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Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Nomination Form

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 any 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 Monroe Elementary School Historic District

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 3200 Pioneer Avenue SE not for publication _____

city or town Cedar Rapids vicinity _____

state Iowa code IA county Linn code 113 zip code 52403-3651

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide X locally. (____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Shankin

4 SEPT 2015

Signature of certifying official

Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
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 or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

10.23.15

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 count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
1		sites
		structures
3	3	objects
5	5	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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

RECREATION & CULTURE/Outdoor recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

RECREATION & CULTURE/Outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof

other METAL/STEEL

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 a 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

1961-1965

Significant Dates

1961

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Brown & Healey

Primary Location of Additional Data:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 7.89 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15_	614251E__	6467443N__	3	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	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 Alexa McDowell, Architectural Historian email akaymcd@hotmail.com

organization AKAY Consulting date 10/27/2014

street & number 103 W. Island Avenue telephone 515-491-5432

city or town Minneapolis state MN zip code 55401-1509

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Cedar Rapids Community School District

street & number 907 15th Street NE telephone 319-558-2000

city or town Cedar Rapids state IA zip code 52404-1700

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Narrative Description

Site Description

Monroe Elementary Historic District is located in Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa (Figure 1). Situated in southeast Iowa, Cedar Rapids (pop. 126,326) is the largest city in the southeast quadrant of the state and ranks second among Iowa's cities overall; exceeded only by the state capital of Des Moines with a population of 203,433.¹ Cedar Rapids covers an area of some 70.80 square miles and is bisected by the north-to-south running I-380 and the east-to-west running U.S. Highway 30 (portions of which are part of the historic Lincoln Highway route).²

Figure 1. Map of Iowa – 2014



(SOURCE: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cedar+Rapids,+IA>. Accessed 07/20/2014)

The location of Cedar Rapids, Iowa is indicated.

Monroe Elementary Historic District is located in the southeast section of Cedar Rapids (Figure 2), in a residential area with houses dating to a similar construction period as that of the school (1961). Like much of the city, the area's topography is hilly. The neighborhood is further characterized by curving roads lined with a variety of mid-20th century houses including numerous small, post-war Ranch-style houses. Mature, deciduous trees create a vegetative canopy.

1 "Iowa's Largest Cities," *Quad City Times*, February 10, 2011. Online at http://qctimes.com/iowa-s-largest-cities/article_c5d8850a-3556-11e0-ba3b-001cc4c002e0.html. Accessed 07/25, 2014.

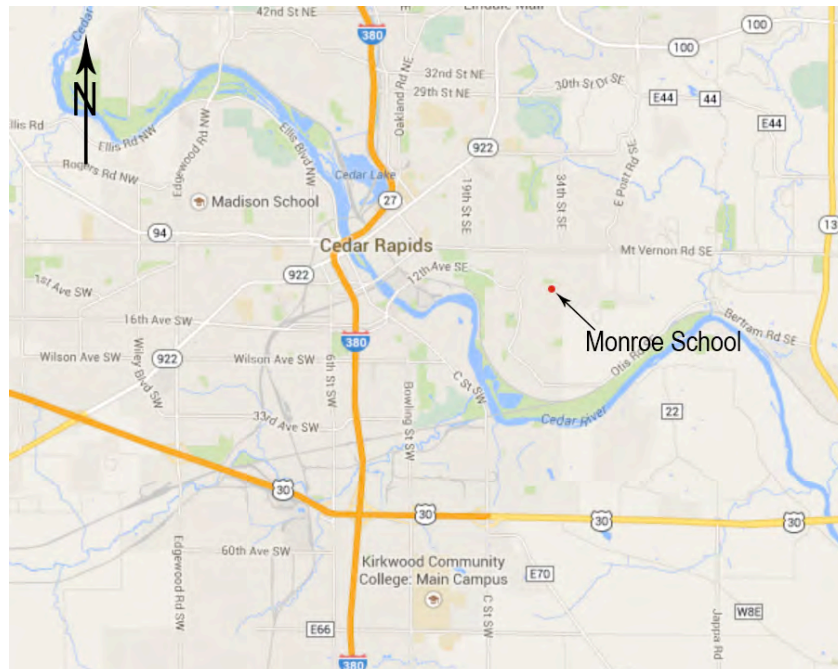
2 <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/19/1912000.html>. Accessed 07/25/2014.

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Figure 2. Map of Cedar Rapids – 2014



(SOURCE: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cedar+Rapids,+IA>. Accessed 07/20/2014)

The location of Monroe Elementary Historic District is indicated.

The school property is sited on a 7.89-acre site on the north side of Pioneer Avenue SE. Although the site itself is generally level, Pioneer Avenue slopes down from west to east - the site being elevated above street grade at its southwest corner. The property boundaries are marked by a line of trees on the west, a stand of mature timber on the north, a chain link fence on the east, and Pioneer Avenue on the south (Figure 3).

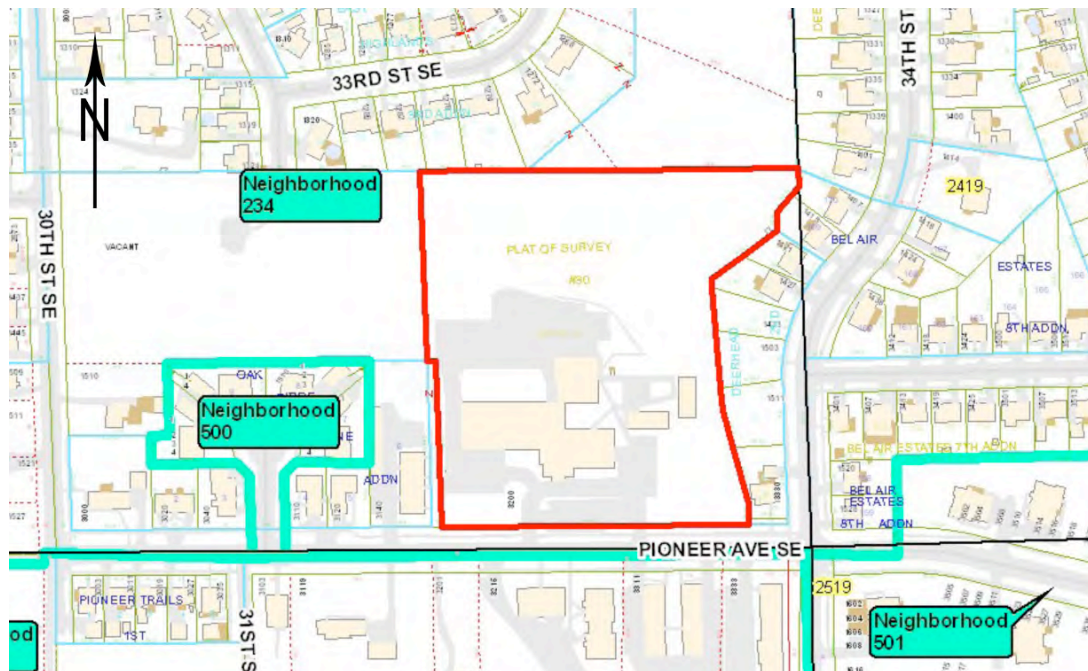
The school building is situated near the south edge of the site, with a paved driveway and parking lot situated between the building and the roadway. The driveway passes along the front of the building to exit back onto Pioneer Avenue or continue north along the west side of the building to connect to the paved portion of the school playground. Paved parking is also located east of the building. Two, c.1995 temporary classrooms (counted as non-contributing buildings) are situated east of the school building (Figure 6).

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Figure 3. Assessor's Parcel Map – 2014



(SOURCE: http://www.cedar-rapids.info/assessor/pmc/query_results.asp?num=3200&street=pioneer. Accessed 07/23/2014)

This assessor's parcel map notes the property boundaries.

The main school playground is located north of the school building. The playground is comprised of three primary sections: a large, paved playground, the sand playground with equipment, and the larger, grassy school yard, which extends to the property lines on the east, north and west (Figure 4). The playground equipment includes two historic basketball hoops and one historic piece of play equipment (counted as contributing objects) formed in the shape of a fire engine (Figure 5). Three non-historic sets of equipment are counted as non-contributing objects.

A city park known as Monroe Park is located adjacent to the schoolyard at the northwest corner of the school property.

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Figure 4. (Image 0004) Monroe Elementary, Site View – 2014



View of the school site, looking southwest from near the northeast property line.

Figure 5. (Image 0006) Monroe Elementary, Historic Playground Equipment – 2014



This fire engine-shaped piece of play equipment is original to the property and is counted as a contributing object.

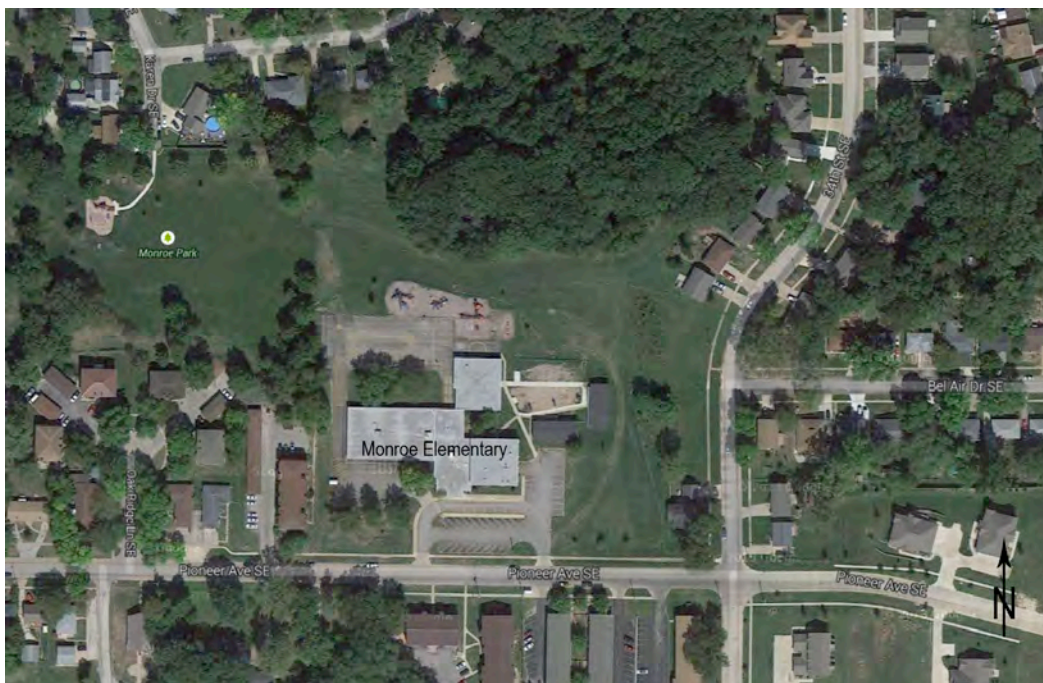
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A second, paved playground is situated south of the building, adjacent to the western-most classrooms, which were designed as kindergarten rooms; there is direct access from those two classrooms to that playground. Additional green space is located in the “L” on the building’s north side (Figure 6) and the courtyard between Sections A and C (Figure 7) created by the footprint of the school building.

Figure 6. Aerial View of Monroe Elementary Site – 2014



(SOURCE: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cedar+Rapids,+IA>. Accessed 07/20/2014)

This aerial view of the historic district provides a good sense of the scope of the grounds and relationship of the site to the residential neighborhood the school was constructed to serve. The aerial also illustrates the school building’s relationship to Pioneer Avenue (south of the building) and to Monroe Park to the northwest (marked by the white dot).

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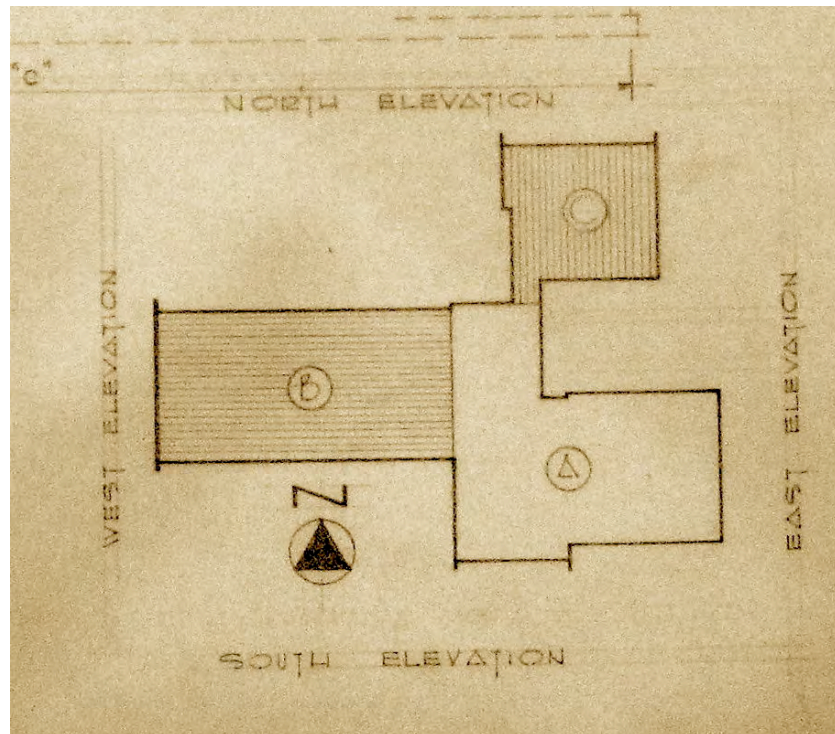
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Exterior

Monroe Elementary is a mid-20th century construction, its exterior form, decorative elements, window configuration, interior arrangement, and interior finishes are reflective of prevailing design approaches specific to educational facilities of the construction era.

The building is a one-story, brick-faced, reinforced concrete and steel beam structure on a concrete slab. The building form is defined by a flat roof, linear profile, and three, interconnected sections that, in plan view, read as an asymmetrical pinwheel. The building's visual character is strongly tied to that form.

Figure 7. Architect's Plan View - 1960



(SOURCE: Koehler History Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Brown & Healey Plans.)

The building's visual character is tied to the architect's utilization of three, interconnected sections that, in plan view, read as an asymmetrical pinwheel. On the interior, the plan facilitates the organization of functional spaces while on the exterior creating outdoor spaces at the points of intersection.

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Figure 8. (Image 0007) Monroe Elementary, Primary (South) Elevation - 2014



View of Monroe Elementary looking northwest from Pioneer Avenue. The canopy marks the primary entrance, with the Section B classroom wing stretching west from that point. The two-story block on the right houses the multi-purpose space, which includes the kitchen and boiler room.

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Figure 9. (Image 0010) Monroe Elementary, Rear (North) Elevation – 2014



View of the rear (north) of the school looking southeast from near the northwest property line showing the intersection of the Section B (at right) and Section C (left) classroom wings.

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10. (Image 0011) Monroe Elementary, North Elevation – 2014



The intersection of Sections B and C creates an L-shaped grassy play area, made accessible from the interior by the expansive fenestration and the series of pedestrian exits out of the classrooms.

As noted, Monroe is comprised of three, intersecting wings (Figure 7). Section A is dominated by the multi-purpose room (gymnasium, cafeteria, stage) but includes the kitchen, boiler room, and staff offices. Sections B and C house the classrooms, with nine classrooms in Section B and four in Section C.³

On the building exterior, the intersecting wings are visually autonomous, their placement relative to one another resulting in a visual differentiation of function and creation of exterior spaces such as the courtyard between Sections A and C.

Section A, located at the southeast corner of the building, is identifiable on the exterior by its increased height (dictated by its function as a multi-purpose room) and minimum use of fenestration (Figure 8). Like the building as a whole, Section A features a flat roof. In contrast to the remainder of the building Section A has no eave, merely a simple metal cornice running the perimeter. The boxy form of Section A is faced in

³ The historic plans drawn by Brown & Healey indicate that Section C was built to allow for future expansion on the east end.

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brick that exhibits variation in surface texture and color. Although predominately red-orange in color, the addition of bricks tending toward tones of brown and ochre add dimension. Variation in roughness likewise adds visual interest. The brick is laid in a common bond, with a typical raked joint.

No openings into Section A are found on the primary (south) elevation. Two pedestrian entrances are located on the east - one providing access into the kitchen and the other into the boiler room. Three irregularly spaced windows are located north of the entrances, all of similar size and featuring a three-light configuration. The horizontal orientation of the lights is in keeping with window configurations in the building as a whole. Three slatted vents are irregularly spaced in the upper wall near the cornice. The Section A windows are steel frame and they utilize a poured concrete sill.

Figure 11. (Image 0013) Monroe Elementary, Section A, North Elevation – 2014



Section A, which is dominated by the multi-purpose room, is windowless except for the north elevation. As seen here, a series of five 16-foot windows and a door with a window above punctuate the west half of the elevation.

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The north elevation of Section A features five tall, 16-foot by window sets punctuating the west half of the elevation (Figure 11). The windows are divided into six horizontal lights. A pedestrian entrance is located south of the series of windows. A four-light window, similar in configuration to the set of five, is located above the door. A small window, configured like those on the east elevation, is located south of the pedestrian entrance. All frames are steel and concrete sills are used on all.

The primary (south) entrance to the school building is also located in Section A. The entrance is marked by a flat-roofed canopy, which extends approximately 20-feet from the south wall plane. The awning is constructed of steel I-beams supported by four slim, steel posts (Figure 12). The metal cornice used in the balance of the building also runs along the edge of the canopy. A 1963 image (Figure 35) reveals that the canopy is not original to the building (its addition to the building is undetermined), but its appearance is in keeping with the historic character of the school, supporting the likelihood that it was added soon after the building's construction.

Figure 12. (Image 0008) Monroe Elementary, Canopy over Primary (South) Entrance – 2014



The primary entrance (Section A, south) is marked by this flat-roofed canopy. A 1963 image reveals that the canopy is not original to the building (examination of the construction bears that out), but its appearance, including the materials used, suggests that it was added soon after the building's construction.

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Fenestration of this portion of Section A is in keeping with that found throughout Sections B and C. Windows are arranged in large groupings of three or five, with alternating light configurations creating a rhythm along the elevation (Figure 13). The variation in configuration revolves around the placement of an operable awning window within the larger arrangement – alternating between the bottom of the configuration and near the top. As the architect’s plans document, all windows, in all sections of the building, are original; the sole alterations being replacement of some glazing with plexi-glass panels and removal of many of the interior screens.

Figure 13. (Image 0018) Monroe Elementary, Typical Windows – 2014



Seen from the interior, this stretch of windows is typical of those found throughout the building, not including the multi-purpose room. Windows are arranged in large groupings, with alternating light configurations creating a rhythm along the elevation. The variation in configuration revolves around the placement of an operable awning window within the larger arrangement – alternating between the bottom of the configuration and near the top. The historic windows remain intact throughout the building - the sole intervention being the minimal replacement of some glazing.

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Section B is a one-story, rectangular form with a flat roof and deep eave – exposed I-beams cantilever the extended eave (Figure 14). The section is brick-faced as described previously. The north and south elevations of Section B are dominated by the window configuration described above, with the west elevation being absent fenestration – a paired door provides entrance to the interior. The south elevation also employs a plain, brick wall, which floats away from the main wall plane (Figure 14). Its attachment to the outer edge of the overhang creates space for an enclosed entryway into the two kindergarten rooms at the west end of Section B.

Figure 14. (Image 0009) Monroe Elementary, Section B – 2014



In this view of Section B (south elevation) we see the L-shaped yard created by the intersection of the section with Section A, as well as the “floating” brick wall that creates an interior vestibule for the kindergarten classrooms located on either side of the vestibule.

Section C is a one-story, square form with a flat roof, deep eave supported by exposed I-beams, and brick-faced finish. Like Section B, the elevations of this section are dominated by windows, the configuration of which is typical of the building. An exterior entrance is located on the east end of the section.

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Significant to Sections B and C is that their placement relative to Section A purposefully creates exterior spaces: at the intersection of Section A and B on the south, an “L” is created, which becomes part of the outside play area for the kindergarten classrooms on that side of Section B; at the intersection of A, B and C an “L” shaped, grassy playground is created on the north; and at the intersection of A and C a courtyard is created.

Interior

The interior character of Monroe Elementary is created by the function-driven floor plan, including central corridors with flanking classrooms, the open space of the multi-purpose room, and the collection of office spaces (Figure 15). Also important to the building’s visual character are the numerous finish materials, including a variety of tiles used on the walls and in the bathrooms, the mounted wood panels in the administrative offices, the exposed brick, and an original (albeit non-historic) mural just inside the primary entryway.

As noted, Section A houses the multi-purpose room, kitchen, boiler, primary entry vestibule and hallway, and school offices.

The one and one-half story portion of Section A marks the location of the multi-purpose room (Figures 23 & 24). The space is spare and athletic in character with an exposed steel beam roof structure, tile floor, concrete block and glazed tile walls, and a raised stage on the south end. The space is well lit by the five, 16-foot windows on the north elevation.

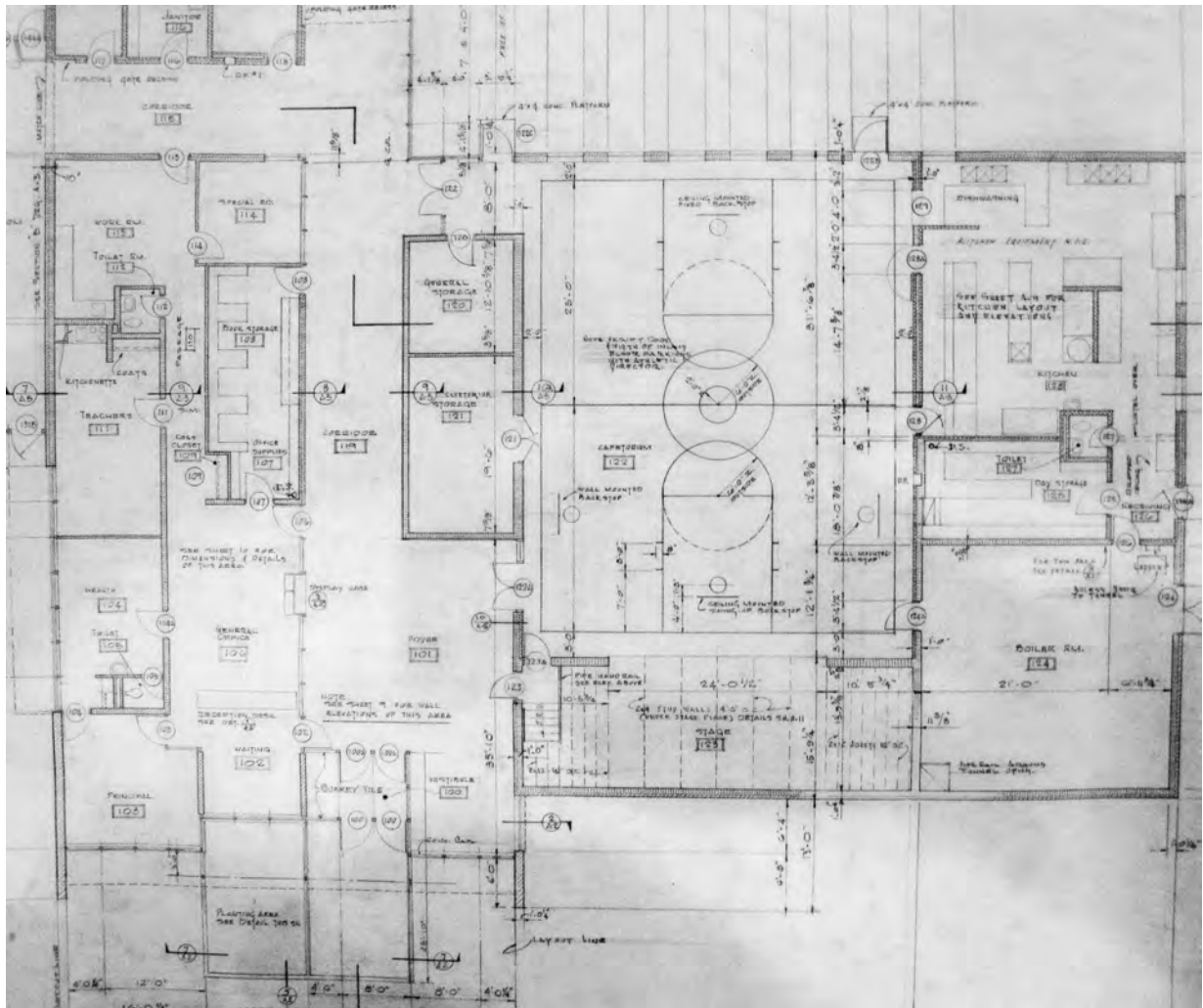
The kitchen is tiled (glazed tile on the walls and red quarry tile on the floor) with acoustical tile on the ceiling. Some kitchen equipment remains in place. The boiler room is typical of an unfinished mechanical space. Access to the kitchen and boiler room is made through doorways on the east wall of the multi-purpose room. Both the kitchen and boiler room also have exterior exits.

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Figure 15. Architect Floor Plan, Excerpt - 1960



(SOURCE: Brown & Healey floor plans on file at Koehler History Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

This excerpt from Brown & Healey's floor plan design shows Section A, with multi-purpose room, kitchen, and boiler room at right and primary entrance and staff offices at left.

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Figure 16. (Image 0023) Monroe Elementary, Section A, Multi-Purpose Space – 2014



The multi-purpose room features a dual-use (gym-cafeteria) space with a stage located on the west end (at left).

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Figure 17. (Image 0024) Monroe Elementary, Section A, Multi-Purpose Space – 2014



In this view looking to the southeast the impact of the 16-foot windows is apparent.

Access to the main hallway and school offices via the multi-purpose room is made from the east. The main hallway (Figures 18 & 19) is 12-feet wide with an approximately 10-foot ceiling. The hallway extends from the primary entrance on the south to its connection with Section C on the north. Just inside the main entry, a hand-painted mural covers the walls. Although the mural dates to 2007, its character is in keeping with the building's historic function as an elementary school.

Across the corridor from the mural, the west wall of the hallway is glazed to provide visual access between the activities of the hallway and the school offices. A small display case is located near the center of the glazed hallway. Further to the north, the east hallway wall is covered in floor-to-ceiling glazed, ceramic tile and the west hallway wall is brick. The hallway floor is covered in 12-inch tile (the present tile likely a replacement for the original asphalt tile noted in the architect's finish schedule) and the ceilings are acoustical tile.

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Figure 18. (Image 0014) Monroe Elementary, Section A, Main Hallway – 2014



View of the main hallway, looking south toward the primary entrance. The administrative offices are at right.

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Figure 19. (Image 0015) Monroe Elementary, Section A, Main Hallway – 2014



View of the main hallway, looking north from near the offices. Hallmarks of the building's historic visual character are the wide corridors, the variety of finish materials, and the expansive windows.

School offices are located just inside the primary entrance, on the west side of the main hallway. Offices in this area include a large administrative space, the principal's office, nurse's office, "therapist" office, a "faculty room," faculty lunchroom with historic oven and steel cabinets, "book room," "workroom," and a faculty restroom. The interiors utilize exposed brick, carpeted floors (non-historic), 9-inch asphalt tile flooring (historic), wood trim, solid core wood doors, storage fixtures, wood paneling, and 1-inch ceramic restroom tile.

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Figure 20. (Image 0016) Monroe Elementary, Section A, Administrative Office – 2014



View of the administrative office looking southeast toward the primary entrance.

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Figure 21. (Image 0017) Monroe Elementary, Section A, Principal's Office – 2014



View of the principal's office looking northwest.

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Section B, which houses classrooms, stretches west from Section A, the connection made via a corridor turning from A into B. The visual character of Section B is derived from the floor plan (central hallway flanked by classrooms), wall finishes, and large expanses of windows (Figure 22).

Figure 22. (Image 0019) Monroe Elementary, Typical Hallway – 2014



True throughout the building, the school's hallways are colorfully finished in a mix of materials ranging from wood to a variety of tiles. The cubbies with hooks running the length of the corridor are detailed on the original design plans.

Nine classrooms are located in Section B – four on the south and five on the north. Although two classrooms on the south side of the section are larger, all classrooms are consistent in layout and general appearance (Figures 23 & 24). All rooms feature exposed I-beams with mounted fluorescent ceiling light fixtures, painted concrete block walls, built-in storage space (shelves and/or cubbies), white boards or cork boards, 9-inch asphalt tile flooring, one door leading into the hallway, and a large bank of windows. Each room is equipped with a long counter complete with a functioning sink and each has wall-mounted heating units. The two kindergarten rooms located in the southwest corner each have a single-stool, bathroom with pink tile and direct access to the south playground.

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Figure 23. (Image 0020) Monroe Elementary, Typical Classroom – 2014



Classrooms are nearly identical throughout the building – only the kindergarten classrooms (of which this is one), varies in size. Each classroom features wall-mounted heating units under a large expanse of windows, 9-inch tile floors, exposed I-beam structure with mounted florescent lighting, a small storage closet, wall-mounted boards (e.g. cork or white), and a counter with a sink. This view is looking southwest.

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Figure 24. (Image 0021) Monroe Elementary, Typical Classroom – 2014



View of the same classroom, looking southeast.

Section C, which houses four classrooms, stretches north from Section A, the connection made via a corridor turning from A into C. Like Section B, the visual character of Section C is derived from the floor plan (central hallway flanked by classrooms), wall finishes, and large expanses of windows. Also like Section B, all classrooms are consistent in layout and general appearance, with exposed I-beams, mounted fluorescent ceiling light fixtures, painted concrete block walls, built-in storage space (shelves or cubbies), white boards or cork boards, 9-inch asphalt tile floors, one door leading into the hallway, and a large bank of windows. Each room is equipped with a long counter complete with a functioning sink and each has wall-mounted heating units.

Two large restrooms, one for boys and one for girls, are also located in Section C. The bathrooms are identical in plan, with the girls finished in pink tile (solid on the walls and patterned on the floor) and the boys in blue. A janitorial closet is situated between the two restrooms, with the workroom associated with the school offices located immediately across the hallway.

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Statement of Historic Integrity

Monroe Elementary Historic District, which remained in use through 2011, retains a very high level of historic integrity as it relates to all seven aspects of integrity: location, setting, association, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling.

Because Monroe Elementary Historic District remains on its original site, the level of integrity as it relates to location is high. The school is sited on a 7.89-acre parcel chosen to serve the residential neighborhood within which it is located. Although no longer functioning as a school, the building and its site remain a visual landmark in the neighborhood.

Integrity of setting is also very high. The large, treed site upon which the school is located was designed to provide space for the outdoor activities of grade school children, with a small paved playground located on the south side of the building near the kindergarten classrooms, a large paved playground on the north, and grassy play areas stretching outward to the property boundaries. The retention of these elements of the original site, including vegetation, support integrity of setting. Further, the retention of three historic pieces of playground equipment, including two basketball hoops and one fire engine-shaped climbing object, enhances integrity of setting.

Monroe Elementary Historic District was constructed in a residential neighborhood with houses dating to a similar construction era as the school (1961). Although there is later construction represented in the area, the neighborhood remains residential with a high percentage of homes dating to the mid-20th century. With their strong association with the impact of the post-war GI Bill, the dominant presence of small, Ranch-style houses in the neighborhood contribute significantly to the high level of historic integrity as it relates to association.

As a resource considered eligible for registration under Criterion C, integrity of design, workmanship, and materials are of paramount concern and the integrity of each of those is very high. Exterior details and materials remain nearly fully intact, significant in that their retention underscores the building's 20th century Modern character. This is particularly true in regard to the flat roof, pinwheel plan, fenestration, and general sense of linearity.

Likewise, the school's interior retains a very high level of integrity of design and materials, with no apparent alterations made. Retention of the historic floor plan, the functional and physical relationship between sections, wide corridors, the variety of finish materials (tile, brick, wood trim and paneling), and the fenestration result in a very high level of historic integrity of design, workmanship, and materials.

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Monroe Elementary also retains a high level of integrity as it relates to feeling. Because the school retains a very high level of integrity as it relates to the previous qualities, visitors from the Period of Significance would readily recognize the building today and experience it much as they would have historically.

Because Monroe Elementary was one of seven elementary schools constructed by the Cedar Rapids School District as a result of the 1959 bond referendum, it is important to consider its level of historic integrity relative to the other six properties. As a “twin” to Monroe Elementary (and designed by the same architectural firm of Brown & Healey), the historic integrity of Madison Elementary (Figure 25) is of particular interest. Like Monroe, Madison school retains a high level of historic integrity, although it is not in its original, 1961 form. In 1965 additions were made to Madison, with classroom space and a dedicated gymnasium added. Even though those changes fall just outside the Secretary of the Interior’s recommended 50-year window, they should be considered historic and reflective of the continued impact of the post-war baby boom, which necessitated additions and alterations in order to meet the demands of a student population that continued to increase through the closing years of the 1960s. However, integrity of design and materials were adversely impacted by the late 20th century renovation of the interior that consolidated three classrooms to make a school library. As a result, Monroe Elementary retains a higher level of historic integrity related to design and materials than does Madison Elementary.

The level of historic integrity of the remaining 1961 elementary schools is also less than that of Monroe Elementary. As noted in Table 3., four of the 1961 buildings no longer function as schools and the changes made to transition to the new uses have impacted historic integrity to varying degrees. The historic visual character of both Eisenhower (Figure 26) and Adams (Figure 27) schools has been significantly altered by non-sympathetic additions to the historic buildings. While adaptive re-use of Grant (Figure 28) and Fillmore (Figure 29) has had less impact on the historic exteriors than either Eisenhower or Adams, interior spaces and finishes have been adversely impacted by the change in function.

Truman Elementary (Figure 30), designed by Crites, Peiffer & McConnell, remains a good and important example of mid-20th century, school architecture – in this case, representative of the work of that particular firm. Some alteration of the rear, one-story sections of the school have been undertaken and a 1999 news article indicates the building received “extensive renovations” in c.1990. However, like Monroe Elementary, a case for listing on the National Register could likely be made for Truman school. Each of the two buildings represents the design approach taken by their respective architectural firms in response to the same set of construction guidelines related to functional needs, stylistic influences, and budget constraints. The visual character of each is very different and both contribute to our understanding of the post-war baby boom impact on the resources of the Cedar Rapids School District.

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Figure 25. Madison Elementary School – 2014



View of the primary elevation.



View of the classroom wing showing fenestration that is the same as used for Monroe Elementary.

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Figure 26. Eisenhower Elementary School (now St. Pius X Learning Center) – 2014



View of the primary elevation.



View of the rear elevations.

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Figure 27. Adams Elementary School (now Isaac Newton Christian Academy) – 2014



View of the primary elevation.



View of the primary elevation and secondary elevations.

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Figure 28. Grant Elementary School (now Five Seasons Learning Centers) – 2014



View of the primary elevation.



View of the classroom wing.

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Figure 29. Fillmore Elementary School (now Abbe Center for Community Mental Health) – 2014



View of the primary elevation.



View of the classroom wing.

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Figure 30. Truman Elementary School – 2014



View of the primary elevation.



View of the rear elevation with classrooms.

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FUTURE PLANS

An historic rehabilitation of Monroe Elementary School is currently in the planning stages. The plan involves reuse of the resource for mixed income, family housing. This proposed function will allow for the conversion of classroom spaces to housing without subdivision of the historic classroom spaces while retaining historic windows, corridors, and finishes. Some alteration of the multi-purpose room will be undertaken while retaining a sense of its historic dimensions. The new function will allow use of the historic play areas, including the fire engine-shaped piece of playground equipment.

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8. Narrative Statement of Significance

Monroe Elementary is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The resource is locally significant in association with the history of education in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, particularly as a representative of the impact of the post-World War II baby boom on the city's education system.

Beginning in the late 1940s, the U.S. began feeling the positive effects of an economy that was coming back to life after the economic devastation of the Great Depression. The trend toward positive economic growth was the force behind changing attitudes and rising expectations in the postwar years that fueled suburban growth, home ownership, increased investment in education, and the phenomenal rise in births known as the baby boom. As described by James T. Patterson, "The baby boom was in some ways cause as well as consequence of prosperity in the postwar years." The baby boom was a significant factor in the surge in suburban development, a rise in consumerism and, most relevant in this case, the increased funding for education that included increased school construction.⁴

The school district in Cedar Rapids certainly felt the impact of the baby boom with a postwar population increase of 9% between 1950 and 1960 and an approximate 70% increase in school district enrollment between 1948 and 1959.⁵ To accommodate the explosion in enrollment, the district undertook three bond issues during the period from 1954 through 1964 for the purpose of funding new construction or additions to existing buildings. Monroe Elementary was constructed in 1961, funded by a 1959 school bond issue necessitated by the system-wide overcrowding that result from the postwar boom. The building is one of seven elementary schools constructed in 1961 that remain today; only three of which remain in use by the Cedar Rapids school district (Table 2).

Monroe Elementary is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C. The resource is locally significant as a very well preserved example of a mid-20th century, postwar elementary school. The Cedar Rapids architectural firm of Brown & Healey followed the prevailing national trend toward single-story, horizontal massing while taking advantage of postwar materials like steel framing and plate glass. Designing with a single-story was determined to be more economical, with savings made from the lack of stairs, the ability to use lighter foundations and supporting exterior walls, and a reduction in the amount of structural steel required.

Further evidence of the impact of nationwide trends on Monroe Elementary is the architect's use of long and wide corridors, lower ceiling heights, expansive use of glazing, exposed trusses, deep overhangs, dedicated

4 James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 61.

5 The Case for a \$4,990,000 School Expansion and Improvement Plan for Cedar Rapids," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 27, 1959, p16.

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playgrounds for the kindergarten classes, and exterior spaces that connect to interior function. Further, the school is awash in color – ceramic tile in many hues line the building’s corridors. Influenced by changing ideas at the national level regarding architecture and education resulted in a design for Monroe Elementary with a clearly postwar identity.

Because it retains a very high level of historic integrity as it relates to all seven aspects of integrity and due to the varying levels of diminished integrity (see integrity discussion) found in each of the other 1961 elementary school buildings, Monroe Elementary is the strongest representative of the elementary schools constructed in that year.

The Period of Significance for Monroe Elementary is 1961 through 1965, which marks the year the building was placed in service through the Secretary of the Interior’s recommended 50-year window. The period covers the early years of the school’s history, which is most representative of the impact felt by the post-war baby boom.

The property is comprised of a total of 10 resources – five contributing and five non-contributing. The school is counted as a contributing building with three historic pieces of playground equipment (two basketball hoops and one fire engine-shaped piece of play equipment) counted as contributing objects. The site is counted as a contributing resource. Two non-historic, temporary classrooms are counted as non-contributing buildings and three pieces of non-historic play equipment are counted as non-contributing objects.

The Significant Date for Monroe Elementary is 1961, the year the building was placed in service.

Historical Background

The Post-War Baby Boom

Beginning in the late 1940s, the U.S. began feeling the positive effects of an economy on the rebound after the economic devastation wrought by the Great Depression. The trend toward positive economic growth was the force behind changing attitudes and rising expectations in the postwar years that fueled suburban growth, home ownership, consumerism, increased investment in education, and the phenomenal rise in births known as the baby boom. The prosperity of the late 1940s gained momentum in the 1950s and rocketed in the 1960s, with the United States experiencing the greatest prosperity it had ever known.⁶

Although the U.S. government reduced spending after 1945, continued investment assisted the increase in

⁶ James T. Patterson, *Grand Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 61.

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economic prosperity with state and local spending, particularly in the areas of schools and roads, more than doubling between 1945 and 1948. Public education had a long history of being valued in the U.S., but the practical reality remained that in 1940 only one-third of the 74.8 million Americans age 25 years and older had attended school past the 8th grade. Further, only one-quarter had graduated from high school. Although teenagers in 1940 were schooled longer than their parents, only 40 percent of 17-year-olds received their high school diploma.⁷

The passage of the GI Bill of Rights in 1944 was central to a reformation in education. The bill was a broad piece of legislation, with benefits that helped veterans buy houses and start businesses. It also provided support for those vets who wanted to complete their education, contributing to an education boom.⁸ Contemporary news stories reported on the tremendous growth in higher education and on the general increase in popular support for schools evidenced by the doubling of per pupil spending for public education in the years between 1944 and 1950. Increased funding had a tangible impact seen in a steady rise in high school graduation, which rose to 57.4 percent in 1950.

Rising economic security, along with increased access to home ownership and investment in education, contributed a sense of optimism that directly impacted family life during the postwar years. As early as 1940, marriage rates were on the rise from their lows running throughout the 1930s. Rates peaked in 1946 with a record-setting 2.2 million couples tying the knot. Although diminished after the 1946 record, marriage rates remained high into the early 1950s. Along with the record number of marriages, divorce rates exploded to a record high in 1945-46, then dropped sharply to remain low through the mid-1960s. As stated by James T. Patterson, "The baby boom that ensued was perhaps the most amazing social trend of the postwar era."⁹

Against the prognostications of the country's demographers (who predicted only a short-term increase in births after the war), birth rates soared beginning with "furlough babies" in 1942 and 1943 and exploding in May 1946 - nine months after V-J Day when births hit 233,452 from a low of 206,387 in February 1946. By October, births were occurring at a record rate, numbering 339,499 in that month; by the end of the year, an annual record had been set with 3.4 million babies born, an increase of 20 percent over the year prior. Astonishingly, the total number of babies born between 1946 and 1964 was 76.4 million, a number representing nearly two-fifths of the 1964 U.S. population of 192 million.¹⁰

Many explanations for the baby boom have been offered through time, most focusing on human responses to the fears, deprivations, and losses suffered during the Depression and war years. A need for security, an innate drive to re-populate, and a desire for normalcy all were likely contributors to the increase in births. A

⁷ Patterson, 67.

⁸ Ibid., 68.

⁹ Ibid., 76.

¹⁰ Ibid., 77.

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more practical explanation considers the simple realities of various population groups who, supported by the growing economy and benefits that it provided such as homeownership and education, were then in a position to create and support a family with a sense that the future was one of promise and relative comfort.¹¹

In the state of Iowa, population gains reported in 1958 indicate that communities across the state were impacted by the postwar baby boom. Cedar Falls, Ames and Waterloo showed the greatest population increases, followed by Iowa City and Des Moines. Cedar Rapids ranked 6th with a 19.20% population increase from 72,296 to 86,181. Dubuque, Burlington, Newton, and Clinton rounded out the top 10 Iowa cities with populations greater than 10,000 experiencing the largest percentage increase in population between 1950 and 1958.¹²

The steep rise in population that began in 1942 soon put a strain on existing, outdated school buildings in use across the country and state. The need for new schools to meet the skyrocketing number of school age students intersected with changing ideas about how a school should function and how a school building can or should impact the student's ability to learn. In response to the demand for new school buildings and the desire for those buildings to meet postwar ideas about educating the nation's children, the American Institute of Architects created the Committee on School Buildings in 1953, which, along with a group from Teachers College, became the Educational Facilities Laboratory (EFL) in 1958. Between 1958 and 1976, the EFL spent 25.5 million dollars on the redesign of the American education. The collision of new construction and changing pedagogical philosophy, pushed architectural design of school buildings away from the forms that had characterized the country's 19th-century schoolhouses and toward structures that are today highly recognizable as postwar constructions.¹³

The Impact of the Baby Boom in Cedar Rapids

Like the rest of the country and the state of Iowa, Cedar Rapids experienced significant population increases in the postwar years (Table 1). Those increases were certainly driven by the same factors identified as those behind the increase in births across the country. The city was experiencing a sense of the promise offered by an increasingly positive economic standing, a rise in home ownership that drove suburban development, increased consumerism (including in the automobile sector), and investment in the city's education system.

The overall population increase experienced by Cedar Rapids between 1950 and 1958 was making itself felt in the school system by 1959 when overcrowding was an issue in schools across the city - this, despite the

¹¹ Patterson, 77, 79.

¹² "Cities in Iowa Have Big Gains," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 17, 1959, p13.

¹³ Amy F. Ogata, "Building for Learning in Postwar American Elementary Schools," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67:4 (2008): 562, 581.

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Table 1. Cedar Rapids Population by Decade, 1900-2000

Year	Population ¹⁴
1900	25,656
1910	32,811
1920	45,566
1930	56,097
1940	62,120
1950	72,296
1960	92,035
1970	110,642
1980	110,243
1990	108,772
2000	120,758

1951 construction of Erskine Elementary (600 36th Street SE) and Grant Wood Elementary (645 Grant Wood Terrace) and the 1954 construction of two high schools.¹⁵ Between 1948 and 1959, the district experienced an approximately 70% increase in enrollment, with projections for continued growth at the elementary grade level.¹⁶ The district adopted a number of stopgap measures to adapt to the space shortages at multiple schools. At Erskine Elementary School, the sixth graders and two-thirds of the fifth graders had been moved into other buildings.¹⁷ At Grant Wood Elementary the typical classroom size rose to 35 students – 10 students over the desirable maximum.¹⁸

By September of 1959, the Cedar Rapids School District had plans in place for dealing with the growing strains on the district’s facilities. Initially, a planned \$4,990,000 bond issue would fund construction of seven new elementary schools, four additions to existing elementary schools, renovations of the city’s four junior high buildings, improvements to seven additional elementary school, additions to the city’s two high school buildings, and equipment for new classrooms.¹⁹

14 <http://data.iowadatabase.org/datatables/PlacesAll/plpopulation18502000.pdf>. Accessed 07/17/2014.

15 www.cr.k12.ia.us. Cedar Rapids School District website with links to individual schools. Accessed 07/24/2014.

16 “The Case for a \$4,990,000 School Expansion and Improvement Plan for Cedar Rapids,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 27, 1959, p16.

17 “Why a School Bond Issue? Too Many Rooms Have Too Many Kids,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 18, 1959, p10.

18 “Ibid., p15.

19 “The Case for a \$4,990,000 School Expansion and Improvement Plan for Cedar Rapids,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 27, 1959, p16.

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In preparation for the bond issue, contracts were prepared dividing the design work between three of the city's architectural firms. Brown & Healey, Crites, Peiffer and McConnell, and Kohlmann and Eckman were tapped for the work.²⁰ Each firm was responsible for new construction projects and for additions to and/or renovation of existing buildings. In addition to Monroe Elementary, the firm of Brown & Healey was contracted to design the new Madison Elementary, renovate an existing junior high school, and construct an addition to Jefferson High.²¹ Although the initial plan for how funding would be expended was somewhat altered by the time it was implemented, construction of seven new elementary schools remained at the center of the system's expansion project.

The new elementary schools were strategically placed throughout Cedar Rapids based on concentrations of population and proximity to upper level schools that the elementary population would eventually graduate into. For example, Fillmore Elementary was located in proximity to Roosevelt High to function as a "feeder" school to that facility. The map in Figure 31 shows the dispersal of the 1959 bond issue projects.

For the new constructions, the Cedar Rapids' architects followed the prevailing trend toward single-story, horizontal massing while taking advantage of postwar materials like steel framing and plate glass. Designing with a single-story was determined to be more economical, with savings made from the lack of stairs, the ability to use lighter foundations and supporting exterior walls, and a reduction in the amount of structural steel required. This approach to economy was practiced nationwide with architects widely utilizing poured concrete slab construction, lightweight steel framing with exposed trusses, and large expanses of glazing.

The design of postwar schools was also undertaken with the idea of flexibility and future expansion in mind. Architects commonly incorporated open corridors, non-load-bearing partitions, and zoned heating and ventilation systems, which simplified the work of later additions.²²

Cedar Rapids' architects were undoubtedly influenced by the discussions and design innovations occurring on the larger, national stage where proponents of educational methods and architects alike were modifying the very notion of the school as a place of learning. Beyond the issues related directly to economy of construction, changes in philosophy and methods of learning impacted the appearance and interpretation of the school building. In one approach by father and son architects, Eliel and Eero Saarinen, the idea of separating the kindergarten classrooms and pairing them with their own play areas was developed. The pair also introduced the use of long corridors, expansive use of fenestration, and lowered ceilings.²³

20 "Ballot Bond Issue Sept. 29," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, August 4, 1959, 16.

21 "School Board Notes," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, August 12, 1959.

22 Ogata, 568.

23 *Ibid.*, 564-566.

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Researchers looking at the modern schoolhouse considered a number of issues related to airflow, lighting, and reflectivity. Experimentation with overhangs and louvered blinds came out of those investigations.²⁴ The impact of color and pattern on learning was also scrutinized. One of the overarching lines of thinking to emerge from the research was the notion of “homelike” schools. Such buildings incorporated lower ceilings, color, fireplaces, casual seating, and large windows to create a sense of safety and domesticity.²⁵

In Cedar Rapids, the impact of national trends is apparent. Published accounts of cost analyses related to the 1959 referendum schools outlined the projected savings, highlighting a cognizance for savings through designing single-story, steel frame buildings. The report states a per square foot cost of a single-story school building at \$15.43 versus \$16.28 per square foot for a multi-story building.²⁶ Additional savings were made by the architects utilizing similar designs for the new constructions their firm was responsible for. The designs for Truman and Fillmore schools, by Crites, Peiffer & McConnell, (Figures 32 & 33) are similar as are the Brown & Healey designs for Monroe and Madison schools (Figure 34 & 35), and the Kohlmann & Eckman designs for Eisenhower (Figure 36) and Grant Elementary schools.

Further evidence of the impact of nationwide trends on the 1959 referendum schools in Cedar Rapids is their utilization of long and wide corridors, flat roofs, lower ceiling heights, expansive use of glazing, steel frame construction, and variety of finish materials. At Monroe Elementary, specifically, architects Brown & Healy constructed a one-story, steel frame building with horizontal massing on a poured concrete slab. Like the national precedents, the school incorporates all of the previously listed elements plus exposed trusses, deep overhangs, dedicated playgrounds for the kindergarten classes, and exterior spaces that connect to interior function. Further, the school is awash in color – ceramic tile in many hues line the building’s corridors. As was true at the national level, changing ideas in architecture and education pushed the design of school buildings away from the 19th-century schoolhouse and toward schools with a clearly postwar identity.

²⁴ Ibid., 569.

²⁵ Ibid., 572.

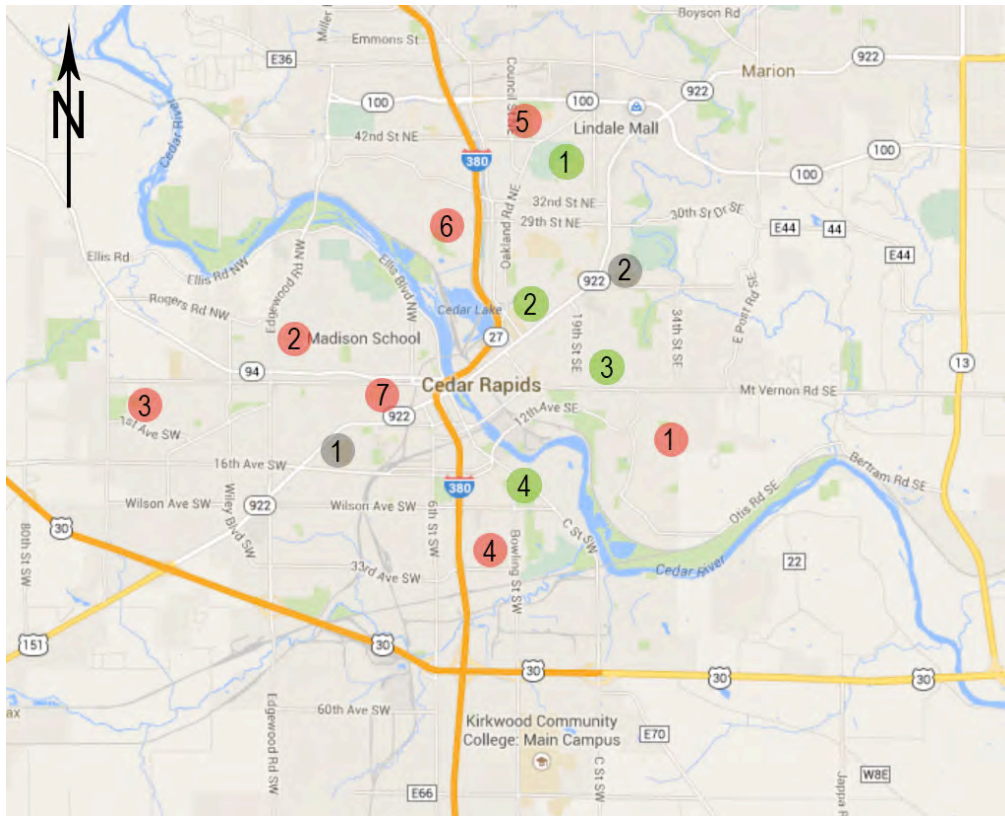
²⁶ “The Case for a \$4,990,000 School Expansion and Improvement Plan for Cedar Rapids,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 27, 1959, 16.

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Figure 31. Map of Schools Constructed, Added To or Renovated Under the 1959 Bond Issue



(SOURCE: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Cedar+Rapids,+IA>. Accessed 07/20/2014)

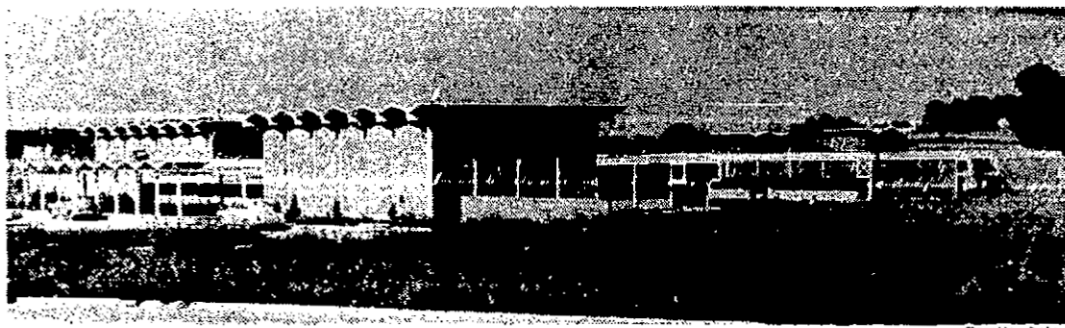
- KEY:** **Red** = New Construction
- 1. Monroe Elementary
 - 2. Madison Elementary
 - 3. Truman Elementary
 - 4. Grant Elementary
 - 5. Eisenhower Elementary
 - 6. Adams Elementary
 - 7. Fillmore Elementary
- Green** = Addition/Renovations
- 1. Polk Elementary
 - 2. Kenwood Elementary
 - 3. Buchanan Elementary
 - 4. Hayes Elementary
- Gray** = High School Renovations
- 1. Jefferson High
 - 2. Washington High

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Figure 32. Historic Image (1961) - Truman Elementary School by Crites, Peiffer & McConnell²⁷

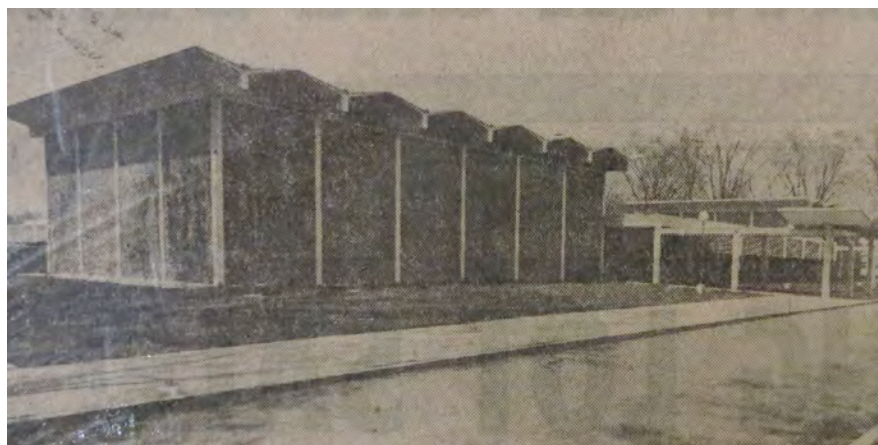


NEW TRUMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN CEDAR HILLS AREA
It's a "twin" of Fillmore addition at C ave., 10th st. NW.

Gazette photos.

Although the news article did not include an image of the Fillmore addition, it notes about the new Eisenhower School that, "It's a twin of Fillmore addition at C ave., 10th st. NW." Note that although the article refers to Fillmore as an addition, the school was indeed a new construction. The misuse of language comes from the initial idea to construct an addition to an existing Fillmore School; a plan that was eventually change.²⁸ The similarity between schools is apparent in the later image of Fillmore seen below.

Figure 33. Historic Image (1963) - Fillmore Elementary School by Crites, Peiffer & McConnell²⁹



²⁷ Record C.R. Enrollment: 18,900," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 3, 1961, 8.

²⁸ Personal interview with Mark Koehler, archivist at the Koehler History Center, Cedar Rapids, IA (Sept. 13, 2014).

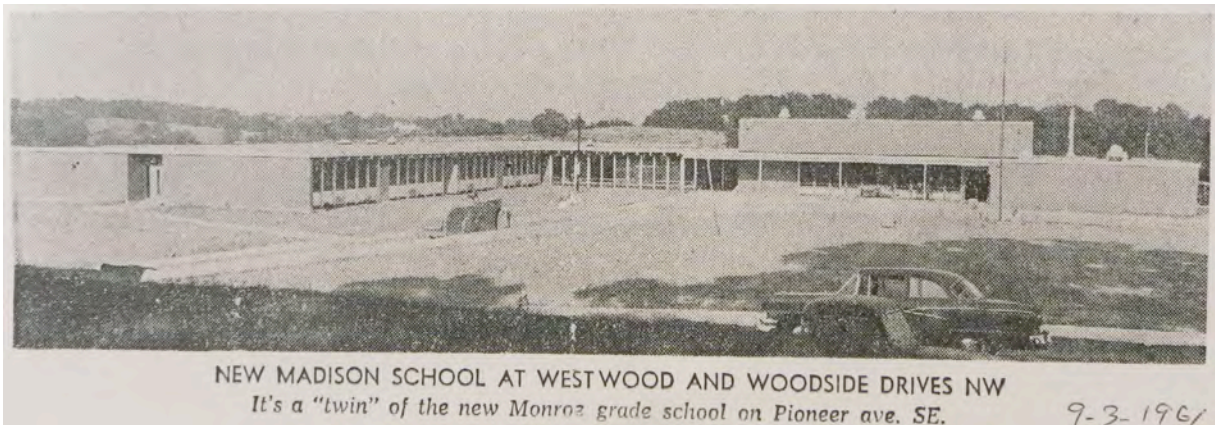
²⁹ Koehler History Center, vertical files.

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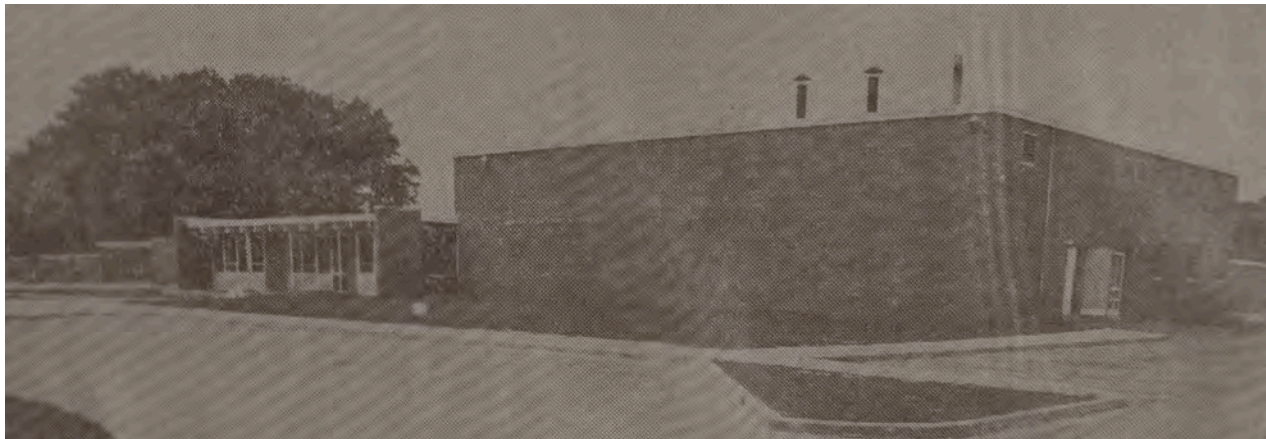
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Figure 34. Historic Image (1961) - Madison Elementary School by Brown & Healey³⁰



Although the image text refers to Madison as a “twin” of Monroe Elementary, Brown & Healey did made some variation in the designs including tweaking the relationship of the building’s three primary sections, appearance of the administrative offices, and the use of interior finishes.

Figure 35. Historic Image (1961) - Monroe Elementary School by Brown & Healey³¹



Described as the twin of Madison Elementary, Brown & Healey made multiple deviations in design between the two buildings. Twins? Yes, but with variation in the arrangement of the sections, changes in layout of the administrative spaces, and use of different finish materials, the two are not identical twins.

³⁰ Koehler History Center, vertical files.

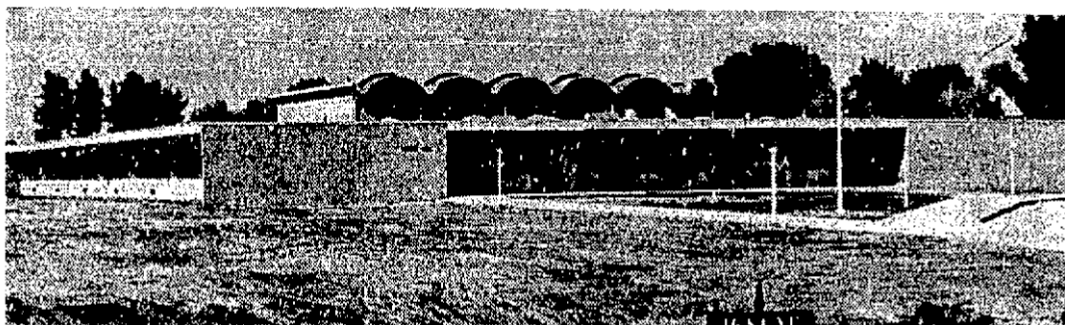
³¹ Record C.R. Enrollment: 18,900,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 3, 1961, 8.

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Figure 36. Historic Image (1961) - Eisenhower School by Kohlmann & Eckman³²



NEW EISENHOWER SCHOOL ON OZARK ST. NE, NOELRIDGE PARK AREA
It's identical in design to the new Grant grade school on J street SW.

Although the news article did not include an image of Grant Elementary, it notes about the new Eisenhower School that, "It's identical in design to the new Grant grade school on J street SW."

The school bond issue was set for public vote on September 29, 1959 – its passage required approval by a 60% majority of voters. The 1959 bond was the first school bond issue since a \$5,950,000 program passed in 1954 for the construction of two senior high schools.³³ The issued carried three to one, with 75.3% of the voters casting a ballot in support of the district's expansion plans.³⁴

Revisions of the initial proposal were undertaken in the coming months. Ultimately, the bond issue funded construction of the seven new elementary schools (each with 13 new classrooms) noted on the map in Figure 14, which were placed in service in 1961. Further, additions were made to five existing elementary schools as well as to the city's two public high schools, Jefferson and Washington. Junior high schools also received renovations (Table 2).

³² Record C.R. Enrollment: 18,900," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 3, 1961, 8.

³³ "The Case for a \$4,990,000 School Expansion and Improvement Plan for Cedar Rapids," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 27, 1959, 16.

³⁴ "Bond Issue Carries By 3 to 1," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 30, 1959, 1.

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Table 2. Projects Funded by the 1959 Bond Issue and Their Current Status

School	Address	Work	Architect	Status ³⁵
Monroe Elementary	3200 Pioneer Avenue SE	New	Brown & Healey	Extant
Truman Elementary	441 W. Post Road NW	New	Crites, Peiffer & McConnell	Extant
Madison Elementary	1341 Woodside Dr. NW	New	Brown & Healey	Extant
Grant Elementary	254 Outlook Drive SW	New	Kohlmann & Eckmann	Extant*
Eisenhower Elementary	800 46 th Street NE	New	Kohlmann & Eckmann	Extant**
Adams Elementary	1635 Linmar Drive NE	New	Crites, Peiffer & McConnell	Extant***
Fillmore Elementary	520 11 th Street NW	New	Crites, Peiffer & McConnell	Extant
Kenwood Elementary	3700 E Avenue NE	Addition	Kohlmann & Eckmann	Extant
Buchanan Elementary	2000 Mt. Vernon Rd SE	Addition	Kohlmann & Eckmann	Extant****
Polk Elementary	1500 B Avenue NE	Addition	Crites, Peiffer & McConnell	Extant
Hayes Elementary	1924 D Street SW	Addition	Crites, Peiffer & McConnell	Extant
Jefferson High	1243 20 th Street SW	Addition	Brown & Healey	Extant
Washington High	2205 Forest Drive SE	Addition	Kohlmann & Eckman	Extant

* Grant Elementary now functions as Five Seasons Learning Centers

** Eisenhower Elementary now functions as the St. Pius X Learning Center.

*** Adams Elementary now functions as Isaac Newton Christian Academy.³⁶

**** Buchanan Elementary has functioned as the Ambroz Recreation Center since 1979.³⁷

The 1959 bond issue only began to address the overcrowding of the Cedar Rapids schools, with that particular bond directed at the elementary level. In the spring of 1961 enrollment in the public school system reached a record of 18,900, with elementary enrollment counted at 11,465. With enrollment increasing to 11,700 pupils projected for the fall of 1961, the new elementary schools and the additions made to existing schools funded by the 1959 bond issue were put to good use.³⁸ However, the problem of overcrowding was not put to bed with construction of the new elementary schools and it soon grew necessary to address overcrowding of the junior and senior high schools as pupils graduated through the system. By 1964 the Cedar Rapids school district had successfully passed another bond issue to fund the further expansion of the system, which included both junior and senior high schools.

35 <http://www.cr.k12.ia.us/schools/index.html>. Accessed 07/17/2014 and "Ideas to build upon," *The Gazette*, September 05, 1999, 19A.

36 <http://www.incaonline.org/history.cfm>. Isaac Newton Christian Academy website. Accessed 07/17/2014.

37 Diane Langton, "Buchanan School building now houses Ambroz Recreation Center," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette* [Cedar Rapids, June 03, 2014].

38 "Record C.R. Enrollment: 18,900," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 3, 1961, 8.

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An addition to Madison Elementary, originally designed with future expansion in mind, was one of the 1964 bond issue projects.³⁹ Twenty new classrooms and a dedicated gym constructed adjacent to the original “cafetorium” (aka multi-purpose room) were completed in 1965. Madison remains in use as an elementary school with some alteration to the historic floor plan having been made to accommodate a school library – that work may have been completed as part of a 1968 bond issue, when nine of the district’s schools received new libraries.⁴⁰

Grant Elementary also received an addition funded by the 1964 bond issue - overcrowding in the 1961 school having resulted in the use of the gymnasium as classrooms by the time of the bond.⁴¹ Grant was closed in 1987 and reopened in 1990.⁴² The building is currently occupied by Five Seasons Learning Centers.

An addition was also made to Fillmore Elementary with the 1964 bond issue.⁴³ The school was sold to the Community Mental Health Center in April of 1983 and now goes by the name of the Abbe Center for Community Mental Health. The building footprint appears to remain intact, but alterations of the interior have been undertaken to provide for the re-use and the historic windows appear to have been replaced.

Adams Elementary, the only one of the 1961 elementary schools to be constructed with two-stories, received an award in 1961 from the American Institute of Architects and the American Association of School Administrators for its “imaginative architecture, adaptation to climatic conditions, light control, relation of the various parts of the building to each other, use of color and control of student traffic.”⁴⁴ The school was sold to the Linn County Christian Education Association in 1989 and now houses the Isaac Newton Christian Academy. The building has been significantly altered, with a large addition currently underway.

Eisenhower Elementary was closed by the school district in 1978. Today it serves as the St. Pius X Learning Center, with the institution’s church building constructed adjacent. Significant alterations have been made to the historic building.

Truman Elementary was expanded nearly as soon as it opened: in 1962 a seven-room addition was made to the 1961 school. The school was closed in 1986 and reopened in 1990 after “extensive renovations.”⁴⁵ The building remains in use as a grade school.

39 Art Winter, “Madison, Opened in 1961, a 2-Unit School,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, June 05, 1963, 15A.

40 “1968 Bond Issue,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, October 13, 1968, 12A.

41 “Overcrowded School Presses Gym Into Use,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, November 13, 1964.

42 “Around the Town. Former student bids farewell to a ‘special friend’,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, June 10, 1987, 2W and “Ideas to build upon,” *The Gazette*, September 05, 1999, 19A.

43 “Overcrowded School Presses Gym Into Use,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, November 13, 1964.

44 Art Winter, “Adams Named for Second and Sixth U.S. Presidents,” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, February 27, 1963, 2B.

45 “Ideas to build upon,” *The Gazette*, September 05, 1999, 19A.

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Monroe Elementary School Architects: Brown & Healey

The architectural firm of Brown & Healey (now, Brown Healey Stone & Sauer) is the oldest in Cedar Rapids. The firm is responsible for countless commissions in Iowa and adjoining states, which include designs for many school buildings for the Cedar Rapids School District as well as institutions of higher learning.

The firm was founded in 1909 by brothers, William J. (1878-1970) and Frederick G. (? – 1911) Brown. The Brown's were born in Urbana, Illinois with William graduating from the University of Illinois in 1900. Following graduation, William worked in Chicago as a draftsman for Holabird and Roche in 1901, in New York City for Kenneth M. Murchison from 1902 to 1903, and for John Russell Pope from 1904 to 1906. The following year he spent three months traveling in Europe, which undoubtedly informed his design sensibility.⁴⁶

William came to Cedar Rapids, Iowa in 1910 to take up partnership with his brother, Frederick G. Brown, who had relocated to Iowa from the west coast in 1909 after securing the commission to build the Cedar Rapids Candy Company building at 412 A Avenue NE (Non-extant, 1968).⁴⁷ Their firm was known as Brown Brothers.⁴⁸ The brothers' partnership was short-lived - Frederick Brown died in 1911. William continued the practice alone for 42 years; on May 1, 1953 he was joined by Edward (Ted) H. Healey and the firm became known as Brown & Healey, Architects.

Ted Healey studied architecture at the University of Illinois, graduating in 1950 – a period he referred to as being “during the height of what was called the modern architecture period, where everything that was traditional was considered bad.” He finished his formal training at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, after which he worked for three years for the university architect at the University of Iowa before joining forces with William Brown.⁴⁹ Healey was a founding member of the Iowa Architectural Foundation, a 504A non-profit established in 1988.⁵⁰

In May of 1960, Carl Bock joined the firm, which was renamed Brown Healey Bock, with offices at 131 36th

46 Wesley I. Shank, *Iowa's Historic Architects: A Biographical Dictionary* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1999), 33.

47 Diane Langton, “Human Skeleton Found.” <http://thegazette.com/2013/08/05/human-skeleton-found>. Accessed 07/25/2014. During the 1909 foundation excavation for the building, construction workers discovered a human skeleton, which was eventually identified as the remains of the father of Osgood Shepherd. A second, smaller skeleton was also found. Osgood was a settler who built a cabin near the site in 1839. His father died during a visit to his son in 1840 and his daughter, who died in childhood, was known to have been buried alongside her grandfather. The Cedar Rapids Candy Co. occupied the building until 1936 when it became Calder's Van & Storage Co. The building was demolished in 1968 as part of the city's urban renewal project.

48 Shank and “Busy as Ever After 53 Years of Designing,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, June 30, 1963, 17A.

49 “Ted knows a town by the buildings it keeps,” *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, April 8, 1992, 4E.

50 Iowa Architectural Foundation website. www.iowaarchitecturalfoundation.org/documents/filelibrary/documents/articles_of_incorporation_28440F93BA523.pdf. Accessed 07/22/2014.

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Street SE.⁵¹ At that time, the office staff included three registered architects, two graduate architects, two graduate engineers, four draftsmen, and two office staff. Carl Bock was born in Bennett, Iowa (one hour southwest of Cedar Rapids) in 1916. After completing high school in Anamosa, Iowa, he attended Iowa State College, graduating with a B.S. in civil engineering. Bock worked for the Atomic Energy Commission on the campus of Iowa State University, then spent four years with Iowa Steel and Iron Works. At Brown Healey Bock he was responsible for the structural and engineering design work in a project.⁵²

During the course of its long history, the firm was commissioned to design a wide variety of Cedar Rapids' buildings. During the period when William Brown was the sole architect (1911-1953) commissions included St. James Methodist Church, the 1929 Consistory Building and the 1928 Memorial Coliseum (with Henry Hornbostel of Pittsburgh), the Strand Theater (aka New World Theater), the Cedar Rapids Country Club (with H.E. Hunter), the McKesson-Robbins building, the Brown Apartments, the Knights of Pythias building, Witwer Grocery Co., and Grant Vocational High School (1932). Further, in 1932 Brown was hired to design renovations for Roosevelt, Franklin, McKinley, and Wilson schools.⁵³

After joining the firm in 1953, Ted Healey worked with the Chicago firm of Perkins & Will to design additions to Hoover, Erskine Elementary, Arthur, Tyler, Johnson, and Taylor schools, all in Cedar Rapids.⁵⁴ In addition, the firm completed the designs for Regis Catholic High School (1958), Monroe and Madison Elementary schools (1961), Pierce Elementary School (1964) and several buildings on the campuses of both Coe College and Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids and Cornell College at Mt. Vernon, Iowa.⁵⁵

Other Iowa commissions include St. John's Lutheran Church at Marengo, the Youngville Café in rural Benton County, the Wartburg Teacher's Seminary in Waverly, Old Main in Mount Pleasant, the Lowell E. Walter House at Quasqueton, the Stewart Library in Grinnell, and Guttenberg's Municipal Building.⁵⁶ In the late 1980s, the firm undertook a number of library commissions across Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, and Iowa.⁵⁷ Ted Healey became known as a library specialist, his interest and expertise placing him on the Iowa State Library Board.⁵⁸

51 "Business Briefs," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 17, 1961, 7.

52 "Executive Quiz," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, September 13, 1964, 9D.

53 Shank and "Busy as Ever After 53 Years of Designing," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, June 30, 1963, 17A and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office state inventory at www.iowahistory.org/historicpreservation/statewide-inventory-and-collections/inventory-plans-drawings.pdf. Accessed 07/17/2014.

54 "Ted knows a town by the buildings it keeps," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, April 8, 1992, 4E.

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56 "Busy as Ever After 53 Years of Designing," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, June 30, 1963, 17A and Iowa's State Historic Preservation Office statewide inventory of historic resources. <http://iowahistory.org/historicpreservation/statewide-inventory-and-collections/inventory-plans-drawings.pdf>. Accessed 07/22/2014.

57 "Ted knows a town by the buildings it keeps," *The Cedar Rapids Gazette*, April 8, 1992, 4E.

58 Susan B. Hagloch, ed., "Library Building Projects: Tips for Survival (Libraries Unlimited, 1994), 6. Online version. Accessed 07/23/2014.

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Relevant Cultural Resource Documents

Although many historical and architectural surveys have been completed in the city of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, no previous evaluation of Monroe Elementary had been conducted due to the resource's "recent past" construction. Further, none of the elementary schools constructed as part of the 1959 bond issue have been surveyed and evaluated for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, limiting relevant cultural resource documents in that regard as well.

Potential for Historic Archaeology

The potential for historical archaeology was not assessed as part of the present National Register nomination. The presence of large expanses of grassy yard historically associated with the site were relatively undisturbed at the time Monroe Elementary was constructed in 1961. As a result, any significant excavation and/or grading should take into consideration the possibility that historic archaeological resources may remain.

Research Methodology

This National Register nomination draws heavily on the numerous news accounts that documented the events that led up to the 1959 bond issue and subsequent construction of Monroe Elementary. Those resources were full of information about the overcrowded conditions of the city's schools and projections about the future of the school district. News accounts also identified architects, included design sketches, outlined building costs, and addressed the case for the bond issue that ultimately funded the construction of six elementary schools, including Monroe Elementary.

The Koehler History Center is a wealth of information for historic research in Cedar Rapids. In this case, the center holds the historic design plans for Monroe Elementary and the 1965 addition to Madison Elementary. The Center also has a "vertical file" system with numerous news clips related to the Cedar Rapids School District.

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- _____. Winter, Art. "Adams Named for Second and Sixth U.S. Presidents." Feb. 27, 1963.
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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The historic boundaries of Monroe Elementary Historic District at 3200 Pioneer Avenue SE are designated as P.O.S. #30 Parcel A STR/LB in the City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa and are indicated as such on the map in Section 7 (Figure 4).

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the Monroe Elementary school building and the site to which the building is historically associated.

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- Figure 5. (Image 0006) Monroe Elementary, Historic Playground Equipment - 2014
- Figure 6. Aerial View, 2014
- Figure 7. Architect Plan View (Footprint), 1960
- Figure 8. (Image 0007) Monroe Elementary, Primary (South) Elevation – 2014
- Figure 9. (Image 0010) Monroe Elementary, Rear (North) Elevation – 2014
- Figure 10. (Image 0011) Monroe Elementary, Rear (North) Elevation – 2014
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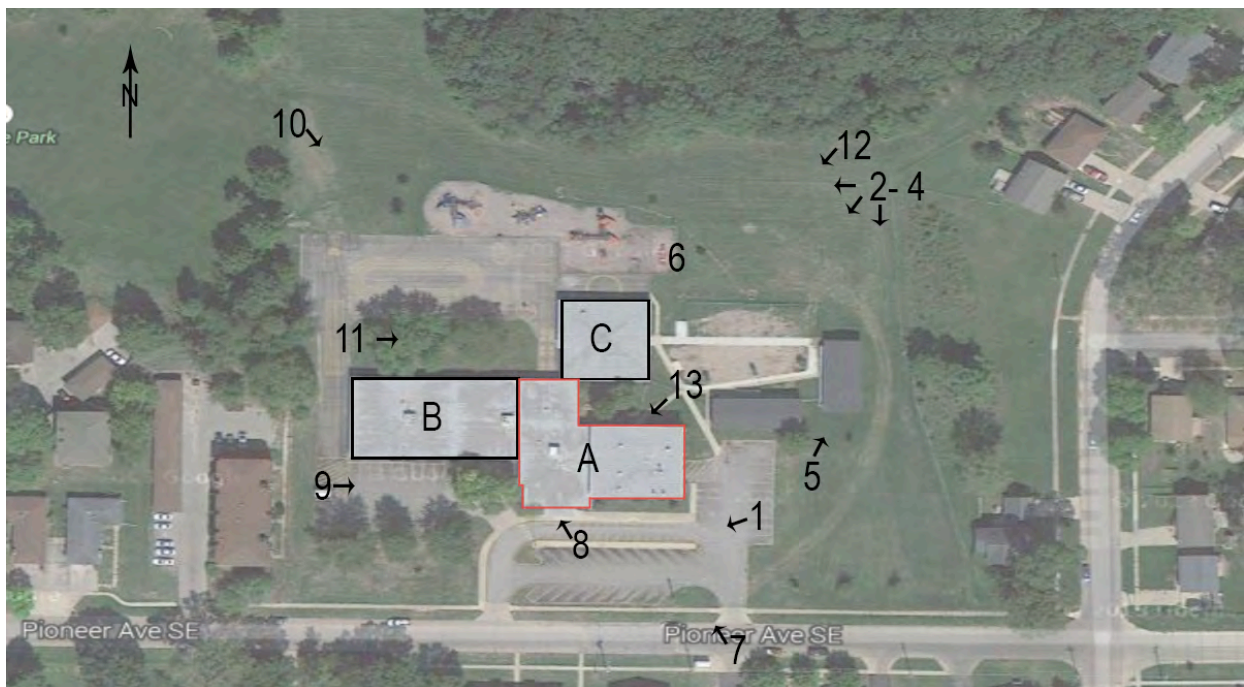
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3200 Pioneer Avenue SE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Linn County, Iowa
Photographer: Alexa McDowell, AKAY Consulting, Minneapolis, Minnesota
June 12, 2014 and September 11, 2014

4 x 6" images printed on Canon Premium Photo Paper using Canon Chromalife 100+ ink
CD-ROM on file with property owner and the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office

Photo Key: Exterior Views

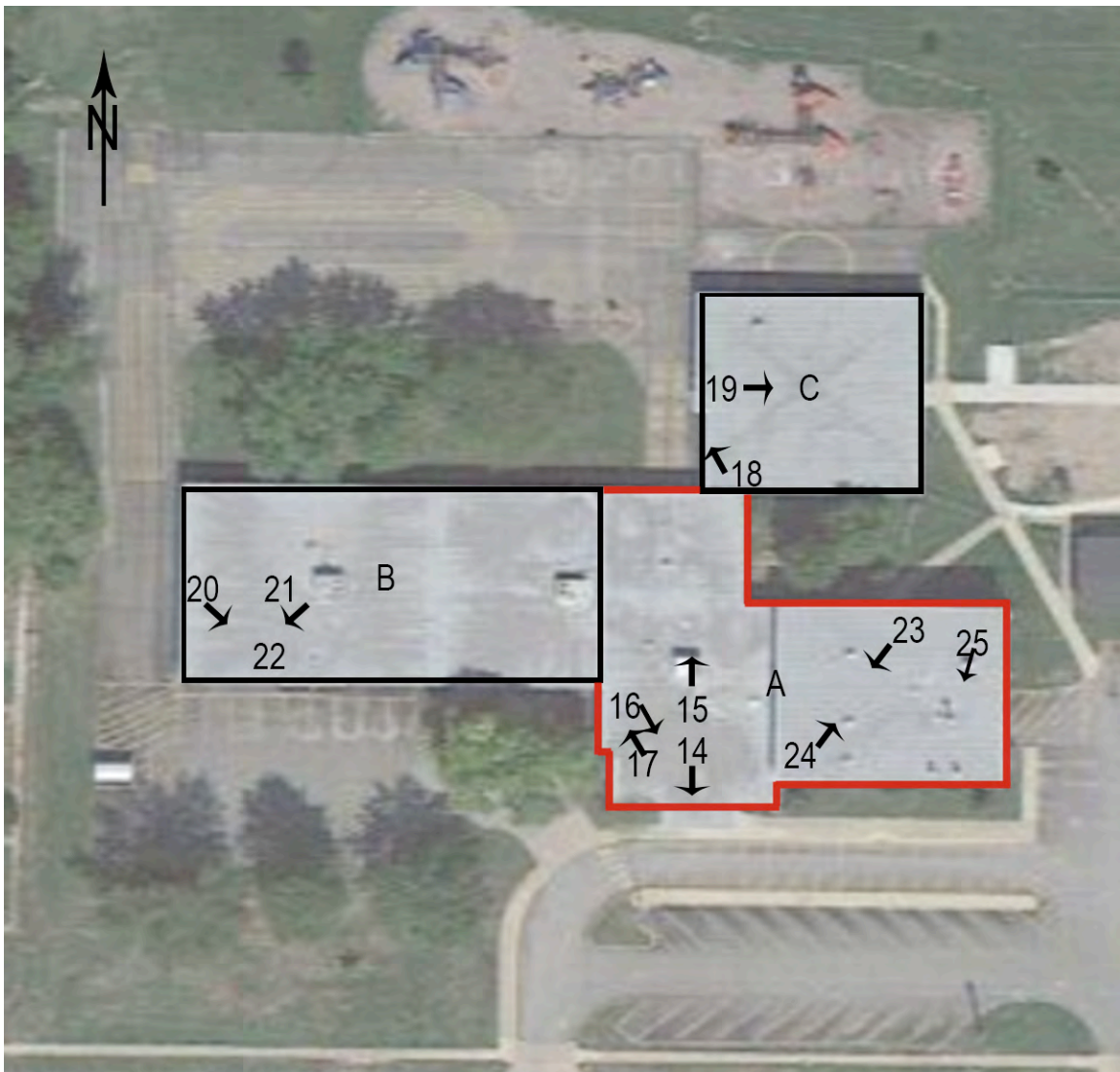


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Photo Key: Interior Views



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Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 0001. Context: View looking southwest with a view of surrounding neighborhood
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0001.tif
- 0002. Site: View looking southwest from east property line.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0002.tif
- 0003. Site: View looking southwest from east property line.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0003.tif
- 0004. Site: View looking west from east property line.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0004.tif
- 0005. Site: View of east, non-historic (c.1995) temporary classroom (typical).
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- 0008. Exterior: Primary (south) entrance, looking northwest.
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- 0009. Exterior: View of Section B, south elevation, west of primary entrance looking east.
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- 0010. Exterior: View of Section B, north elevation, looking southeast from schoolyard.
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- 0011. Exterior: View of Section B, north elevation, looking east.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0011.tif
- 0012. Exterior: View of Sections A & C, north and east elevations, looking southwest.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0012.tif
- 0013. Exterior: Section A, gymnasium (multi-purpose room), north elevation, looking southwest.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0013.tif

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IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0014.tif
0015. Interior: View of main corridor, Section A, looking north from primary entrance.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0015.tif
0016. Interior: Administrative office, Section A, looking southeast.
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0017. Interior: Principal's office, Section A
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0018. Interior: View of typical window configuration (from Section C, looking northwest to playground).
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0020. Interior: View of Section B classroom looking southeast (typical, except for bathroom).
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0020.tif
0021. Interior: View of Section B classroom looking southwest (typical, except for bathroom).
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0021.tif
0022. Interior: View of kindergarten restroom, Section B
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0023. Interior: View of Section A gymnasium (multi-purpose room), looking southwest with stage at left.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0023.tif
0024. Interior: View of Section A gymnasium (multi-purpose room) looking northeast.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0024.tif
0025. Interior: View of kitchen.
IA_LinnCounty_MonroeElementary_0025.tif



































PRINCIPAL













West

NO SMOKING
NO DRUGS
NO ALCOHOL





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Monroe Elementary School Historic District

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Linn

DATE RECEIVED: 9/09/15 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/06/15
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 10/21/15 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 10/25/15
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 15000751

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

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

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 10.23.15 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
the National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

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

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

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR
KIM REYNOLDS, LT. GOVERNOR

MARY CONWAY, DIRECTOR
DREW BRADSHAW, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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IOWA

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SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

STATE
HISTORIC
SITES

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION
OFFICE OF IOWA

IOWA
HISTORICAL
FOUNDATION

September 4, 2015

J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief
National Register and National Historic Landmarks
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

The following National Register nomination(s) from Iowa are enclosed for your review and listing if acceptable.

- Manning Commercial Historic District, 217-411, 41-507 and 302-326 Main St., 717-723 3rd St., 303 Center St. and 825 5th St., Manning, Carroll County
- Edwards, Joseph A. and Lydia A. (Frazier), House, 1735 Salem Road, Salem vicinity, Henry County
- Boyle, Hugh and Matilda, House and Cemetery Historic District, 3225 Lexington Avenue, Lowell vicinity, Henry County
- Garretson, Owen A. and Emma J. (Dilts), House, 1878 135th Street, Salem vicinity, Henry County
- Benjamin Chapel and Richwoods Cemetery, 1936 Franklin Avenue, Trenton vicinity, Henry County
- Monroe Elementary School Historic District, 3200 Pioneer Avenue SE, Cedar Rapids, Linn County
- Cedar Rapids 2nd Avenue SE Automobile Row Historic District, Roughly, 2nd Ave. SE to 3rd Ave. SE, from 6th to 8th Streets SE, Cedar Rapids, Linn County

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill
National Register