

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

..... Name of Property
..... County and State
..... Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number ___ Page 1

Supplementary Listing Record

NRIS Reference Number: SG100003973

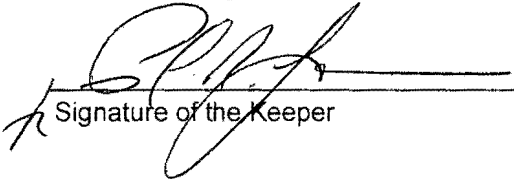
Date Listed: 5/20/2019

Property Name: Prairie Grove School

County: Des Moines

State: IA

This Property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation



Signature of the Keeper

5/20/2019

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Description:

The narrative description is revised to note that the School is located immediately to the west and south of the Prairie Grove Cemetery, as per the aerial maps provided with the nomination; and the extant shed-roof outhouse is located northeast of the school. [This corrects citations provided in the first two paragraphs of the narrative.]

The school grounds are being encroached on by the expansion of cemetery burial plots, but the nomination is not counting any of the cemetery features as components of this nomination as they do not represent the historically significant themes of Architecture and Education. At this point they are considered as components of the overall historic setting and do not negatively impact the integrity of the school property or its ability to convey its significance.

The IOWA SHPO was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Prairie Grove School
other names/site number Prairie Grove Independent School District; Flint River School No. 6
Name of Multiple Property Listing _____
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 13598 Beaverdale Road not for publication
city or town West Burlington vicinity
state Iowa county Des Moines zip code 52601

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 at the following level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria: X A ___ B X C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date _____
State Historical Society of Iowa
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting official Steve King Date 12 APR 2019

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register
___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register
___ other (explain): _____
Signature of the Keeper [Signature] Date of Action 5/20/2019

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		site
		structure
		object
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE
walls: STONE
WOOD
roof: ASPHALT
other: _____

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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph (Briefly describe the current, general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Prairie Grove School is located immediately east and south of Prairie Grove Cemetery, which lies between N. Prairie Grove Road and Beaverdale Road/Co. Rd. X40 in the northwest corner of Flint River Township, approximately 11 miles northwest of Burlington in Des Moines County in southeastern Iowa. The school and cemetery are part of the small unincorporated rural community of Prairie Grove that developed between these two rural roads. Built in 1879, Prairie Grove School is a nineteenth-century rural schoolhouse with good historic integrity. It has a foundation and exterior walls of limestone masonry and a front-gable roof. In 1926, a wood belfry and front cloakroom were added to the stone schoolhouse, and after 1945, modern conveniences, including electric lights, an oil burning furnace, and running water for a drinking fountain and sink, were brought to the school to keep it functional until it closed in 1960. One of two original shed-roof outhouses is extant and located southeast of the school.

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable.)

(**Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions:** After the main **Narrative Description**, discuss any physical alterations since the period of significance under the subheading **Alterations**, the seven aspects of integrity as it applies to the property in a **Statement of Integrity**, and any future plans for the property under the subheading **Future Plans**.)

Prairie Grove School is located immediately east and south of Prairie Grove Cemetery, which lies between N. Prairie Grove Road and Beaverdale Road/Co. Rd. X40 in the SE quarter of the NW quarter of Section 7 in the northwest corner of Flint River Township, approximately 11 miles northwest of the Mississippi River town of Burlington in Des Moines County in southeastern Iowa. N. Prairie Grove Road and Beaverdale Road meet in a Y intersection southeast of the school, forming a triangular shaped area between that developed informally as the historic community of Prairie Grove. A sign reading Prairie Grove is positioned near this crossroads. The topography surrounding the school is flat to gently rolling, with wooded areas lining the west and north sides of the cemetery and along the banks of the branch of Flint Creek. This waterway divides the north (original) section of the cemetery from the south (newer) section of the cemetery, where Prairie Grove School is situated. The original route of N. Prairie Grove Road forms the north and west boundary of the original section of the cemetery. This road was once the main road within the community and provided access to the school on the east, the church on west, and the historic Prairie Grove Store, where it joined Beaverdale Road. These three buildings formed the historic core of the unincorporated rural community of Prairie Grove. Today, the community includes the Prairie Grove School museum, Prairie Grove Cemetery, Peace Lutheran Church (historic church with modern additions), and the former and much neglected Prairie Grove Store (a two-story front-gable commercial building). Two farmsteads border this community, one on the northwest side of the community (north side of Beaverdale Road) and one on the southwest side (south side of Beaverdale Road). Both feature early to mid-twentieth farmhouses, barns, and outbuildings. Nearly all of the buildings in this small crossroads community can be seen from various vantage points around Prairie Grove School.

The schoolhouse, which faces south, has a rectangular footprint and a limestone foundation. Built in 1879, the original schoolhouse has exterior walls of native limestone masonry and a gable front roof. Each long side of the schoolhouse features three original 6/6, wooden, double hung windows, each with flat stone headers and stone sills. The rear gable end has no fenestration. In 1926, a wood-frame cloakroom addition was built onto the façade of the original stone schoolhouse and a wood belfry (including the extant bell) was added, positioned on the ridge of the roof of the original stone school. The cloakroom addition has a concrete slab floor, exterior walls clad in horizontal wood clapboard, and a front-gable roof. Fenestration includes a central entrance door flanked by two 1/1 double hung wood windows. The frames and sashes of these windows are original, but the glass has been replaced.

Interior

Over the past 15 years, Prairie Grove School has been restored and preserved by the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association and other volunteers as a late 1940s-1950s rural schoolhouse museum. The interior has freshly

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repaired plaster walls and paint, original student and teacher's desks, piano, and many other historical artifacts original to the school, including books, wall maps, and recess equipment. Handwritten names of students under the coat hooks in the cloakroom are extant. After World War II, a few modern conveniences were added to Prairie Grove School. In 1946, the building was wired for electricity and interior light fixtures were installed. In 1948, the coal burning stove was replaced with an oil burning furnace, which probably included building the exterior brick chimney stack on the west side. In 1953, a water line was built to the school, giving the students a sink and water fountain in the classroom. Linoleum floor tile was installed over the historic wood flooring c.1953, likely around the same time that the sink and drinking fountain were installed. All of these historic alterations are extant and reflect the latter two decades of Prairie Grove School's history.

Contributing Outhouse/Privy

A historic outhouse/privy is located approximately 60 feet from the northeast corner of the school and is a contributing resource to the nominated school. The privy has a nearly square footprint, a concrete foundation, exterior walls clad in vertical wood siding, and a shed roof with overhanging open eaves. The door to the privy is located on the south side facing toward the school. One small square window is positioned in the upper half of the east wall and north wall. In 2012 and 2013, repairs to the privy made it functional. This outhouse served as the girls' privy. The boys' privy was located just west of this but is nonextant. A newspaper photo from 1961 (Figure 10), the year after the school closed, shows both outhouses north of the school.

Post Period of Significance Alterations

In 1976, the original wood roof shingles were replaced with asphalt shingles. In 2003, when the restoration of the schoolhouse first began, the building received a new asphalt roof. Stone repair and interior wall repair and paint have been completed in the last few years, work which was partly funded by the State Historical Society of Iowa's Country School Grant. Just northwest of the school, the contributing wooden, shed-roof outhouse was repaired and put in working order in 2012 and 2013. In 2017, a new roof that mimics the original wood shingle roof was installed, and in 2018, volunteers added a period-correct door to the school's entryway.

Timeline of Historic and Modern Alterations

- Front cloakroom and belfry with bell added to stone school – 1926
- School wired for electricity and interior lights installed – 1946
- Oil burning furnace installed and exterior brick chimney stack built – 1948
- Water line built to school and sink and water fountain installed in classroom – 1953
- Linoleum tile floor installed (probably same year the sink and water fountain were installed) – c.1953
- Original wood roof shingles replaced with asphalt – 1976
- Restoration of schoolhouse as museum begins with new asphalt shingle roof – 2003
- Stone repair, interior plaster wall repair, exterior paint – early to mid 2010s
- Contributing outhouse/privy repaired – 2012 and 2013
- New roof that mimics original wood shingles installed – 2017
- Period correct front door installed – 2018

Statement of Integrity

Prairie Grove School reflects its period of significance (1879 to 1960) and meets the National Register's seven aspects of integrity.

Location - This is the location where the original stone Prairie Grove School was built in 1879, onto which a front cloakroom addition and bell tower were built in 1926.

Setting - Prairie Grove School was built just outside the boundaries of Prairie Grove Cemetery, a pioneer cemetery established in the 1840s by early settlers of northwest Flint River Township. The rural cemetery setting remains intact, although the cemetery has expanded to surround the school. The rural crossroads community of Prairie

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Grove west and south of the school and cemetery is extant and includes the Peace Lutheran Church (a historic church with modern additions), the historic Prairie Grove Store (original but abandoned and neglected), and two bordering farmsteads that retain some historic farm buildings.

Materials - The original materials of Prairie Grove School have been preserved, including the exterior limestone masonry, wood, and windows. Exterior materials, particularly mortar and stone, are in good condition. Many original and historic interior features have been retained as well, including plaster walls, blackboard, student and teacher desks, as well as post-World War II improvements including the sink and drinking fountain, linoleum flooring, and electric lighting. The mix of original and newer historic materials reflects the layers of history extant in the school's 81-year period of significance.

Design - The design of Prairie Grove School is intact, a combination of the original one-room stone schoolhouse and the 1926 cloakroom addition and belfry.

Workmanship – Prairie Grove School retains original configurations, fenestration patterns, exterior materials (except roof shingles), and architectural embellishments that show the workmanship of original builders and contractors. The historic one-room schoolhouse also retains historic early to mid-twentieth-century interior features and furnishings, including plaster walls, blackboard, student and teacher desks, as well as post-World War II modern conveniences and improvements including the sink and drinking fountain, linoleum flooring, furnace, and electric lighting.

Feeling – Prairie Grove School still reflects the sense of time and place of the property during its period of significance, such that former students of the school would easily recognize it. The exterior is unchanged from its 1926 appearance, and the interior reflects both its mid-1920s history as well as its updated 1940s-1950s history.

Association - Through its original and historic exterior architecture and interior features, Prairie Grove School retains strong associations with its history as a late-nineteenth to mid-twentieth-century rural one-room schoolhouse.

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Figure 1. Prairie Grove School with new roof shingles, view northwest, May 2017
Photo by Gary Johnson, Iowa City, Iowa

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1879-1960

Significant Dates

1879

1926

1960

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

McCormick, Arch

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Statement of Significance

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

Prairie Grove School is locally significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, Prairie Grove School is associated with the history of rural education, the community of Prairie Grove, and the surrounding farming community in northwestern Flint River Township. Under Criterion C, Prairie Grove School is an intact example of a late-nineteenth-century American vernacular rural schoolhouse: a long narrow rectangle (approximately 28x18 feet), with a bank of three windows on each side, a central front entrance, and a front-gable roof with belfry. The original 1879 schoolhouse was built of native limestone, and a wood-frame cloakroom addition was built in 1926. Inside, the classroom was well-equipped (i.e., piano, books, maps, globe, slate blackboard, and playground equipment), reflecting the commitment of the community to providing its children with a quality education. Linoleum floor tile, electric lights, indoor plumbing, and furnace were interior improvements made during the late 1940s and early 1950s to keep the schoolhouse functional in the waning years of rural education. Prairie Grove School is one of a dwindling number of well preserved and maintained one-room rural schoolhouses in the state and is one of only two preserved schoolhouses in Des Moines County. Prairie Grove School is representative of the history of Flint River Township's independent schools and the generations of farming families in Independent District No. 6 that it served. The period of significance for Prairie Grove School is 1879-1960, from the date of its construction to the year the school was closed.

Narrative Statement of Significance

 (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

(Iowa SHPO Additional Instructions: For properties not nominated under Criterion D, include a statement about whether any archaeological remains within or beyond the footprint of the property were assessed as part of this nomination under the subheading **Archaeological Assessment**.)

Criterion A: History of Prairie Grove School

Prairie Grove School is associated with the history of rural education and the community of Prairie Grove in northwestern Flint River Township in Des Moines County, Iowa. The history of the Prairie Grove community and its schoolhouse began with Joel Johnson, a native of Tennessee, who first arrived in Flint River Township in 1840. In 1841, Johnson purchased from the General Land Office in Burlington 160 acres in the SE quarter of the NW quarter of Section 7, along with an additional 145 acres in the W½ of the SW quarter of Section 7. A widower with five children, Johnson married Lucinda Judd in 1846, and the couple eventually added 10 more children to the family. In 1849, just one year after the state constitution had "made provision for a "system of common schools" under a Superintendent of Public Instruction," the Johnsons gave a parcel of their land in the NW quarter for the construction of a schoolhouse. This parcel lay just south of land that later became Prairie Grove Cemetery, and on which neighboring landowning brothers Hiram and Samuel Cockayne had built a log cabin structure (dubbed "Cockayne School") that had served as the area's first schoolhouse. School sites, such as that of Prairie Grove School, "were one acre in size and usually located in a corner of a section "to minimize disruption on the neighboring farm" and "fenced off with trees along the property line." Farmers ordinarily donated this land "to be used for school purposes." The Cockayne families and the Johnson family all had large numbers of children (13, 13, and 15, respectively), a fact that may explain in part these early settlers' immediate need for schoolhouses (Dieber and Beedle 2002:3,10; Hueschen 1963; Find-a-Grave website).

The schoolhouse built in 1849 on Johnson's donated parcel was constructed of locally manufactured brick and the building served the rural community for almost three decades. By 1869, however, a report on Flint River Township's schools, probably by the county superintendent, found School No. 6 to be less than adequate:

The school house is of brick, and is large enough to accommodate 30 pupils. It is in a beautiful location, but is desperately dirty above all things -black, gloomy, cheerless and comfortless does it appear inside. It should be put in better condition at once, by cleaning, furnishing with suitable seats and desks, fencing, building out houses and tree setting (*Burlington Daily Hawkeye-Gazette*, June 15, 1869).

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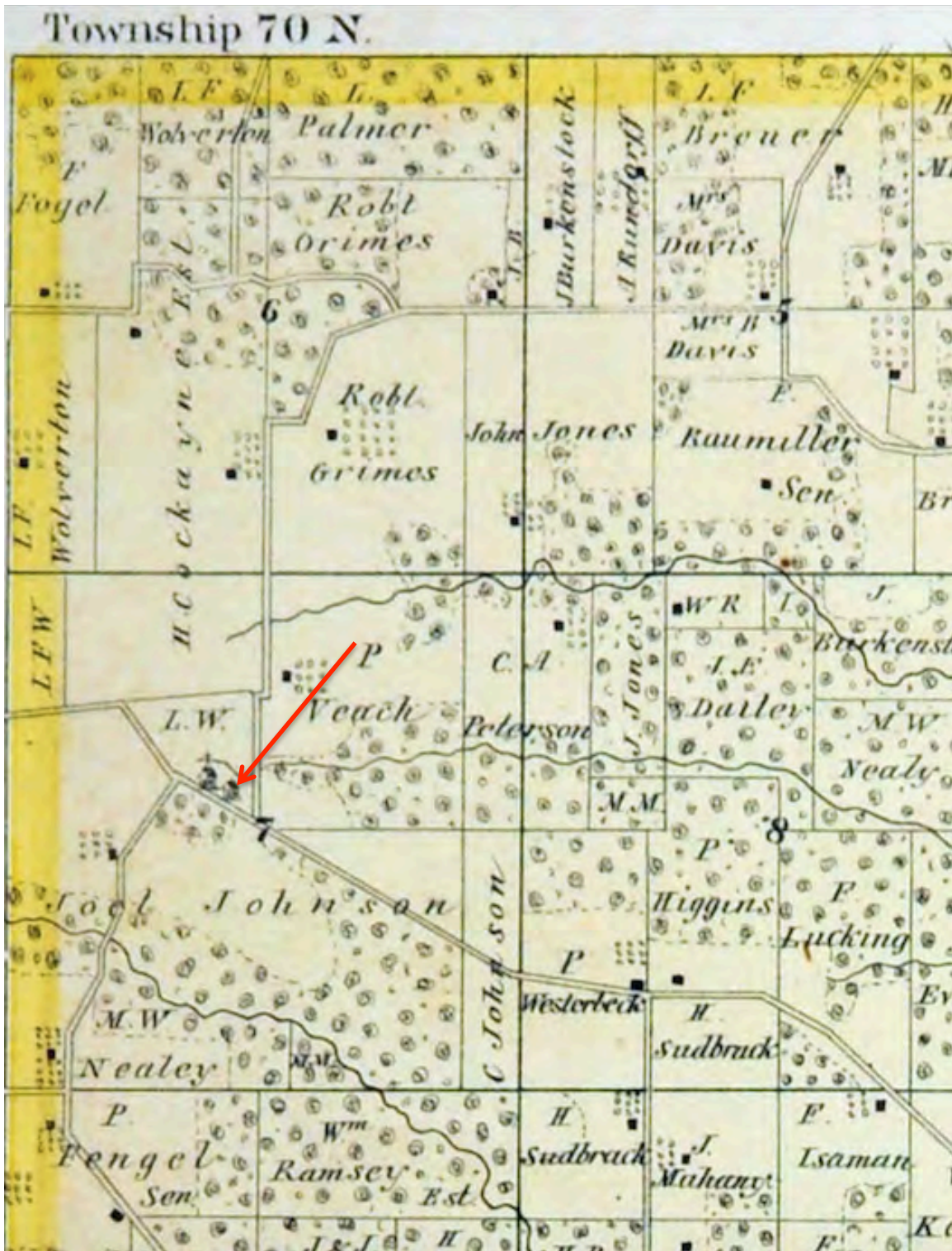


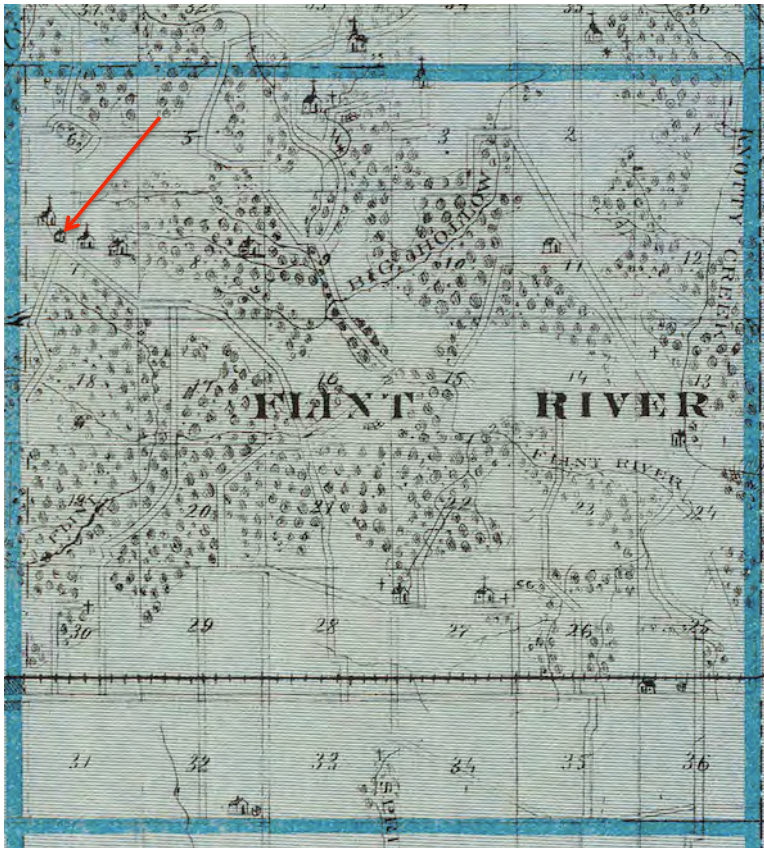
Figure 2. The previous brick Prairie Grove School, as shown on the 1873 plat map of Flint River Township
Source: Andreas 1873

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In 1874, with 58 students enrolled, Flint River School No. 6 was beyond capacity and past its prime. In the fall of 1878, plans were made to replace the old schoolhouse with one built of limestone. The limestone was hauled to the site by men from the community from a stone quarry in Danville Township approximately two miles west of Prairie Grove. The stone schoolhouse was completed in 1879. The old brick building was sold at auction, with the proceeds from the sale and money from the surplus teachers' fund used to open the new Prairie Grove schoolhouse free of debt (Hueschen 1963).

Figure 3. The previous brick Prairie Grove School, as shown on map of Des Moines County, 1875. Source: Andreas Atlas Co 1875

The name Prairie Grove School was not widely used until the 1890s. Prairie Grove seems to have evolved as an unofficial name of the immediate rural neighborhood. Prairie Grove Cemetery and Prairie Grove Church predated the name of the school.¹ The earliest reference to Prairie Grove School in the *Burlington Gazette* appears in 1896. That same year a post office, known as Fan, was established just north of Prairie Grove Church. The name appears on the 1897 Flint River Township Plat Map. By 1898, however, the Fan post office was discontinued.

Education was considered a fundamental necessity to Iowa's early settlers, and the state prided itself on its commitment to public education. The first school opened in Lee County in 1830, sixteen years before Iowa achieved statehood. The first schoolhouse, built of logs, was constructed in 1833 near the Dubuque lead mines. "By the time the Iowa Territory was organized in 1838, there were already between 40 and 50 established schools, and eight years later the state constitution made provision for a 'system of common schools' under a Superintendent of Public Instruction" (Deiber and Beedle 2002:3).

The Iowa legislature passed an education bill in 1858 "making the civil township the official school district" (Deiber and Beedle 2002:3).

Towns with more than 1,000 residents (a number later lowered to 100) could become independent districts operating separately from the township districts. County superintendents were elected to supervise both the township and independent schools.

An official school township district included up to nine sub-districts, each containing an area of four square miles, with the school building in the center. In this manner, no child would have to walk more than two miles to get to [his or] her school. In reality, local politics, large families, or changing demographics often dictated that a schoolhouse move to another more advantageous site in the district (Deiber and Beedle 2002:3).

In his thesis "A History of School Organization and Superintendence in Iowa," Wayne Palmer Truesdell considered 1858 as the end of the first period of Iowa education, with the "establishment of the common school under lay control" and the beginning of the second period, characterized by the "struggle for better schools through larger districts, better trained teachers, and better supervision" (Truesdell 1965:4; Deiber and Beedle 2002:4).

¹ According to Gary Johnson, former student of Prairie Grove School, the cemetery was established long before the Union Church was built. The Union Church was built c.1872 and is shown on the 1873 plat map (Figure 2). The Union Church was shared by two congregations, one Lutheran and one Baptist, until the early 1950s. Anyone could purchase a plot in the cemetery, but over the years it has primarily been Lutherans and Baptists.

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The 1858 law was refined in 1872 to allow sub-districts to become their own independent school districts. In the process, control of the rural schools was transferred from the township to rural neighborhoods. Schools had to maintain a minimum attendance of pupils to remain independent. As such, an independent school was governed "by its own board of trustees, and for a time at least, education came under the control of the local residents" (Deiber and Beedle 2002:3). Prairie Grove became an independent school district at some point after 1872 and this transfer of control to the local community was likely the catalyst for building the stone school in 1879. Interestingly, whether schools were built under "the township system or the independent school district, the result was the entrenchment of the one-room country school as the dominant educational force in the state" (Neymeyer 2000:E-5). The tradition of the rural, ungraded school controlled by the immediate community was firmly established. In the years to 1900, some 66% of those students receiving primary education would attend these schools. The year 1901 was the high point for rural school districts [in Iowa] with 12,623 students in attendance (ibid.).

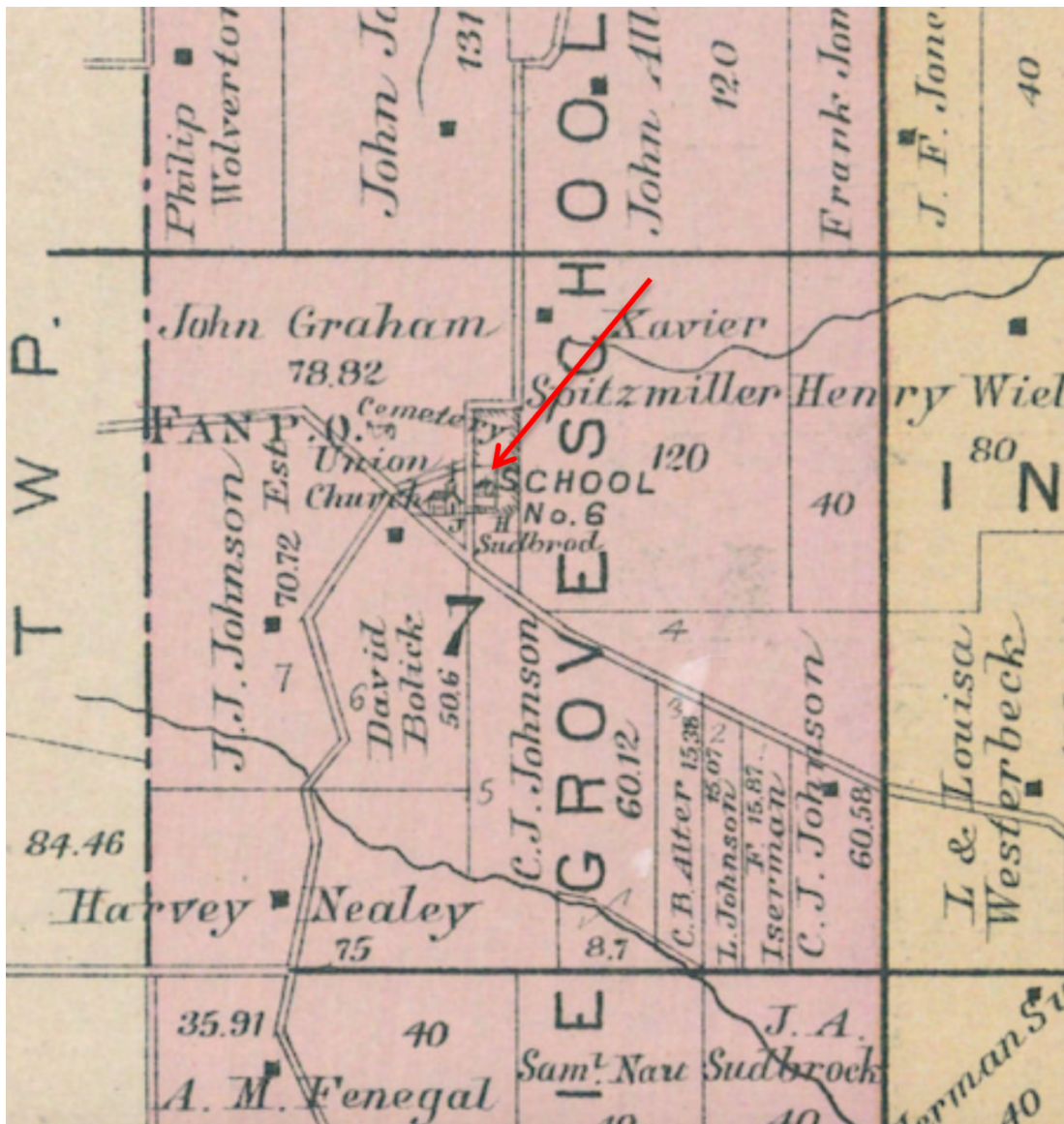


Figure 4. Prairie Grove School, as shown on plat map of Flint River Township, 1897. Note the "Fan" post office, which was discontinued just one year later. Prairie Grove, by which the cemetery and school had been locally known since at least the 1870s, gradually became the unofficial name of this rural crossroads community. Source: North West Publishing Co 1897

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Figure 5. Prairie Grove School, Class of 1916, pose at rear of school
Source: Prairie Grove School website 2017



Figure 6. Prairie Grove School, Class of 1927-28
Source: Prairie Grove School website 2017

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The rural school consolidation movement, begun in Iowa in the early 1890s, sought to standardize and modernize rural education by closing rural schools and transporting students to new consolidated township schools. The movement was slow getting started but gained increasing momentum from the early to mid-twentieth century. Iowa's first school consolidation law was passed in 1906, and "mandated that a school district include no fewer than sixteen square miles; and electors in both urban and rural areas had to approve the larger district in separate votes." Four years later, only ten consolidated schools existed in the state. In 1913, another law "further encouraged the rural school consolidation movement—funding for consolidated schools" (Deiber and Beedle 2002:5-8; see also May 1956:1-64).

Districts could receive aid for schools if they met grounds and building requirements, had acceptable public transportation for students, hired certified teachers, maintained an agriculture experiment plot, and owned the proper equipment to teach agriculture, home economics and manual training. Schools received money for equipment and instruction according to the number of rooms in the buildings—a two-room school received \$250 for equipment and \$200 for instruction, three-roomed schools brought in \$350 for equipment and \$500 for instruction, and four rooms got the school board \$500 for equipment and \$750 for instruction (Deiber and Beedle 2002:7-8)



Over more than half a century, Iowa's rural schools closed, and many of the buildings subsequently vanished from the landscape. In 1919, a minimum attendance law forced directors to close schools "that had fewer than five students in average daily attendance or could not show the planned attendance of at least ten pupils for the following year. Country schools struggled to stay open under the stringent minimum attendance requirements, garnering some sympathy from local politicians. By 1925, the number required for anticipated attendance was lowered from ten to seven" (Deiber and Beedle 2002:8).

Figure 7. Prairie Grove School Class of 1951-52. Note the linoleum floor tile has not yet been laid; desks and blackboard are extant. Source: Prairie Grove School website 2017

In 1945, Iowa passed legislation that "allowed directors to close a school if the operating cost per pupil was greater than the cost of tuition at another school." In 1953, another law was passed "requiring the formation of community school districts to receive public funding with each district absorbing all elementary schools in the region." This law "effectively closed any remaining country schools (Deiber and Beedle 2002:4-8).

Prairie Grove School outlasted most of Iowa's rural one-room schools. After 1945, changes to the schoolhouse involved adding modern conveniences: electricity in 1946; an oil burning furnace with chimney stack in 1948; and a water line for a sink and drinking fountain in 1953 (Prairie Grove School 2005). As Deiber and Beedle write:

The greatest contrast among country schools was in classroom equipment. Here the district's prosperity, or lack thereof, and a commitment to providing quality education were most evident. There was usually a built-in bookcase to house a library. Student desks, singles or doubles, and a recitation bench varied somewhat from building to building, but it was the size and design of the teacher's desk, and the presence of a pump organ or piano, wall maps, globes, and curtains that distinguished schools from one another. Blackboards ranged from painted wood to slate. While the austere exterior symbolized practicality, the interior reflected the community's concern for the children (Deiber and Beedle 2002:11).

That Prairie Grove School was able to remain open until 1960, 54 years after the state passed its first consolidation law in 1906, is a testament to the dedication of this rural neighborhood to maintaining and populating this school. It managed to survive the 1919 minimum attendance law that mandated school closure if a school had an average daily attendance of fewer than five students "or could not show the planned attendance of at least ten pupils for the following year" (Deiber and Beedle 2002:8). In 1920, attendance at Prairie Grove School was 26, and remained over 20 through 1932. When the

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front cloak room addition and belfry were built in 1926, the school undoubtedly anticipated many years of future use. Class sizes at Prairie Grove School had fluctuated over the decades, varying from a high of 47 students in 1890 to just 9 students in 1939. After World War II ended, however, the number of students jumped to 33 in 1947. Even in 1959, the last school year at Prairie Grove, 20 students were enrolled, although the class of 1960 graduated just one eighth grade student – Gary Johnson. After that, the Prairie Grove Independent School District closed and merged with the Danville Community School District for the following school year. Consolidation of the state's rural independent schools continued until in 1972, not a single public one-room school was operating in Iowa (Hueschen 1963; Prairie Grove School 2005; Neises 2003).

Just one year after the school closed, descendants of Joel Johnson's estate deeded the land to the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association. The association then purchased the school and made plans to preserve it as a local historic site (Hueschen 1963). In 1962, a Prairie Grove School reunion was held at the schoolhouse, an event that attracted more than 100 former students and teachers. These Prairie Grove School reunions have recurred periodically ever since, and these events, along with the surrounding cemetery grounds, have contributed to the preservation of this one-room rural schoolhouse, which today operates as a museum (*Burlington Hawk Eye*, September 9, 1962; Neises 2003).

Criterion C: The Rural Schoolhouse as a Property Type

Prairie Grove School is a good example of a typical late-nineteenth to early-twentieth-century rural Iowa schoolhouse. It features generalized vernacular Greek Revival details, including overall symmetry, a front-gable roof, and flat window headers, all common architectural features of early rural schoolhouses. The overall symmetry of the building is largely achieved through fenestration. The 1926 front cloakroom addition continues the symmetry of the original schoolhouse, with a central front door flanked by two windows and front gable roof.



Figure 8. Students posed on east side of Prairie Grove School in 1948. Source: Prairie Grove School website 2017

In Iowa, the rural schoolhouse property type was dominated by front-gabled buildings, with later types that included bungalow-style or cube-shaped buildings with hip roofs. Most Iowa schools had a single entry door, with later examples including cloakroom vestibules or hallways and sometimes two entry doors, one for boys and one for girls. "The earliest schools did not have a cloakroom," but this feature began to be added in the 1860s-1870s to older schools as shed additions. "By 1890, schools were

being constructed with an internal entry hall leading into the main classroom." Most schools were built without basements and were heated by wood or coal-fired stoves. Bell towers were uncommon on early schools; teachers used hand bells to call pupils to class. The window arrangement for early rural schoolhouses had two to four sets of windows on opposing walls used for cross lighting. By the early 1920s, the state superintendent's office had issued new standards that endorsed the use of a bank of windows on only one elevation after determining that cross lighting was harmful to pupils' eyes (Johnson 1998:11; Rogers and Price 2013).

Prairie Grove School was like many nineteenth-century one-room schoolhouses in that it resembled a country church in appearance. Such schools were typically a long rectangle in shape (18 feet wide and 28 feet long), with a bank of three double hung sash windows on both long sides, a central front entrance, and a gable roof. They were built of commercial materials, such as dimension lumber, bricks, concrete block, wood shingles, and local limestone, and usually painted white both to reflect the sun and adhere to tradition. While architectural plan books for such buildings were available,

Prairie Grove School
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"most country schools were designed and built by local craftsman." Prairie Grove School remained largely unchanged until 1926, when the school district hired local contractor Arch McCormick to build a wood-frame entryway/cloakroom onto the front of the school. First introduced in the 1890s, these front cloakrooms had become popular additions to the standard Iowa schoolhouse design. McCormick also installed a new roof and added a belfry to the Prairie Grove schoolhouse. According to historians Camilla Dieber and Peggy Beedle, "[b]ell towers were uncommon on most of Iowa's country schools built in the 20th century. Those few schools that were adorned with bell towers were usually in more prosperous communities," suggesting Prairie Grove may have been one such community (Dieber and Beedle 2002:9-10, 11; Hueschen 1963).

Iowa has been touted as "America's Country School Capital" because it is believed that "no state can match Iowa's total of standing one-room schools and the number that have been preserved as museums" (Sherman, ed. 1998:63). However, the rural schoolhouse building stock in Iowa will continue to lose those buildings that are not restored or converted to other purposes. Prairie Grove School's simple form, substantial masonry construction, inviting entry addition, and prominent belfry have made it a lasting and beloved landmark in Des Moines County. It is certainly evocative of the one-room school experience in rural Iowa. In its current function as a museum, the building imparts an experience for children to learn about Iowa's educational past and the importance of a free, public education in the State's history. Its location within Prairie Grove Cemetery, its ownership by the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association, and its restoration, maintenance, and educational programming directed by a dedicated committee made up primarily of former students will help insure its survival for many more years to come.

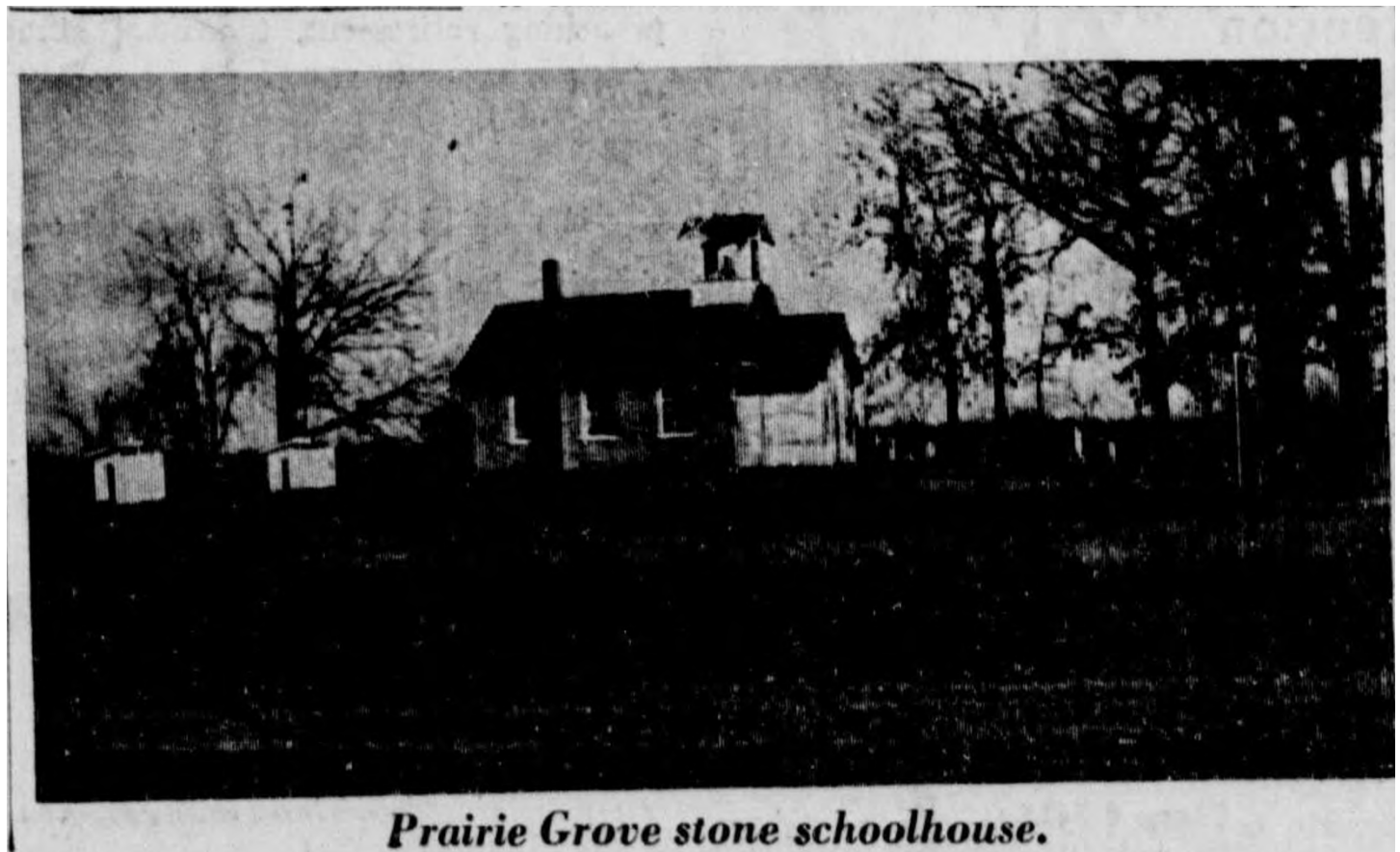


Figure 9. Prairie Grove School, 1962, two years after closing.
Note the two outhouses on the left. Source: *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, September 9, 1962

Prairie Grove School

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Figure 10. Prairie Grove School, two decades after closing
Source: *Burlington Hawk-Eye*, April 19, 1981

Archaeological Assessment

The potential for any prehistoric or historic archaeological remains within the property boundary was not assessed as part of the present National Register nomination. The parcel is part of an active cemetery and includes one extant contributing privy and one non-extant historic privy approximately 60 feet from the northeast corner of the school. The location of the nonextant outhouse should be explored if any future burials are to be made in that area.

Acknowledgements

This National Register Nomination of Prairie Grove School was made possible by the Building Committee of the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association and the leadership of Gary Johnson of Iowa City, who was the last student to graduate from Prairie Grove School.

Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa
County and State

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>40.880422</u> Latitude	<u>-91.248554</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property – Prairie Grove School – encompasses approximately one acre located in the southwest section of the following 4.840-acre parcel, platted as Prairie Grove Cemetery and owned by the Prairie Grove Cemetery Association: the northeast part of the Southeast Quarter of the Northwest Quarter of Section 7 of Flint River Township (T70N-R3W). The north boundary is approximately 190 feet; the east boundary is approximately 250 feet; the south boundary is approximately 185 feet; and the west boundary is approximately 205 feet. The outhouse/privy – located approximately 60 feet from the northeast corner of the schoolhouse – is a contributing building to the nominated property.

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes a one-acre plot of land that is historically associated with the Prairie Grove School. The outhouse/privy – located approximately 60 feet from the northeast corner of the schoolhouse – is a contributing building to the nominated property. The school and outhouse are located within the Prairie Grove Cemetery, which is an active cemetery, and in recent years newer burials have been added within the historic school boundary. These burials do not materially affect the integrity of the school site or its ability to convey its significance, nor will future burials within these boundaries likely be of concern.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jennifer A. Price, PhD/Consultant date April 2019
organization Price Preservation Research telephone (319) 594-9513
street & number P.O. Box 5201 email jenniferprice1311@icloud.com
city or town Coralville state IA zip code 52241

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Prairie Grove School

Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa

County and State

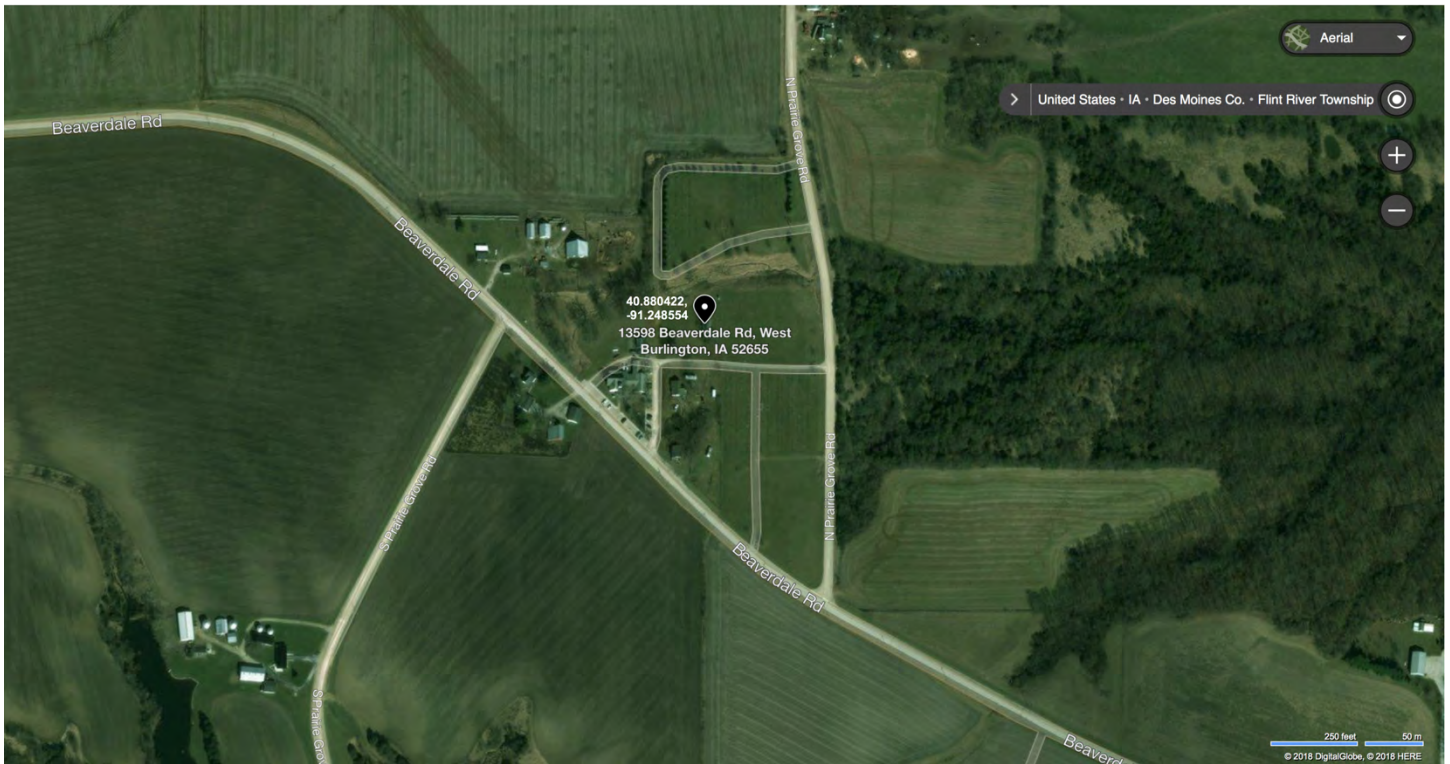


Figure 11. GIS Location Map **N**↑

Source: Bing Maps 2018

Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa
County and State



Figure 12. Local Location Map and Photo Key (Photo 20)

Base map: 2018 Aerial/ Des Moines County Assessor

Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa
County and State

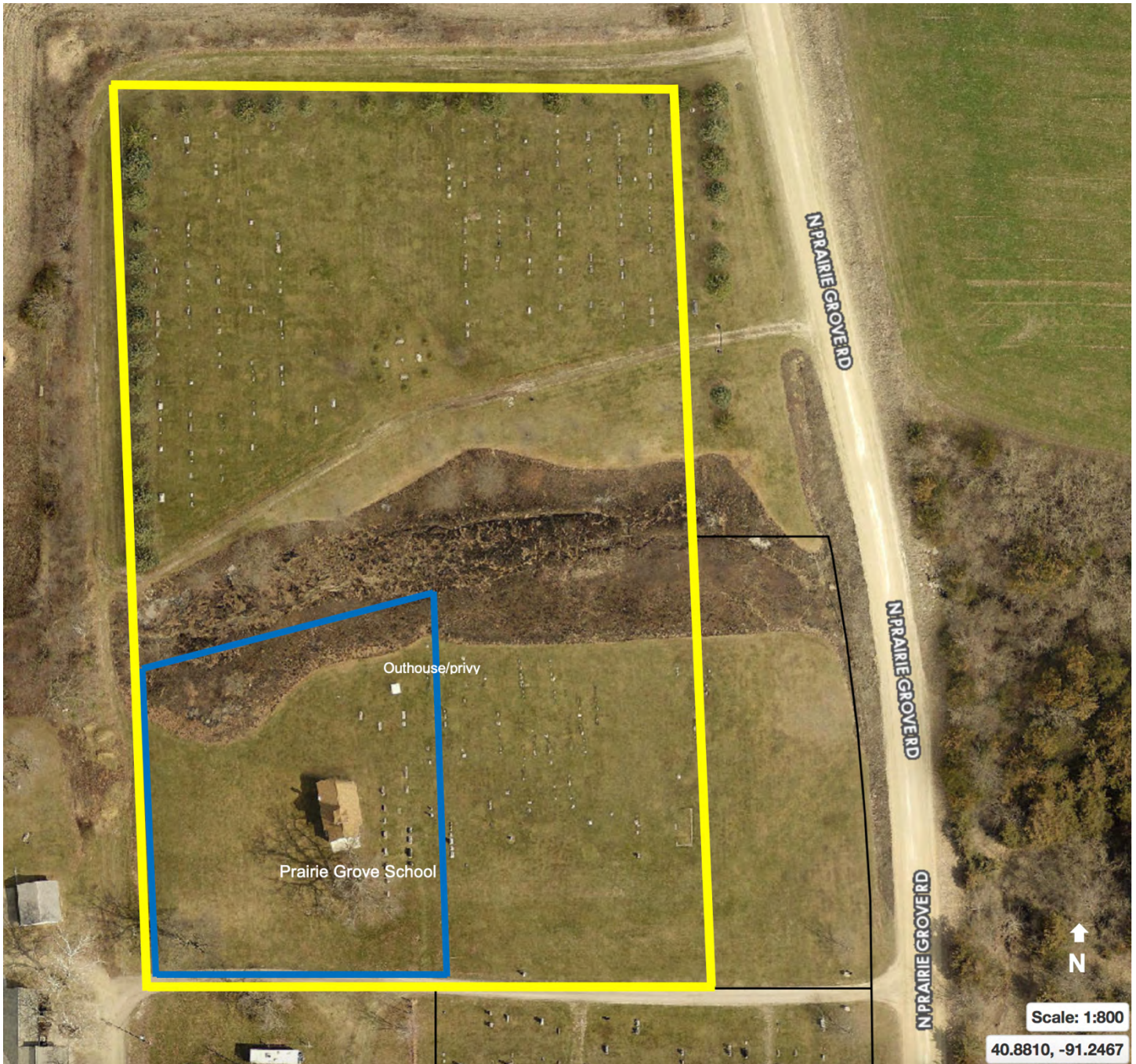


Figure 13. Boundary Map

Yellow = Cemetery boundary
Blue = Historic school site (nominated property boundary)

Base map: 2018 Aerial/ Des Moines County Assessor

Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa
County and State

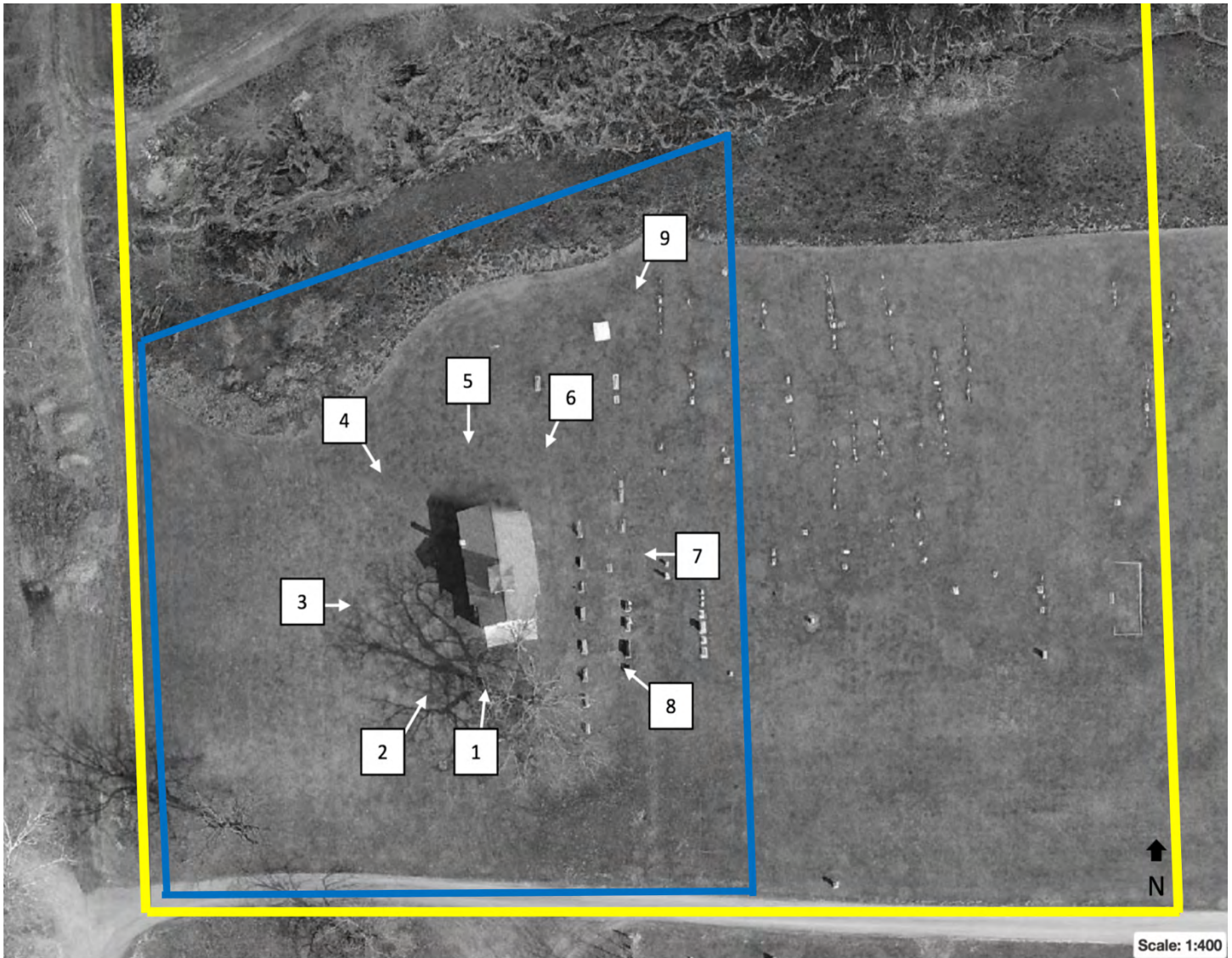


Figure 14. Exterior Photo Key (Photos 1-9)

Base map: 2018 Aerial/ Des Moines County Assessor

Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

Des Moines County, Iowa
County and State

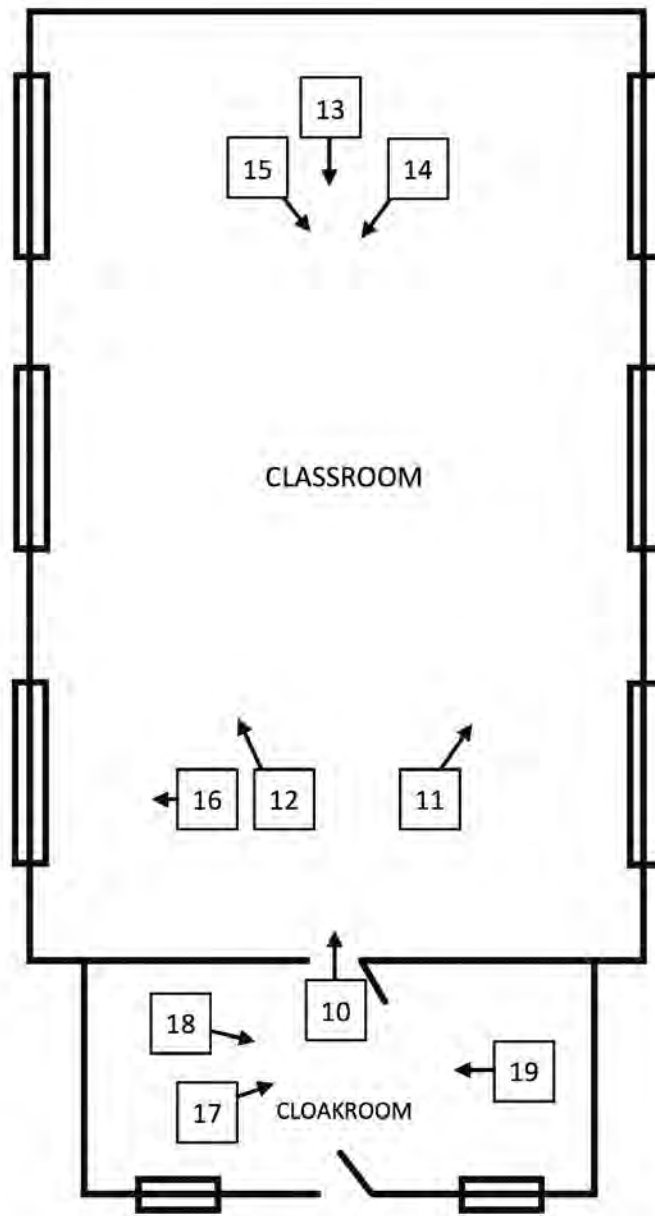


Figure 15. Floor Plan & Photo Key (Photos 10-19)

not to scale

Drawing by Price Preservation Research 2018

Prairie Grove School
Name of Property

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County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Prairie Grove School
City or Vicinity: West Burlington
County: Des Moines **State:** IA
Photographer: Jennifer A. Price
Date Photographed: February 3, 2017

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 20: View northeast
- Photo 2 of 20: View north-northeast
- Photo 3 of 20: View west
- Photo 4 of 20: View northwest
- Photo 5 of 20: View south
- Photo 6 of 20: View southwest
- Photo 7 of 20: View west
- Photo 8 of 20: View northwest
- Photo 9 of 20: View southwest of outhouse and school
- Photo 10 of 20: Interior of classroom, view north from cloakroom addition
- Photo 11 of 20: Interior of classroom, view northeast
- Photo 12 of 20: Interior of classroom, view northwest
- Photo 13 of 20: Interior of classroom, view south from teacher's desk
- Photo 14 of 20: Interior of classroom, view southwest
- Photo 15 of 20: Interior of classroom, view southeast
- Photo 16 of 20: Interior of classroom: sink and drinking fountain in northeast corner
- Photo 17 of 20: Interior of cloakroom addition, view northeast
- Photo 18 of 20: Interior of cloakroom addition, view east-southeast
- Photo 19 of 20: Interior of cloakroom addition, view west
- Photo 20 of 20: View northwest of Prairie Grove, from junction of N. Prairie Grove Road and Beaverdale Road

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County and State

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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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



PRAIRIE GROVE
SCHOOL
1840-1960



PRAIRIEGROVE
SCHOOL
1840-1960













PRAIRIE GROVE
SCHOOL
1840-1960









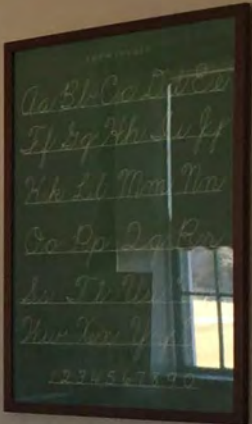
PRAIRIE GROVE
SCHOOL
OPEN HOUSE



PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE SEATING

Prarie Grove
School
Open House





PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH THESE

Public School
Education
Department

Public School
Education
Department



PRAIRIE GROVE
SCHOOL
OPEN HOUSE









PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH ITEMS THANK YOU

PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH ITEMS THANK YOU





OPEN HOUSE

AMERICAN CLIPPER



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination
Property Name: Prairie Grove School
Multiple Name:
State & County: IOWA, Des Moines

Date Received: 4/15/2019 Date of Pending List: 5/2/2019 Date of 16th Day: 5/17/2019 Date of 45th Day: 5/30/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: SG100003973

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 5/20/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Prairie Grove School is locally significant under National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Education and Architecture. The Prairie Grove School represents an increasingly rare example of a well preserved and maintained one-room nineteenth-century school house in Des Moines County. Built in 1879 with a modest frame cloakroom addition in 1926, the rectangular, native limestone building is an excellent illustration of late nineteenth-century vernacular rural schoolhouse design. In operation from 1879 to 1960, the school reflects the significant historic patterns of educational development in rural Flint River Township.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian

Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 5/20/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF
CULTURAL AFFAIRS

KIM REYNOLDS, GOVERNOR
ADAM GREGG, LT. GOVERNOR

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL PRODUCE IOWA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

CHRIS KRAMER, DIRECTOR



April 12, 2019

Joy Beasley, Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms Beasley:

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

Prairie Grove School

Prairie Grove School is locally significant and eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, Prairie Grove School is associated with the history of rural education, the community of Prairie Grove, and the surrounding farming community in northwestern Flint River Township. Under Criterion C, Prairie Grove School is an intact example of a late-nineteenth-century American vernacular rural schoolhouse: a long narrow rectangle (approximately 28x18 feet), with a bank of three windows on each side, a central front entrance, and a front-gable roof with belfry. The original 1879 schoolhouse was built of native limestone, and a wood-frame cloakroom addition was built in 1926. The period of significance for Prairie Grove School is 1879-1960, from the date of its construction to the year the school was closed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura Sadowsky
State Historian and National Register Coordinator
State Historical Society of Iowa

Enclosures.

IOWA ARTS
COUNCIL

PRODUCE
IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
MUSEUM OF IOWA

STATE HISTORICAL
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

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PRESERVATION
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FOUNDATION