NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. Aug. 2002)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

0MB No. 1024-0018 (Expires Jan. 2005)

vicinity N.A.

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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

other names/site number <u>Odell Gross Elementary; Ck-W-900</u>

#### 2. Location

street & number \_\_\_\_\_\_ not for publication \_\_\_\_\_\_ N.A.\_\_

city or town <u>Winchester</u>

state Kentucky code KY county Clark code 049 zip code 40391

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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

May 28 - 2004

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

Dad To MMagan	
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, SHPO	

\_\_\_\_Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office\_\_ State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

State of Federal Agency of Tribal government

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 or Tribal government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Bignature of the Keeper	Date of Action
entered in the National Register		<u> </u>
See continuation sheet. determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet. determined not eligible for the	ason A. Ball	8/4/2004
National Register		
other (explain):		

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form Victory Heights Elementary School (Ck-W-900) Clark County, Kentucky

5.Classification		
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)	(Check only one box)	(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)
X private public-local public-State public-Federal	X building(s) district site structure object	Contributing       Noncontributing          buildings          sites          3
		Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>N. A.</u>
		Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) <u>N. A.</u>
6. Function or Use		
Historic Functions (Enter cate Cat: <u>EDUCATION</u>	egories from instructions) Sub: <u>Sch</u>	ool
Current Functions (Enter cate Cat: <u>Vacant Not in Us</u>		
7. Description		
Architectural Classification		
(Enter categories from instructions)		Materials
Modern/Art Deco		(Enter categories from instructions)
		foundation <u>Reinforced Concrete</u>
		walls <u>Brick</u> <u>Aluminum</u> <u>Glass</u> Steel
		roof Asphalt
		other <u>Cut Stone</u>
Narrative Description		
(Please see continuation sheets)		
8. Statement of Signi	ficance	

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- **X** A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

**USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form** Victory Heights Elementary School (Ck-W-900) Clark County, Kentucky

- **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.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- В removed from its original location.
- С a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- Ε 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

#### **Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Politics- Government** 

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Please see continuation sheets.)

#### **Major Bibliographical References** 9.

(For citation of books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form see 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**

#\_\_\_\_\_

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

Significant Dates 1939

Period of Significance

1939-1943

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

N. A.

#### Architect/Builder

Wilson, John F., Architect

Brock and Johnson, Architects

Name of repository: Clark County Board of Education

#### 10. Geographical Data

#### Acreage of Property <u>3 acres</u>

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zo	ne	Northing	Easting		
1	_16_	4209483 N	746378 E	3	
2	See c	ontinuation sheet.		4	

Verbal Boundary Description (See continuation sheets.)

**Boundary Justification** (See continuation sheets.)

#### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title \_\_\_\_Jayne H. Fiegel, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization Palmer Engineering date February 24, 2004

street & number 400 Shoppers Drive telephone 859-744-1218

city or town <u>Winchester</u> state <u>KY</u> zip code <u>40392-0747</u>

#### Property Owner

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

name Clark County Association for Handicapped Citizens

street & number P.O. Box 643 telephone 859-744-0370

city or town <u>Winchester</u> state <u>KY</u> zip code <u>40391</u>

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#### NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Victory Heights Elementary School, (Ck-W-900) occupies an 11-acre parcel in the west end of Winchester, Clark County, Kentucky. The school sits on a corner lot on the west side of Maryland Avenue, facing south toward Forest Avenue. Unoccupied since the mid-1990s, the structure has experienced some deterioration due to lack of maintenance but is in sound condition. The 3-acre area proposed for listing contains the significant resource, i.e., the school, and 3 other buildings, a 1978 modular construction library and 2 concrete block storage buildings.

Much of the acreage behind the school is covered in tall grass, and a paved parking lot is adjacent to the east side of the building. This area does not contain the usual associated features such as a playground or baseball fields, and according to a former principal, these items were never developed at Victory Heights. The school building is owned by the Clark County Association for Handicapped Citizens who intends to rehabilitate the structure for use as an early childhood development center. They are seeking historic certification, and National Register listing to obtain historic tax credits for the project.

The residential Waveland Heights neighborhood located south and in front of the school was laid out in July 1924 [DB 101, p.450]. Fairfield Heights, located further south, across Lexington Avenue was established, just before WWII [Odell Gross personal communication: 2003]. Many of the homes in the neighborhoods surrounding the school date from the 1940s and 1950s. The yard area in front of the school has retained several large, older trees and the flagpole (photo 1). Victory Heights was the second consolidated school built in Clark County. The new building replaced the original Victory School, a small two-room structure located south of Lexington Avenue on Victory Avenue. Since many of the new residential subdivisions surrounding the school utilized the word "Heights" the name Victory Heights was a natural combination of the old school name with the new location.

Victory Heights was built in 1939 with funding from the Public Works Administration, a New Deal-era federal grant program. PWA funding originally would have supported construction of a two-story facility. However, plans were altered and a one-story brick school with a one-and-one-half-story gymnasium was built instead. Later additions including the second floor, a cafeteria, and a classroom wing were incorporated into the 1939 structure. Because these phases of construction can be confusing the building will be described in a chronological manner.

#### **1939 PWA One Story Structure and Gymnasium**

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In 1939 Victory Heights Elementary School was constructed with a one story, masonry main block with a one-and-one-half-story gymnasium wing to the rear (photos 1 & 7). Designed by Architect John F. Wilson and funded through the Public Works Administration, the building held grades 1-8 in six classrooms plus the principal's office and two lavatories. Laid in a Common bond brick pattern (five rows of stretchers and one of headers), the five-bay main block rested on a full, poured concrete basement and had stone and concrete details including cut stone coping along the cornice and cut stone windowsills. The sides of the main block and gymnasium were detailed with shallow pilasters with stone caps. The original windows were 8/8, double hung, wooden sashes with stone sills on the main façade and some 10 light, steel windows with concrete sills, on secondary facades.

The central entrance bay projects from the main façade and is accented by graduating stepped vertical brick courses (photo 2). The main entrance is recessed within the central bay and is sheltered by a half-round flat-roofed aluminum entrance canopy, decorated with a center band of fluted metalwork. Supported at each end by a pair of chains anchored to the façade, similar canopies originally sheltered the east and west entrances to the main block (1939 PWA plans and specifications). The main entrance steps are flanked by poured, concrete, one-quarter round hand rails that are located just below a pair of narrow sidelights (photos 2 & 17).

The gymnasium is also brick masonry construction laid in an American bond (five rows of stretcher to one row of stretcher/header) pattern (photos 7 & 13). The shallow roof supported by reinforced, steel arches and the original 12/12, steel, casement windows are intact. The raised, stage area detailed in the original 1939 plans is extant. Ornamental wood hoods supported by oversized brackets originally sheltered the two rear (north) entrances of the gym. One is extant on the east end entrance (photo 18).

#### 1949 Second Floor and Cafeteria Addition

In 1949 a second story with identical room plan was added to the main block, thereby increasing the classrooms to fourteen. In order for the addition to be totally compatible with the original construction, the same architect designed the additions, and similar construction materials were used throughout. The design and appearance of the second floor and cafeteria wings are completely compatible with the original construction. The architect specified that certain features of the original building would be removed and relocated, such as the cut stone coping along the cornice, the metal gutters, roof vents, and interior hand rails. The 1949 additions are nearly identical to the 1939 plans and specifications approved by the PWA, even to the door and window schedules.

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In 1949, during the construction of the second story, a second tier of smaller pilasters were added to the outside set of these supporting elements on the main block only. Oddly on the main block, there are two sets of pilasters on the east elevation (photo 4) and only one set on the west end. The west elevation has metal wall washers or tie rods to stabilize the brick (photo 3). The side entrances to the building, presently sheltered by modern metal canopies are flanked by these elements (photos 3 & 4).

The interior of the second floor addition still contains some original elements such as wood classroom doors with upper glass panel (photo 22), integrated coat closets with folding doors (photo 19), wood flooring in classrooms and blackboards (photo 20). The bathroom units have painted concrete, interior walls and steel casement windows.

A one-story, cafeteria with a full basement was also connected to the rear (north side) of the gymnasium during the 1949 construction (photos 5, 8 & 9). It was built with concrete blocks and brick masonry veneer. To protect the students from the elements, an enclosed, brick walkway was incorporated into the west, rear, gymnasium, entrance (photo 7). The cafeteria has changed little since construction with the interior divided into three spaces, two smaller cells on the south end for a coat room and kitchen, and the larger area for the eating space. The windows are the original ten-light steel casements with concrete sills. The interior coverings are utilitarian with painted concrete walls and linoleum floors. The basement contains three large rooms originally utilized for storage.

#### **1958 Primary Classroom Wing**

In 1958, a one story, classroom wing designed by Brock and Johnson, Architects was attached to the west elevation of the breezeway (photos 10-12). Constructed to house the primary grades, the addition is concrete block construction with brick veneer. This section features enlarged bay windows, with metal louvers, and concrete sills and foundation. This addition was constructed on a concrete slab and does not have a basement.

The last phase of construction occurred in 1978 with the construction of a separate, one story, library east of the gym (photo 6). This structure is modular construction with metal sliding windows, and brick panels on the exterior walls. Due to the age of the library building, it is being considered a non-contributing structure.

Two, small, one story, concrete block structures that were used for maintenance and storage are located east of the cafeteria wing (photos 15 & 16). Their date of construction is not known and they are considered non-contributing structures.

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The rehabilitation of Victory Heights would bring vitality back to this locally important structure by providing excellent office and educational space for the Clark County Center for Handicapped Citizens.

#### INTEGRITY CONSIDERATIONS

The school's integrity of **location and setting** remain largely unchanged from the original construction period. The Waveland Heights residential neighborhood just south of the school across Forest Avenue was platted in 1924 and the area remains residential today.

Integrity of **workmanship and materials** at Victory Heights are intact with a reinforced concrete foundation and brick masonry bearing walls detailed with cut stone and concrete. Similar materials were used in 1949 during the construction of the second floor addition and cafeteria wing. The 1949 brick masonry closely matches the original masonry in color and texture and the demarcation between sections is not discernable. The exceptions to integrity concern the louvered, aluminum windows that replaced the original, 8/8, wood sash windows during the 1970's. However, these windows used the original openings with no alteration, and do not detract from the overall fenestration pattern of the structure.

The school's integrity of **design** is best described as intact but altered. Although the 1949, second floor addition was not constructed with federal funds, or under the New Deal, it completes the original two-story design planned by the WPA in 1939. The second floor addition and cafeteria wing are completely compatible with the original construction. The same architect designed these sections utilizing similar materials, and design features. Even parts of the original structure, such as, cut stone coping along the cornice, metal gutters, roof vents, and interior handrails were incorporated into the addition. The 1949 additions are nearly identical to those original plans and specifications approved by the PWA in 1939 construction, even to the door and window schedules.

For educational buildings constructed during the New Deal, to have integrity of **association** and **feeling** the original function of the structure must be recognizable. Schools were altered in response to changing student populations, or the expected need for additional floor space. To have integrity, these alterations or additions must not obliterate the original form of the building. The addition of the second floor and cafeteria altered the original form of the structure. However, the alterations were completed in a sensitive and compatible manner, thus, contributing to the structure's ability to convey the feeling and association of the original New Deal construction.

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Therefore, the original function of the structure is easily understood, and the structure has integrity of setting, location, materials, and workmanship, as well as integrity of association and feeling.

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#### NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Victory Heights Elementary School, (Ck-W-900) meets National Register Criterion A. It is significant as a property type within the context "**New Deal Era Construction in Clark County, Kentucky.**" Constructed in 1939 with funding from the Public Works Administration, Victory Heights is an important property that helps us evaluate and understand Clark County's interest in improving the overall condition of the education environment. The construction of Victory Heights was one in a series of large projects undertaken by the City of Winchester and Clark County School Systems. The objective was to upgrade older city school buildings and consolidate the inefficient one and two-room, graded facilities serving the Clark County rural districts. The construction of Victory Heights is considered an important indicator of the community's interests in improving the overall standard of living for those in rural areas, another New Deal objective. Beginning in the fall of 1939, Victory Heights became the first consolidated school in Clark County to bus their students to school.

#### New Deal Era Construction in Clark County, Kentucky

Victory Heights can be seen as a significant event in the context of construction projects funded by the New Deal within Clark County. To begin this study, the Index to Reference Cards for Works Progress Administration in Kentucky 1935-1943 was consulted. This source identified other projects within the county, ranging from a very small undertaking (painting the schools in 1935 at a cost of \$1,500) to the very large (reconstruction of the streets in the City of Winchester in 1939 at a cost \$31,377). Other construction projects undertaken include the 1939 remodeling and addition to the county courthouse (\$19,830), and a garage and warehouse constructed for the Clark County Fiscal Court (\$12,545) in 1938. In the late 1930s, several other educational construction projects were funded by the PWA and undertaken within Clark County. The 1890s Hickman Street School received additions (\$2,692) and the Winchester High School built a gymnasium and auditorium (\$20,884). In 1935 several smaller WPA projects were undertaken to improve educational properties in Clark County including an \$890 landscaping project around Burns High School and improvements to the grounds around the Oliver Colored School (\$430). One other Clark County consolidated school was constructed with New Deal funding. In 1938, a total of \$23,715 in WPA funds was awarded to help construct a new consolidated school in Trapp [Centennial Edition 1978:3].

The same year the PWA offered Clark County \$190,000 for the construction of three other consolidated schools, Victory Heights, Providence, and Pilot View. On November 1, 1938, the Clark County Board of Education voted to reduce the number to one school, and the school system received \$22,005 in WPA funds for the

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construction of Victory Heights [Centennial Edition 1978:3]. The original plans were completed and dated November 16, 1938 and recorded as Project No. PWA Docket KY 1390-F. The plans were registered in Atlanta at the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works on January 3, 1939 and approved one month later on February 3, 1939.

The original plan for the building called for a design with a two story main structure. However, the local school board had four concerns that resulted in the removal of the second story from the original plans. First, Victory Heights was the second of Clark County's consolidated schools to be constructed. Second, there were approximately 27 one-room and two-room schools scattered throughout the county. Third, there was little money for school buses. Finally, the school board was unsure if the Victory Heights district contained enough students to fill the school. The local county school superintendent was considered by some to be very parsimonious. Therefore, the Clark County Board of Education persuaded the PWA that a one-story facility was more appropriate and the original plans were changed at the last minute [Odell Gross personal communication: 2003].

#### New Deal Era Construction Kentucky (1933-1943)

The stock market crash of October 29, 1929, and the sharp and lingering financial disaster that followed, created nationwide unemployment and subsequent social problems on a scale previously unknown in American history. Although the United States had previously experienced panics or depressions, the magnitude of this particular disaster overwhelmed the ability of most state and local governments to provide needed assistance [Brent 1991:4]. This chaos ushered in the era known as the Great Depression.

The Hoover administration's first attempt to manage the crisis with federal intervention was the signing of the Emergency Relief and Construction Act on July 21, 1932. This act provided \$300,000,000 to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to make loans available to states and local governments. Kentucky Governor Ruby Laffoon requested \$15 million, but Kentucky received only \$1.1 million in assistance. Unfortunately, Hoover's efforts did little to alleviate the crisis. The election of Franklin Roosevelt, who ran on the promise of "a new deal for the American people", established the grand scheme for federal intervention to end the economic chaos.

The term "New Deal" endured and came to represent all of the new economic programs brought about during the first part of Roosevelt's administration [Readers

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Companion: 1]. The most significant programs were inaugurated in the middle of 1933 during the famous "100 days" by legislation that established many of Roosevelt's programs including: the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC); the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC); the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA); the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC); the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA); and the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) [Kleber1992: 679].

The NIRA was an important act because it guaranteed workers the right to collective bargaining. Under the NIRA the Administration of Public Works (PWA) was established on June 16, 1933, with Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes as director. The first meeting of the PWA board in June of 1933 established the priorities of the administration. Although the PWA was a relief program, the primary workforce would not consist of citizens on relief. "Money expended in doles or direct relief contributes little to the stimulus of trade, whereas, money spent in public works stimulates business not only in the community itself but throughout the material and transportation industries. Public works built at the present low wage and price levels...will carry a low cost. It is good business as well as good tactics to use this opportunity to add substantially to the public wealth" [Ickes 1935:12]. Ickes desire to create lasting and impressive monuments specified the employment of skilled craftsmen or specialized construction workers [Brent 1991: 6].

In the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, educators became increasingly concerned over the state of the learning environment. The Kentucky Education Commission and the Efficiency Commission of Kentucky sponsored several studies concerning the lack of proper educational facilities. They reported that at least half of all Kentucky oneroom schools were dilapidated and recommended school consolidation as a way to improve the situation by pooling the limited construction resources [Kennedy and Johnson 2000:36]. The existing unimproved road system forced rural communities to educate their children in inefficient and isolated conditions, and public money to improve these facilities was in short supply.

One of the first major programs that the PWA funded were appropriations for the expansion of the road system in America. Approximately one-eighth of the entire sum for the first public works program was a grant for road improvement [Ickes 1935:81]. This was the first part of the overall program's purpose for improving the standard of living for rural America.

Once the road system was improved the next, and equally important improvement would be in the area of education. The link between roads and a new more desirable type of rural education was readily apparent. Requests to consolidate schools from districts increased where new roads were built. School consolidation

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finally became a reality with funding from the New Deal programs. In this aspect, Secretary Ickes again expressed his vision. "PWA has funds to spend for school buildings, and for certain educational equipment, it was our keen desire to spread the benefits of PWA to education as far as we possibly could" [Ickes 1935:88]. It was their aim to place in every part of the nation school structures that would stand long after the program was ended as monuments to its social vision" [Ickes 1935:91].

In keeping with this goal, the architecture of educational structures in Kentucky is varied and depended upon several factors including, the location of the structure, locally available resources and materials, and the personal preferences of the architect. In his historic context, *New Deal Era Construction in Western Kentucky, 1933-1943*, Brent sums up the variation of styles in educational buildings. "The architecture is often functional or institutional with little ornamentation yet often the materials used in the construction were deliberately chosen and were an integral part of the project...there was really no "New Deal style". Architects simply adapted the styles of the day to the building and materials they had to work with" [Brent 1991:25]. The design of many of the school buildings were influenced by the most popular architectural styles of the two were constructed earning the architectural nickname "WPA Modern" [Kennedy and Johnson 2000:43].

In Kentucky the Public Works Administration spent approximately 49 million dollars and funded over 600 construction projects. Two hundred and seventy-six new schools were constructed, along with 6 hospitals, 24 sewage treatment plants, over 80 waterworks, bridges, post offices, a fire station and an electric generating plant. In Kentucky's two largest cities, PWA funded the clearance of slums and the construction of low cost, public housing [Brent 1991:21].

#### Educational Building Property Types

Seven New Deal agencies constructed some type of educational facility including: The Civilian Conservation Corps, The Tennessee Valley Authority, The Civil Works Administration, The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Works Progress Administration, National Youth Administration, and Public Works Administration [Brent 1991:24]. Educational facilities were the most numerous of any type constructed or funded by the New Deal. Thus, projects associated with this type may be found in every county in the state. Examples of educational structures associated with the New Deal and documented in western Kentucky include: schools (vocational/educational), cafeterias, auditoriums, gymnasiums, and shop or utility facilities [Brent 1991:24].

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To be eligible under this context, the structure must have been constructed, occupied or funded by one of the New Deal agencies and have integrity of location, setting, materials, and association. Consolidation was one of the key functions of the new schools funded by the New Deal, thus, integrity of location and setting is important. Surviving educational structures are most likely to have been altered by the state's oversight in school facility improvements. Additionally, the original function of the structure must be easily recognized and integrity of materials and association must be intact. OMB No. 1024-0018

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Victory Heights Elementary School. Original Plans and Specifications. 1939.

Victory Heights Elementary School. Plans and Specification for Second Story Addition and Cafeteria. 1949.

Victory Heights Elementary School. Plans and Specifications for Primary Classroom Addition. 1958.

#### **Interviews**

Gross, Odell. Interview by author 2, December, 2003.

Vermillion, Frank. Interview by author 2, December, 2003.



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#### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The proposed National Boundary for the Victory Heights Elementary School is a parcel of three acres of land described in Clark County Deed Book 117, page 121, dated November 12, 1938. See attached Parcel map with reference D.B. 136, pg. 468.

#### **Boundary Justification**

The boundary of the nominated property encompasses approximately 3 acres of property that was originally purchased for the construction of Victory Heights in 1938. The nominated structure is contained within these three acres. Although the State Board of Education required the purchase of more property during the construction of the second floor and cafeteria in 1949, these parcels to not contain any buildings or playground features that contribute to the significance of the building. The nominated area contains the school structure and parking lot located east of the structure and two non-contributing storage buildings located north of the parking lot.

