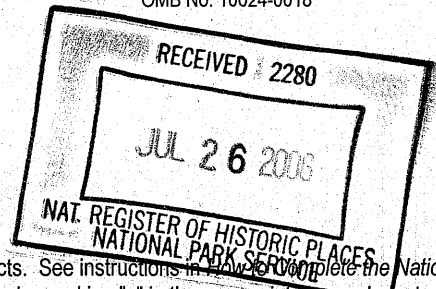


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *NPS Form 10-900a* 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 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Cato District No. 4 School  
Other name/site number 037-0000-0028

2. Location

Street & number Intersection of 200th St. & 720th Ave.  not for publication  
City or town Cato  vicinity  
State Kansas Code KS County Crawford Code 037 Zip code 66711

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.)

Patricia Zolner DSHPO 5/22/06  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Kansas State Historical Society

State or 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 commenting 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):

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

9.6.06

Cato District No. 4 School  
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas  
County and State

**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	
2		buildings
	1	sites
		structures
		objects
2	1	total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

Historic Publis Schools of Kansas

**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)

Vernacular

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: limestone

Walls: limestone

sandstone

Roof: composite

Other:

**Narrative Description**

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

Cato District No. 4 School  
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- 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 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.)

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

#### Period of Significance

1869-1955

#### Significant Dates

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Unknown

### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Cato District No. 4 School  
Name of Property

Crawford County, Kansas  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 1.8 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	5	3	4	6	4	1	0	4	1	7	0	0	7	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

2

Zone		Easting				Northing								

3

Zone		Easting				Northing								

4

Zone		Easting				Northing								

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 Susie Stelle  
Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Date April 2005  
Street & number 602 West Martin Telephone 620-232-6944  
City or town Pittsburg State KS Zip code 66762

**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 SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

Name Cato Christian Church c/o Susie Stelle  
Street & number 602 West Martin Telephone 620-232-6944  
City or town Pittsburg State KS Zip code 66762

**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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National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Cato District No. 4 School  
Crawford County

Section number 7 Page 1

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**Architectural Description**

Cato School District No. 4 is located in the community of Cato, in Lincoln Township, Crawford County. The schoolhouse is located northwest of the intersection of 200th Street and 720th Avenue, about 0.5 mile south of the Bourbon County line. The school was constructed in 1869 and classes were held there until 1955. Also on the property are a contributing outhouse and the non-contributing foundation of a reconstructed log cabin.

**Exterior**

The schoolhouse is rectangular in form, measuring 35 ft by 26 ft, and consists of a single room. The building's foundation and walls are constructed of limestone laid in regular courses with Portland or concrete mortar. Sandstone is used for the lintels above the windows and doors, the window sills, and the door thresholds. The gabled roof has a 7/12 pitch and is covered with composite asphalt shingles. A small brick chimney is situated at the center of the roof's ridge.

The front façade faces east. Two doorways are symmetrically placed on the façade. Temporary wood and corrugated sheet metal doors serve to secure the building since the original doors are no longer present. Centered above the doors is the remnant of a large metal sign used for the state's centennial celebration in 1961. Centered in the gable is a sandstone block inscribed with the date, "1869." In the peak of the gable is an electrical outlet where an outdoor light fixture once hanged. There is presently an 8 ft by 4 ft poured concrete porch on this façade. There are four concrete steps on its south side, two on its east side, and three on its north side. The construction of the concrete porch post-dates a 1926 image, which shows a plank porch. Prior to that, a 1908 class photo shows a large stone slab and a small concrete pad that served as landings.

The south façade has three evenly spaced windows centered in the wall. They are six-over-six light sash windows and the window openings are covered with wire intruder screens. The rear, or west, façade contains no openings or details of note. The north façade is identical to the south with three six-over-six windows. Just to the east of the middle and west windows are concrete buttresses supporting the wall.

**Interior**

The interior contains many original features. The wood floor and trim are all intact. The walls are covered with a simple wainscoting of horizontal boards from the window sills down and with plaster from there up. The plaster is in poor condition. Only one slate blackboard remains on the east wall between the two doors. The ceiling is covered with beadboard. Hanging from the ceiling are two small globe light fixtures added after the turn-of-the-century. All of the wood trim has been painted repeatedly over the years. In the center of the room is a large cast iron stove. It is marked with "Hot Blast No. 627." The stove is surrounded by a decorative, pressed-tin surround measuring 142 inches in circumference. The surround would have served to protect the children from the hot stove and to dissipate its heat.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Cato District No. 4 School  
Crawford County**

Section number 7 Page 2

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Only minor alterations have been made to the interior. Immediately behind the stove is a square column, which does not appear to be original. A 4-ft high partition, or half-wall, was added across the west end of the room after the school closed in 1955 when the building was used for community functions. Neither of the desks nor other furnishings are original.

**Other Features and Outbuildings**

Outside the school, a cast iron well pump sits just to the north. It is marked with "Hayes Pump and Planter Co.", "Galva, ILL, US" and "P278." Its handle is missing. Further north of the school, along the edge of the school yard, is one of the outhouses. It is a wooden structure, painted white with a shed roof sloping from front to back. It houses two toilet pits. There were probably two outhouses present at one time, one for the girls and one for the boys. One historical photograph shows a coal shed behind the school, to the southwest. Near the end of the school's existence, a teacher's garage was situated south of the school.

To the north and slightly east of the schoolhouse are the remains of the limestone foundation and chimney of a reconstruction log cabin. This cabin was built on the school grounds as part of Crawford County's celebration of the state's centennial in 1961. A small concrete slab with memorial plaque was placed in the ground in front of the foundation. It reads, "This Cato Memorial is Dedicated to the First Settlers of Crawford County." Because the date of the Centennial celebration falls outside the period of significance, the cabin foundation and its memorial marker are considered non-contributing.

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Continuation Sheet

Cato District No. 4 School  
Crawford County

Section number 8 Page 3

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**Statement of Significance**

The Cato School District No. 4 is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the history of public schools in Kansas, and under Criterion C as a good example of a vernacular stone one-room school dating to the 1860s. The historical context for public schools of Kansas has been detailed in the Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF), *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*. The Cato School is an example of the country school property type dating from the early statehood period (1861-1880). The school maintains a high degree of integrity and has undergone very little alteration over its 86-year period of use.

**Historical Background**

Cato is the earliest town in what later became Crawford County. It is located in Lincoln Township one-half mile from the Bourbon County line. In 1854, John Rogers settled in the area because he felt Ft. Scott was becoming too crowded. Rogers opened a store one day's ride south of Ft. Scott. Rogers partnered with Peter Smith who took over the store after Rogers was killed while on furlough from the Civil War. Shortly after, Smith began a brickworks and built a new brick store. He also supplied brick to the growing village. Enough settlers had come to Cato that by 1858 a post office was opened. Cato claims many other Crawford County firsts. The first fraternal lodge in the county was organized in Cato. Cato also claims the first grist and saw mill south of Ft. Scott was built there. According to Polk's state gazetteer, Cato's population was estimated at 150. At its peak, Cato was home to two general stores, two shoemakers, two physicians, a Baptist Church, a Church of God, a grist and flour mill, and a blacksmith. Cato never grew into a town of significant size because the Kansas City, Fort Scott & Gulf Railroad bypassed the town, choosing a route several miles to the west.

**School History**

In 1858, the first school was held in a log structure west of the present school, on property of early resident, Chad Brown. Mr. Emery Condit was its first teacher. By 1867, Dr. Charles H. Strong, a physician from Ohio, moved to Cato and began a subscription school. Dr. Strong also served as the first County Superintendent of Public Instruction. He was responsible for laying out the county's school districts and oversaw the building of the early schoolhouses. He also was elected the Clerk of District Court and founded the town of Girard.

The stone schoolhouse at District No. 4 was built in 1869. There are few records about the first few years, but the earliest report to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction was submitted for the 1875/76 school year. It shows two schools in operation for District No. 4: the public school and the private school begun by Dr. Strong. Enrollment for each was about equal with 24 and 20 students, respectively. That report also notes that the stone schoolhouse was valued at \$1000. Of the 99 schoolhouses in the county that year, only two were stone.

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Continuation Sheet

Cato District No. 4 School  
Crawford County

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The following school year (1876/77), the private school had closed and the superintendent's report shows that the public school enrollment had more than doubled to 52 taught by two teachers. This suggests that the public school had absorbed the private students and teacher. By the 1878/79 year, the school had returned to just one teacher.

The Cato School served generations of the same families over its lengthy existence. The last classes at the school were held during the 1954/55 school year. No classes were held for three years before the residents voted in 1958 to disorganize the district and consolidate with nearby Arcadia. The school was sold to the Cato Christian Church with the provision that it be used for church or community purposes. When no longer used for those purposes, it was to revert to Crawford County District No. 112.

#### Architectural Significance

The Cato School is an example of a country or one-room school, as defined in the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* Multiple Property Documentation Form. It exemplifies the Early Kansas Schools (pre 1900) type. For early settlements, the schoolhouse reflected the permanence sought by the residents and in part used to entice new settlers. Many rural areas lacked access to standard school plan books. Schools of this period were vernacular in both form and materials. The early rural schools were a simple rectangular form with a gable roof. They typically had three windows on each side and a brick chimney in the center or rear of the roof. The Cato school maintains all the above characteristics.

The Cato School meets the registration requirements set forth in the *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* MPDF. The school served as school facility for more than 80 years. It has never been moved and maintains its rural settings. Very few modifications have been made to its setting. The concrete buttresses were added at an unknown date to support the north wall, but these are not visible from the road. The school retains its original design, materials, and workmanship. The exterior maintains its original appearance with the exception of the buttresses and metal sign, which is removable. The interior design and materials are very much consistent with the original construction and in many instances are the original materials. An historic stove and a slate chalkboard are still present. The half-partition in the rear is the only interior modification other than the school's eventual electrification.



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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cato District No. 4 School  
Crawford County

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### Bibliography

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Home Authors, *Twentieth Century History and Biographical Record of Crawford County, Kansas*. Lewis Publishing: Chicago, 1905.

"Old School Stands Silent." *Pittsburg Headlight-Sun*. May 29, 1973.

"Old Stone School Building Sold, Cato District No. 4 Becomes History." *Pittsburg Headlight*. May 13, 1958.

*Pittsburg Daily Headlight*. May 19, 1926. [Semi-centennial Edition]

Polk, Ralph L. *Kansas State Gazetteer and Business Directory, Volume I*. R.L. Polk and Company: Detroit, 1878.

Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1876-1879.

"A Romance of a Big Deer Hunt, How Girard was First Located by Hunting Party," *Topeka Daily Capital*. April 19, 1908.

"Tiny Cato has many 'firsts'," *Ft. Scott Tribune*. November 1, 2001.

"Towns of Crawford County," *Girard Press*. January 8, 1880.

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Cato District No. 4 School  
Crawford County

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

A tract of land commencing ten rods West of the Southeast corner of the Northeast Quarter of Section Twenty-six (26), Township Twenty-seven (27), Range Twenty-four (24), East of the Sixth Principal Meridian, and running thence West twenty rods, thence North sixteen rods, thence East twenty rods, thence South sixteen rods to the place of beginning.

**Boundary Justification**

This is the legal boundary of the parcel containing the school.

**Photographs**

The following information is consistent for all photographs:

1. Cato District No. 4 School
2. Crawford Co., Kansas
3. Photograph by Patrick Zollner
4. November 17, 2005
5. Digital image archived at Kansas State Historical Society

The following information is specific to each photograph:

<u>Photo #</u>	<u>Description of View</u>
1.	View from the east.
2.	View from the southeast.
3.	View from the south.
4.	View of rear elevation from the southwest
5.	View from the north.
6.	View of date block in front gable end from the east.
7.	View of outhouse from the south.
8.	View of interior from the northeast.
9.	View of interior from the northwest.
10.	Window detail from the south.



