

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received APR 22 1983

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Mankato Second Normal School, Mankato State Teachers College

and/or common Old Main and the Annex

**2. Location**

street & number 5th Street South at Jackson Street N/A not for publication

city, town Mankato N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota code county Blue Earth code

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

**4. Owner of Property**

name Valley Campus Associates / Mankato Old Main Associates

street & number P.O. Box 1358 / 5221 Edina Industrial Blvd.

city, town Mankato / Edina N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Blue Earth County Courthouse

street & number 204 - 5th Street South

city, town Mankato state Minnesota

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Historic Sites Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1979  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Minnesota Historical Society - Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul state Minnesota

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good Old Main	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair Annex	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Old Main complex consists of two structures aligned along 5th Street South: The rectangular 1908 "Annex" and a much larger building connected to the north that dates from 1922-24. Their essentially utilitarian design is typical of school buildings of the period. Both are three-story structures on high limestone basements with brick-faced walls ornamented by patterns of brick and limestone. An imposing Jacobethan Revival tower highlights the entryway of Old Main. Sited on a hillside overlooking downtown Mankato, Old Main provides a stately terminus to Jackson Street and, because of its mass and location, the complex has been an important landmark in central Mankato since construction of the respective sections.

The 1924 building was erected to replace the original Richardsonian Romanesque school of 1874 which burned in 1922. The floor plan is basically H-shaped with a rectangular auditorium protruding from the central rear section. The structure is of reinforced concrete faced with roughly textured brick in variegated shades of reddish brown. Blackened bricks create diamond patterns and also appear randomly in the coursing. Most prominent in the design is the central tower which rises one story above the rest of the building. Irregular limestone quoins edge the four corner piers. Each pier is crowned by limestone strapwork and chunky obelisks and by petite copper domes which rise to tall points. A pre-construction sketch in the school's 1923 yearbook does not include the domes and shows a large clock on the tower's fourth floor facade. It is not known why the design was altered prior to completion. Limestone cartouches incised with the letter "M" and grotesques, one representing the diligent student with a quill pen and the other a dunce whose slate holds the equation "2+2=5". Smooth limestone ashlar covers the first floor entryway. Three arched openings separated by fluted Doric pilasters lead to a vestibule before the building's three pairs of doors. The latter are topped by semicircular arches which echo the exterior arches. A balustrade runs above the entryway's denticular cornice. Stringcourses ring the building below the second floor windows and at the cornice line. A limestone band also trims the low parapet. Limestone ashlar covers the walls from the bottom of the first floor windows to the ground. A slightly projecting bay in the front end of each wing holds a Classical Revival doorway with fluted Doric pilasters, a denticular pediment with flaming urn-shaped acroteria, and a semicircular transom decorated by a delicate fan of wrought iron. Paired windows on the floors above the doorway are surrounded by shallow irregular quoins, with square stone panels linking the second and third floor windows. Windows fill a large percentage of most elevations, usually arranged in bands of four or five. The twelve-over-twelve windows are slightly recessed. Header bricks form panels between second and third story windows. The northeast wing features fall segmental arch windows appropriate to the two-story library on the interior and it ends in a polygonal shape. Narrow piers stretch from the ground to the parapet between groups of windows on side and rear elevations. The cornerstone from the original building on the site -- inscribed "State Normal School 1868" -- is incorporated into the rear wall of the auditorium.

The three-story link between the two sections has a Palladian motif surrounding the entryways on both front and rear elevations. It is attached to the northern, narrow end of the Annex. Originally built as a practice teaching laboratory in 1908, the Annex stands three stories tall and is of timber frame construction faced in brick laid in Flemish bond. The building's symmetrical design is centered on a pavillion two bays in width topped by a pedimented parapet. Shallower one bay projections emphasize the entryways near each end of the front facade, and are crowned by segmental arch parapets. A limestone cartouche beneath each arched section holds an open book. Limestone is also used for the Classical Revival door surrounds which include Doric pilasters, a plain entablature, and a semicircular transom. A rusticated limestone foundation covers the building's first half story. A stringcourse runs below the second floor windows and below the parapet. Brick corbelling below the parapet is interrupted by recessed limestone diamonds. Limestone pieces also ornament brick panels between second and third floor windows.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** Annex 1908; Old Main 1922-24 **Builder/Architect** Annex-unknown; Old Main-Clarence H. Johnston

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Old Main and the Annex, the oldest extant structures associated with Mankato State University, typify the design of early twentieth-century school buildings and represent a long-standing commitment to education in Minnesota. The school was conceived in 1858 when the first state legislature passed a bill to establish three normal schools in an effort to supply teachers for Minnesota's rapidly growing population. Students who agreed to teach in the state for at least two years after graduation received a free education, a policy continued until 1934. Mankato became host to the second normal school in 1868. The school's facilities expanded in the following decades as the course of study became more advanced and as the size of enrollment grew from a fledgling class of 54 in 1868 to over 12,000 students in 1982. Changes in the school's name reflect its rising status: the Mankato Second Normal School was retitled Mankato State Teachers College in 1924, becoming Mankato State College in 1957 and, in 1975, Mankato State University. In 1909 the Model School Building -- now the Annex -- was built to house the practice teaching program, a prominent component of the curriculum since the school's inception. The structure is connected to Old Main, which served from 1924 to 1977 as an administrative, academic, and social center for the school. The construction of Old Main was overseen by the prominent local contractor Jacob B. Nelsen who demanded quality craftsmanship, particularly in the patterned brickwork and the precisely laid local limestone. The design, a creative Jacobethan Revival interpretation of the standard school building type of the period, is by Clarence H. Johnston, state architect at that time. In addition to classrooms and offices Old Main housed the school's first bookstore, the campus radio station, and the student union. The complex was abandoned in 1977 when the campus was consolidated in the Highland area about a mile from the original Lower Campus. The new campus had been initiated in 1957 to cope with the mushrooming student population which could not be accommodated by the limited area of the Lower Campus. Old Main and the Annex, sited imposingly on a hillside overlooking downtown Mankato, survive as a reminder of the institution's history and as a symbol of the school's extensive contribution to education in the community and the state.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Thomas Hughes, History of Blue Earth County (Chicago: Middle West Publishing Co., 1909)  
 Donald B. Youel, "Mankato State College: An Interpretive Essay" (Mankato: School Progress, Vol. 49, No. 4, May 1968)  
The Katonian (Mankato State Teachers College Yearbook) 1922, 1923, 1924

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 238,500 Square Feet (5.5 acres)

Quadrangle name Mankato East, Minnesota; Mankato West, Minn. Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

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 Zone Easting Northing

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

Branson's Addition, Block 4; Lots 7-10, Block 6  
 Branson's Addition, Lots 10-12, Block 11  
 City of Mankato

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charlene Roise, Consultant

organization Valley Campus Associates

date December 1982

street & number 2001 Killebrew Drive

telephone (612) 854-8800

city or town Minneapolis

state Minnesota

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Russell W. Fridley

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 4/7/83

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Jane McClelland  
 Keeper of the National Register

date 6/2/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration