of Richard S. Altman and the original lot line, On the West by lands of Clifford Edgar and other lands of Grantor, and on the North by other lands of the Grantor, and agreed line being established between the Northwest and North-east corner of the said above described tract as being a straight line between iron stakes placed at both of the above corners, ALSO, Lots No. One (1) Two (2) and Six (6) in Block No. 4A and lots No. One (1) and Six (6) in Block No. 5A, and including also all fractional lots East of the original land line of lot No. 281, and in the 5th District of said County, the same having been left unnumbered by Alma Land & Improvement Company, in their Map & Survey of said City, said City lots and unnumbered fractions containing Forty-three-One Hundreths acres.”

The Grantee, in addition to the Board of Education is listed as the Bacon County Elementary School Property located in city of Alma, Ga. In a Board of Education meeting on January 22, 1934, there is confirmation that “. . . Alma High School District is now engaged in the construction of a new school house . . .” The name of the school architect is unknown, but the general contractor was Alexander W. Douglas. Velmar Benton and Howard Taylor laid the brick.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

The finished school building consisted of approximately 24,000 square feet of space, serving grades 1-11, with 16 classrooms. In times of overcrowding, the overflow of students attended classes in the McCoy home or in a tobacco warehouse.

As documented in the historic context *Public Elementary and Secondary Schools in Georgia, 1868-1971*, consolidated public schools were built in response to concerns about the state of education in Georgia in the early 20th century. Increased funding, provided by a 1919 law, provided funds for schools that had been consolidated. At the same time, an amendment to the state constitution permitted county school boards to issue bonds for new school construction. Changing means of transportation, including increased use of the automobile, made possible the consolidation of rural and urban schools. The establishment of high schools, and the elimination of ungraded schools at this time were important changes that were reflected in this type of school. Once built, these school buildings became important for use as community centers for meetings, cultural and recreational uses.

During the 1940s, Bacon County Junior High School and Bacon County High School buildings were constructed on the school site, and the 1934 school building housed primary grades only. A cafeteria was constructed on the site in 1953. The Bacon County Junior High School and the Bacon County High School buildings were vacated after new facilities were constructed elsewhere in Alma in 1957 to 1958. The vacated buildings were subsequently used to house Head Start, kindergarten, and other classrooms.

In 1966, the Bacon County School System integrated, on a voluntary basis, and the African-American Alma High School closed in 1968 when mandatory integration took place.

In 1978, a major interior rehabilitation of the Bacon County School took place, which removed asbestos materials and plaster, installed new restrooms, wall panels, suspended ceilings, air conditioning, heating and electrical systems. The architect for this rehabilitation was James Buckley. The school operated as an elementary school until 2003 when a new school was constructed. The junior high, high school and cafeteria buildings were demolished in 2003.

In 1969, two additional buildings were built on the site for kindergarten and Head Start. Architect Percy Perkins was responsible for school changes and additions at this time. These buildings are located northwest of the 1934 school and are to remain as part of a new Bacon County Board of Education Complex. Plans are to renovate the 1934 building for use as a senior center.

Several well known people have attended the school. Best known is author Harry Crews who is in the Georgia Writers Hall of Fame. Born in Bacon County on June 7, 1935, Crews authored over 21 books and was a regular contributor to *Esquire* magazine and other publications. A movie is currently being developed about his life in Bacon County and the South.

This school is an example of a building that was constructed in response to the merger of the county and city public school systems. Initially, the school housed grades 1-11, then as time and money allowed, more buildings were constructed. Over the years, the school became specialized as to the

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section 8--Statement of Significance

grades that were housed in it, until finally, only the lower grades were left. Additionally, it came to house Head Start and pre-K classes, previously unavailable in the county.

The school was the site of many community meetings including the annual meetings of the Satilla Rural Electrical Administration. It also served as a religious center for many churches until they could afford larger buildings. The Bacon County Commission also held meetings here, as needed. Community and school plays were performed in the auditorium, providing entertainment for the community.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Aerial map. On file at Bacon County, Georgia, Board of Education. n.d.

Aycock, Billy. "Bacon County School." Historic Property Information Form, July 17, 2006. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Bacon County, Georgia. Board of Commissioners Minutes, various years.

Bacon County, Georgia. Board of Education Minutes, various years.

Bacon County, Georgia. Superior Court. Deed Book 16, p. 401.

Baker, Bonnie. "A Short History of Alma and Bacon County." Alma-Bacon County, Georgia Historical Society, 1977.

Baker, Bonnie T. The History of Alma and Bacon County. 1984.

Benton, Wanzette. Alma, Georgia. Interview by Henry Kight, 1 June 2006.

Buckley, James. "Rehabilitation Plans, 1978." Bacon County, Georgia, Board of Education.

Crimmons, Timothy; Dickens, Roy; Preston, Howard. "Survey of the Historical and Archaeological Impact of Selected Model Cities and Community Development Projects, Alma, Georgia." Atlanta, 1975.

Johnson, Jones. Alma, Georgia. Telephone interview by Henry Kight, 22 November 2006.

Johnson, R.T. First Baptist Church, Alma, Georgia. Interview by Henry Kight, 4 June 2006.

Kight, Henry. Floorplan Drawings, 2006. On file at Save Our Schools, Inc. Bacon County, Georgia.

Kight, Henry. Southeast Georgia Regional Development Center, Waycross, Georgia. Interview by Michael V. Jacobs, 1 June 2006.

Perkins, Percy. "Bacon County Elementary School and Bacon County Board of Education. Bacon County Consolidated School Construction Plans, c. 1969." Percy H. Perkins Collection, Tube #6, Georgia Southern College Special Collections. Also on file at Bacon County, Georgia Board of Education.

Ray & Associates. *Public Elementary and Secondary Schools in Georgia 1868-1971*. Atlanta, GA: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 2004.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 9—Major Bibliographic References

Thomas, Ken. "Alma Depot." National Register Nomination, 1983. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

www.georgiaencyclopedia.org. "Harry Crews."

Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued
date issued:
- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other, Specify Repository:

Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.44

UTM References

A) Zone 17 Easting 361158 Northing 3490722

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is indicated by a heavy black line on the attached map.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is the land immediately around the historic school building and is the current legal boundary. It does not include land on which other historic school buildings, since demolished, once stood, and it does not include extant non-historic school buildings.

11. Form Prepared By

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title Lynn Speno, Survey and Register Specialist
organization Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources
mailing address 34 Peachtree Street, Suite 1600
city or town Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303-2316
telephone (404) 656-2840 **date** 11/6/2007
e-mail lynn.speno@dnr.state.ga.us

Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable) () not applicable

name/title Billy Aycock
organization Bacon County Commissioners
mailing address P.O. Box 356
city or town Alma **state** GA **zip code** 31510
telephone 912-632-5214
e-mail N/A

- (X) **property owner**
() **consultant**
() **regional development center preservation planner**
() **other:**

Property Owner or Contact Information

name (property owner or contact person) Bacon County Commissioners
organization (if applicable) Bacon County Commissioners
mailing address P.O. Box 356
city or town Alma **state** GA **zip code** 31510
e-mail (optional) N/A

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

Name of Property: Bacon County School
City or Vicinity: Alma
County: Bacon
State: Georgia
Photographer: James R. Lockhart
Negative Filed: Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Date Photographed: April 2007

Description of Photograph(s):

Number of photographs: 26

1. Main or east façade of the school; photographer facing northwest.
2. Main or east façade of the school; photographer facing west.
3. Main or east façade of the school; photographer facing west.
4. Main or east façade of the school; photographer facing west.
5. Main or east façade of the school; photographer facing west.
6. Main façade, central portion; photographer facing west.
7. East façade of northern end pavilion; photographer facing west.
8. Main façade and north end pavilion; photographer facing southwest.
9. Main façade and north end pavilion; photographer facing southwest.
10. West elevation of building; photographer facing east.
11. West elevation of building; photographer facing northeast.
12. South elevation of the auditorium; photographer facing north.
13. South and east elevations of the building; photographer facing northwest.
14. South and west elevations of the building; photographer facing northeast.
15. South elevation of the south end pavilion; photographer facing north.
16. Interior office; photographer facing west.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

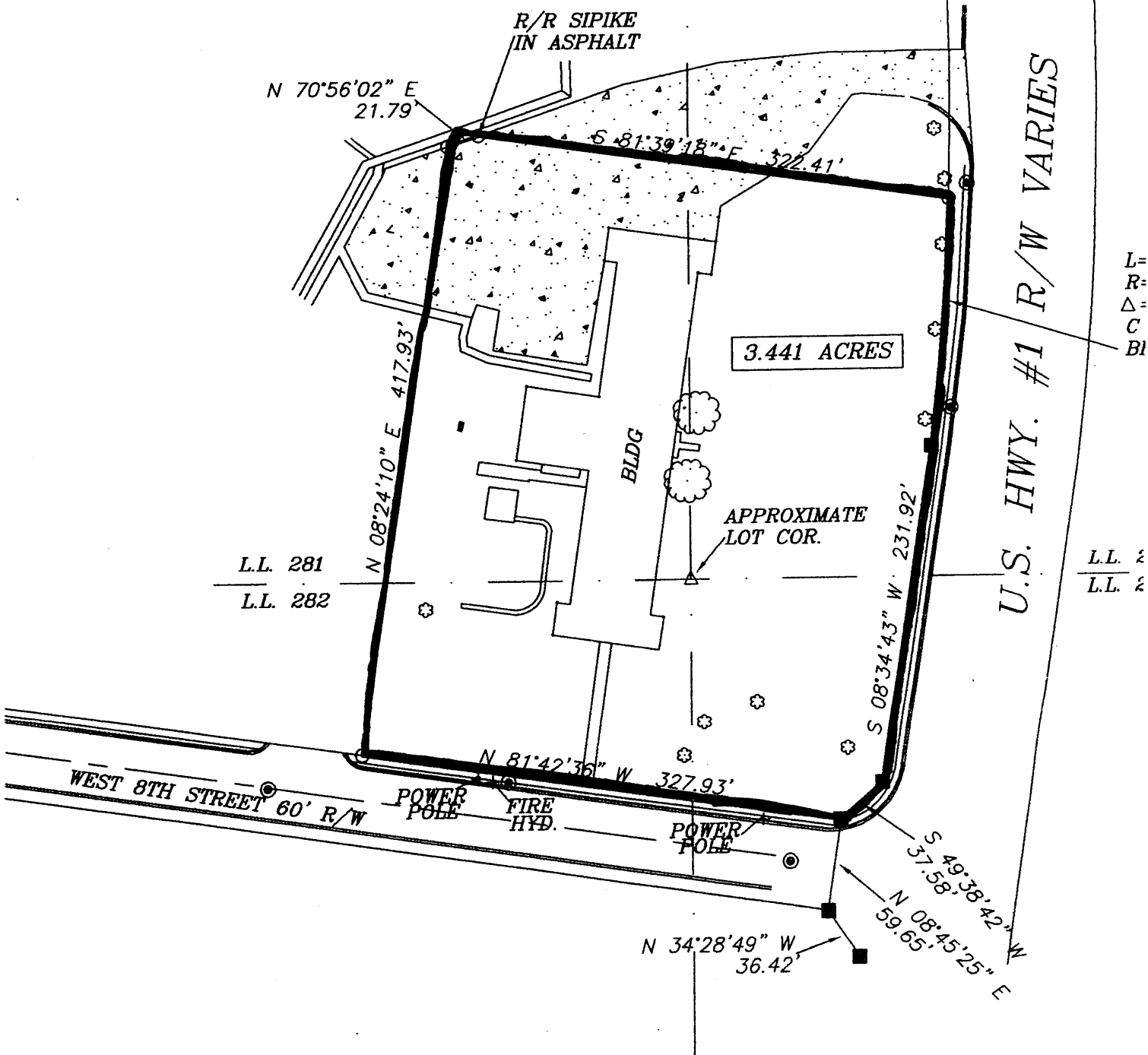
Photographs

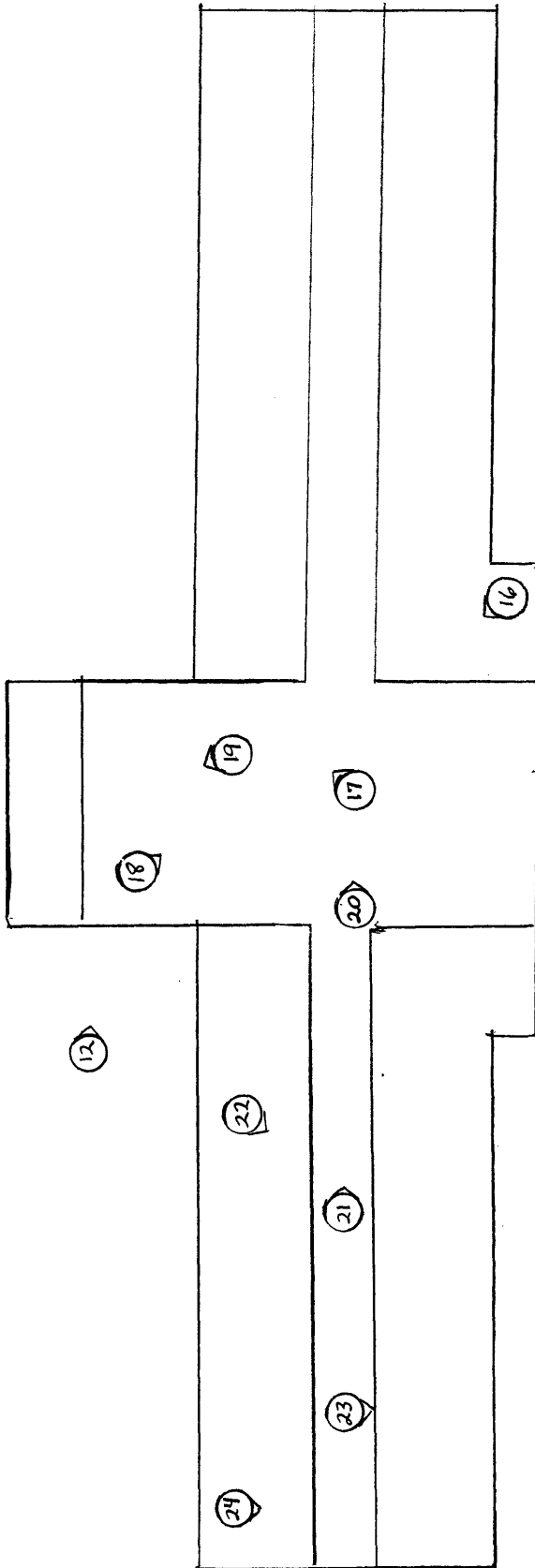
17. Corridor in central block; photographer facing northwest.
18. View in auditorium; photographer facing northeast.
19. View facing stage in auditorium; photographer facing west.
20. View up stairs to second floor; photographer facing north.
21. View in corridor of south wing; photographer facing north.
22. View in classroom; photographer facing southeast.
23. View into classrooms; photographer facing east.
24. View in classroom; photographer facing east.
25. View in upstairs classroom; photographer facing northwest.
26. View in upstairs classroom; photographer facing southwest.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)

Bacon County Elementary School
Bacon County, Georgia
National Register Map/Plat Map

National Register Boundary: **——**
 North: ↑
 Scale: 1" = 100'
 Drawn by: Everett Tomberlin





**Bacon County Elementary School
Bacon County, Georgia
First Floor Plan**

North: ↑

Scale: Not to Scale

Drawn by: Henry Kight

Photograph/Direction of View: Ⓢ

10

9

8

7

6

4

3

2

12

22

5

1

21

23

24

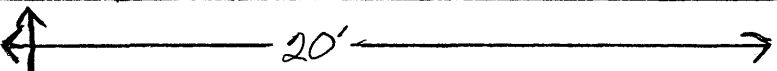
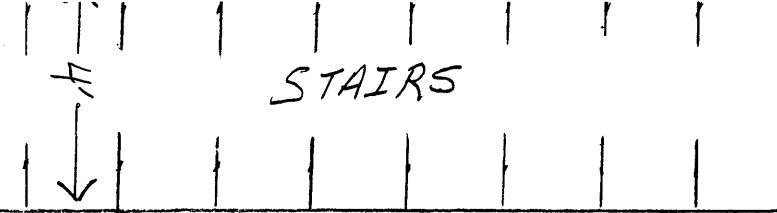
15

13

11

14

STAIRS



Bacon County Elementary School
Bacon County, Georgia
Second Floor Plan
 North: ↑
 Scale: Not to Scale
 Drawn by: Henry Kight
 Photograph/Direction of View: Ⓞ

N ↑

.82

26

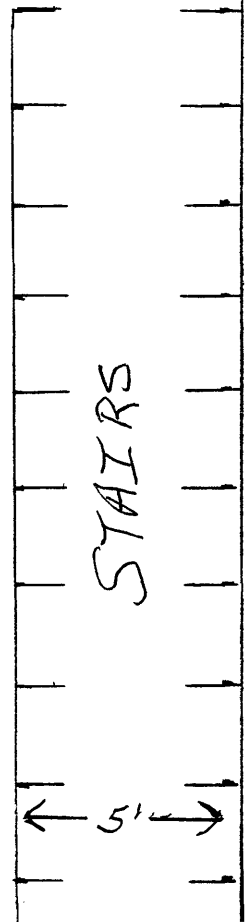
21'

UPSTAIRS
CLASS ROOM

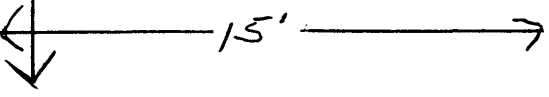
44'

BALCONY

MAP # 2



STAIRS



.81

25

27'

UPSTAIRS
CLASS ROOM