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OMB No. 10024-0018

NPS Form 10-900

Wisconsin Word Processing Format (Approved 1/92)

United States Department of 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 *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 an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Muskego State Graded School  
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number S75 W17476 Janesville Road N/A not for publication  
city or town Muskego N/A vicinity  
state Wisconsin code WI county Waukesha code 133 zip code 53150

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

9/4/2019  
Date

State Historic Preservation Office - Wisconsin  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.  
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain.)

*by Barbara Ayell*  
Signature of the Keeper

10-17-19  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

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

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

contributing	noncontributing
1	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	0 total

**Name of related multiple property listing:**  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Prairie School  
MODERN MOVEMENT

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other STONE

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1926 - 1960  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1926, 1949, 1951, 1952, 1956  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Redden, William J. (1926 school)  
John H. Flad and Associates (1956 addition)  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**  
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographic References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File** (National Park Service):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 6.5 acres

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

1 16T 407527.56 4751204.42  
 Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

See Continuation Sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

**11. Form Prepared By**

**name/title:** Rachel Barnhart, Associate and Matt Wicklund, Consultant  
**Organization:** MacRostie Historic Advisors  
**street & number** 53 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1142  
**city or town** Chicago **state** IL

**date** May 17, 2019  
**telephone** 312-488-1682  
**zip code** 60604

Name of Property

County and State

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

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

<b>name/title</b>	Richard Petfalski, President, Board of Education	<b>date</b>	May 17, 2019
<b>organization</b>	Muskego-Norway School District	<b>telephone</b>	262-971-0004
<b>street &amp; number</b>	S87 W18763 Woods Road	<b>zip code</b>	53150
<b>city or town</b>	Muskego	<b>state</b>	WI

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section 7 Page 1

Muskego State Graded School  
Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

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**Summary**

The Muskego State Graded School is located at S75 W17476 Janesville Road in Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin. The original school building was constructed in 1926 and designed by architect William J. Redden. Four additions forming a cohesive rectangular unit were completed to the rear of the 1926 school in 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956. The Muskego State Graded School provided public education for students from kindergarten through the eighth-grade level, and was the town's only school. It is eligible for individual listing in the National Register at the local level for significance under Criterion A in the area of Education: it represents the history of education in the town of Muskego. The 1926 school building reflects Wisconsin's early-twentieth century, statewide efforts to provide public education, and the mid-century rear additions represent the school's expansion and the town's efforts to serve its growing student population as Muskego transitioned from a rural into a suburban community. The period of significance begins in 1926 and ends in 1960 when the Muskego School District was dissolved and incorporated into a larger regional school district.

Wisconsin architect William J. Redden designed the 1926 cube-shaped school building with raked brick cladding, decorative stone corner blocks and brick banding, and a hipped roof with overhanging eaves that evoked influences of the Prairie style. The four rear additions (1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956) are two stories tall with red and brown variegated brick cladding, horizontal bands of windows, and a flat roof, reflecting the Modern Movement style. The 1951 addition contained the school's combination gymnasium and auditorium, while the 1949, 1952, and 1956 additions contained additional classrooms, administrative offices, and bathrooms. The architects of the 1949, 1951, and 1952 additions are unknown. John H. Flad and Associates of Madison designed the 1956 addition.

The National Register boundary coincides with the legal parcel and encompasses a 6.5-acre L-shaped parcel that includes the school and its associated grounds, acquired in 1941. The school grounds are comprised of an asphalt-paved parking and play area to the east of the school (re-paved in 2005), three mulched/graveled areas with playground equipment to the north of the paved area, and a grass play field to the northeast of the school. The nominated property has one contributing building, the Muskego School. The Muskego School and its additions were constructed within the period of significance and retain integrity to convey the building's significance in the area of Education.

**Setting and Site**

The Muskego State Graded School is located at S75 W17476 Janesville Road in Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin. Muskego is in the southeast corner of Waukesha County and is approximately twenty miles southwest of downtown Milwaukee. Muskego began as a rural agrarian community and

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evolved into a suburban town in the mid-twentieth century. It is currently a mid-sized city with a population of approximately 25,000.

The Muskego School is situated along the north side of Janesville Road between Park Drive to the west and Michi Drive to the east. The school property is on the southeast side of Little Muskego Lake, approximately 0.2 miles from the shoreline. The larger Muskego Lake is approximately 1.8 miles southeast of the school. Interstate 43 is located approximately 2 miles northwest of the school. The school faces south onto Janesville Road, a primary thoroughfare in Muskego oriented northeast-southwest. The school is situated along the west end of a 1.4-mile stretch of Janesville Road that serves as Muskego's primary commercial corridor. The commercial and public buildings along this corridor are predominantly from the late-twentieth to early-twenty-first centuries. To the north and south of the corridor are clusters of residential neighborhoods dating from the mid-to-late-twentieth century. A modern residential development with attached housing units and curvilinear streets is located to the west of the school across Park Drive. Mid-to-late-twentieth century frame houses line Park Drive to the north of the school, leading to a lake access dock. A one-story modern commercial building with paved parking lot is located across Michi Drive to the east. A series of one-story modern commercial buildings with parking lots are located across Janesville Road to the south.

The Muskego School sits at the south end of a 6.5-acre L-shaped parcel located at the northeast corner of the intersection of Janesville Road and Park Drive. The parcel is bound by Janesville Road to the south, Michi Drive to the east, rear residential lot lines to the north and upper west, and by Park Drive to the lower west. The legal parcel contains the Muskego School and its grounds, and serves as the National Register boundary because it reflects the boundary of the school grounds as formed in 1941, during the period of significance.<sup>1</sup> Originally, the Muskego School occupied a rectilinear tract measuring 150 feet along its south side at Janesville Road and north side, and 294 feet along its east and west sides. The larger rectilinear parcel to the east of the school was acquired in 1941 by the Town of Muskego from landowner F. Kellner.

The Muskego School is set back about fifty feet from Janesville Road and Park Drive. The west and south façades of the school are fronted by a grass lawn, and a concrete sidewalk with grass tree lawn lines the south edge of the school property along Janesville Road. A few trees dot the lawn to the west of the school. A small rectangular area on the lawn to the southwest of the school contains mulch and raised planter beds. A non-historic wood sign and non-historic flagpole are on the lawn to the south of the school. A concrete path leads from the sidewalk to the primary entrance at the south façade of the 1926 school. The path wraps around the building to the west, leading to a secondary entrance with

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<sup>1</sup> Wisconsin Department of Transportation, "Muskego School Determination of Eligibility Form," April 8, 2011, n.p. Wisconsin Historical Society, Division of Historic Preservation/Public History; Waukesha County Register of Deeds, Book 9-20 (Northeast and Southeast quarter sections of Section 9, Town 5, Range 20 East), pages 343 and 346.

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double doors. An irregular-shaped area of concrete paving fronts the school entrance at the south façade of the 1952 addition. The east façade of the school is abutted with asphalt paving and a narrow concrete ditch. An asphalt-paved driveway abuts the north façade of the school and exits onto Park Drive.

The rectangular portion of the parcel to the east and north of the school was acquired in 1941. The south half of the grounds contain an asphalt-paved parking lot and asphalt-paved play area. The parking lot and play area were installed circa 1955 and have been re-paved at various times throughout the late-twentieth and early-twenty-first centuries. The most recent re-paving dates to circa 2005. The parking lot is bounded by a non-historic chain link fence on its west and north edges, and has an east exit onto Michi Drive and a south exit on to Janesville Road. The asphalt-paved play area to the north of the parking lot has a paved vehicular exit and a smaller paved pedestrian exit onto Michi Drive. The east side of the paved area is lined with a non-historic chain link fence and grass ditches. Abutting the north side of the paved play area are two irregularly shaped groupings of non-historic playground equipment on islands treated with gravel and mulch. The remaining northern third of the parcel is undeveloped and features a grass lawn used as a play field by the school and as an athletic field by local youth sports organizations (*Photo 6*). The east side of the field is lined with a non-historic chain link fence.

The school grounds were acquired within the period of significance and thus are included in the boundary and reflect the setting of the school. The non-historic sign and flagpole at the front of the 1926 school do not date from the historic period and are of insufficient size and scale to be included in the count. The paved parking and play area were initially developed in circa 1955, but have been re-paved in new configurations several times, with its current paving dating to 2005. The playground equipment is non-contributing and of insufficient size and scale to be included in the inventory count. The grass play field to the north of the paved area has not been developed since it was acquired by the school. While the field has been used by the school and local youth sports organizations for recreation and reflects the setting of the school, it did not play a strong role in the area of significance and thus is not included in the resource count.

### **Exterior Description**

The Muskego State Graded School faces south toward Janesville Road and is comprised of an original 1926 school building with a set of additions to the rear, completed in 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956. The 1926 school has a square footprint with one story over a raised basement. It has a stone foundation, reddish-brown color wire-cut brick cladding with a raked finish, and a hipped roof with asphalt shingles and overhanging eaves. The south façade of the 1926 school has a projecting entrance pavilion with a hipped roof with asphalt shingles and overhanging eaves and a round-arch entrance. A



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soldier brick stringcourse with stone corner blocks wraps the building above the raised basement and at the cornice. The first-floor windows are replacements from circa 1963 set within the historic openings, and are comprised of aluminum-frame sashes with a opaque rust-colored asbestos panels above fixed lights. The historic window openings have flat brick lintels and stone sills. The 1926 school's decorative brickwork, stone corner blocks, and hipped roof with deep eaves give it a Prairie-style influence that is distinct from the Modern Movement-style rear additions.

The rear section of the school is comprised of four additions from 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956 that form a cohesive rectangular block in the Modern Movement style. The two-story 1949 rectilinear addition is located at the northwest corner of the 1926 original school building and has a projecting one-story entrance pavilion on its south façade. The double-height 1951 concrete block combination auditorium-gymnasium was built immediately north of (and the same width as) the 1926 school.<sup>2</sup> It abuts (and is the same length as) the east wall of the 1949 addition. In 1952, a two-story rectilinear addition was completed along the east side of the 1951 auditorium-gymnasium, projecting slightly further north. The school's new entrance was located at the south wall of the 1952 addition. A final two-story L-shaped addition was constructed in 1956 along the north façades of the 1949, 1951, and 1952 additions, completing the block's unified rectangular footprint.

The two-story block of additions has a concrete foundation, variegated red and brown colored brick cladding in a six-course common bond, and a flat roof. The windows are replacements from circa 1963 set within the original openings, and are comprised of aluminum-frame sashes with opaque rust-colored asbestos panels above fixed lights. The historic window openings have flat brick lintels and stone sills.

*1926 Original School Building*

The 1926 original school building faces south. An entrance pavilion projects from the center, has a hipped roof with asphalt shingles and overhanging eaves (*Photos 1-2*). A soldier brick stringcourse with stone corner blocks runs above the basement level and at the cornice. The upper third of the entrance pavilion features a decorative eleven-course band of stacked header bricks with stone corner blocks. The south wall of the entrance pavilion contains a round-arch entrance with soldier and header brick voussoirs and a tall stone keystone. The entrance contains non-historic double-leaf painted metal doors with vertical viewing panes. A round-arch transom above is infilled with a painted asbestos panel; the transom historically contained a multi-light fanlight (not extant). Two diamond-shaped stone blocks ornament the wall to the northeast and northwest of the arched entrance. A stone plaque is set into the header-brick band above the entrance and reads "MUSKEGO SCHOOL" in raised letters.

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<sup>2</sup> The 1951 auditorium-gymnasium is not visible from the exterior.

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The east wall of the entrance pavilion has an elevated non-historic metal fire exit door accessed via a metal landing and staircase with pipe handrails (*Photo 2*). The west wall of the entrance pavilion has an offset square-shaped historic window opening at the first-floor level with an opaque panel above a fixed light (*Photo 5*).

The outer bays flanking the entrance pavilion each have, at the first floor, three replacement windows that are set within the historic window openings. The windows have a square opaque panel above two rectangular lights. The raised basement level of the south façade to the west of the entrance pavilion has two spaced square-shaped window openings infilled with red bricks. The raised basement level of the south façade to the east of the entrance pavilion has a square-shaped window opening at the east end of the wall with a stone sill and a one-light replacement window.

The east façade of the 1926 school building has six bays at the raised basement level (*Photo 2*). From south to north, the first four bays and the sixth bay have window openings infilled with glass blocks in the upper half and red bricks in the lower half. The fifth bay contains a non-historic metal exit door with a glazed viewing panel in the upper half. The first story has two bays. The south bay contains a rectangular window opening with an opaque panel above two rectangular lights. The longer north bay contains a set of three windows divided with aluminum-frame mullions on a continuous stone sill. Each window has an opaque panel above two lights.

The west façade of the 1926 school building has five rectangular bays at the raised basement level (*Photo 5*). From south to north, the first four bays are regularly spaced and are infilled with red brick. The offset north bay has a metal vent in the upper half and brick infill in the lower half. The first story has two bays. The south bay contains a rectangular window opening with an opaque panel above two rectangular lights. The longer north bay contains a set of three windows divided with aluminum-frame mullions on a continuous stone sill. Each window has an opaque panel above two lights.

The north façade of the 1926 building is not visible, as it is abutted by the 1951 addition.

*Rear Additions – 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956*

*South Façade*

The south façade of the 1949 addition is set back to the northwest of the 1926 school building (*Photo 5*). The addition has red and brown variegated brick cladding laid in a six-course common bond. The top three courses of brick at the cornice are laid in a Flemish bond with projecting header bricks. The cornice is topped with metal coping. A one-story entrance pavilion projects from the east end of the south façade. The pavilion has red and brown variegated brick cladding and a Flemish bond brick

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pattern at the cornice. The south wall of the entrance pavilion contains a flat-arch entrance with non-historic double-leaf metal doors. The entrance has two brick outlines; the inner outline is composed of header and rowlock bricks and the outer one is of stretcher and soldier bricks. The portion of the 1949 south façade above the entrance pavilion is recessed. It contains two rectangular windows with opaque panels above a single light. A short west-facing wall rises above the east side of the entrance pavilion; it also has a rectangular window with an opaque panel above a single light. The two-story south façade wall to the west of the entrance pavilion has a rectangular glass block window with a stone sill at the west end of each story, which correspond to interior bathrooms.

The two-story south façade of the 1952 addition is set back to the northeast of the 1926 building (*Photo 2*). The façade has red and brown variegated brick cladding laid in a six-course common bond and metal coping at the cornice. A two-story, nearly full-width entrance pavilion housing a stair hall and the school's primary entrance projects from the south façade. A flat entrance bay at the west end of the first story contains non-historic double-leaf aluminum-frame glazed doors with glazed sidelights. The entrance is sheltered by a non-historic flat-roofed metal canopy with metal support posts. The west end of the second story of the pavilion contains one rectangular window bay with an opaque panel above two lights. The east end of the pavilion at the second story has affixed cast metal letters that read "MUSKEGO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL". The east wall of the entrance pavilion, corresponding to the interior stair hall, contains a rectangular window opening between the first and second stories with an opaque panel above two rectangular lights.

*East Façade*

The two-story east façade of the rear block is five bays long (*Photo 3, left*). From south to north, the first four bays correspond to the 1952 addition and the northernmost bay corresponds to the 1956 addition. The façade has red and brown colored variegated brick cladding in a six-course common bond, stone sills at the windows, and metal coping at the cornice. A brick chimney rises above the roof between the fourth and fifth bays and marks the beginning of the 1956 portion of the façade. Beginning at the south end of the first story, the first bay contains three spaced window openings; the taller, wider outer windows contain an opaque panel above two lights. The shorter, narrower center window contains an opaque panel above one light. The second bay contains two spaced, short, rectangular window openings with an opaque panel above one light. The third and fourth bays each contain a set of three windows spaced with brick piers. The outer windows contain an opaque panel above two lights. The wider center window contains two opaque panels over three lights. The fifth bay contains a punched opening with a metal louvered vent and a single-leaf non-historic metal door with a transom containing a metal louvered vent. The wall above at the second story is un-fenestrated and painted metal pipes are affixed to brick cladding.

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Beginning at the south end of the second story, the first, third, and fourth bays contain a set of three windows spaced with brick piers. The outer windows contain an opaque panel above two lights. The wider center window contains two opaque panels over three lights. The second bay contains two spaced, short, rectangular window openings with an opaque panel above one light.

*North Façade*

The north façade corresponds to the 1956 addition. It has red and brown variegated brick cladding in a six-course common bond, stone sills at the windows, and metal coping at the cornice (*Photo 3, right*). A small one-story concrete block shed with a flat roof was built at an unknown date at the east end of the first story to expand the school's boiler room. The shed is painted and its east wall contains double-leaf painted plywood doors with metal strap hinges. A flat lintel of soldier bricks above the shed marks the historic opening in the wall. To the east of the shed is a rear exit containing a non-historic single-leaf aluminum-frame glazed door. The bay at the east end of the first story contains three windows spaced with brick piers. The east and center windows are wider and contain two opaque panels above three lights. The west window is narrower and contains one opaque panel above two lights.

The second story has four bays. The east bay contains a window with two opaque panels above three lights. The narrower center bay contains a window with one opaque panel over two lights. The wide west bay contains four windows spaced with brick piers. The smaller outer windows contain one opaque panel over two lights. The wider inner windows have two opaque panels over three lights.

*West Façade*

The two-story west façade of the school is comprised of the 1956 and 1949 additions (*Photo 4*). The 1956 addition is at the north end and is discernable by its slightly higher roofline and has red and brown variegated brick cladding in a six-course common bond, stone sills at the windows, and metal coping at the cornice. The first and second stories of the 1956 addition have two bays. The wide northernmost bay is comprised of three windows spaced with brick piers. The outer windows have one opaque panel above two lights. The wider center window has two opaque panels above three lights. The south bay contains a narrow rectangular window with an opaque panel over two narrow rectangular lights.

The 1949 portion of the façade to the south of the 1956 portion has red and brown variegated brick cladding laid in a six-course common bond. The top three courses of brick at the cornice are laid in a Flemish bond with projecting header bricks. The cornice is topped with metal coping. The 1949 portion of the façade has five bays on each story. From north to south, the first and third bays contain a wide window with a cast aluminum mullion and four opaque panels over six lights. The second and four bays contain a narrow rectangular window with an opaque panel over two narrow rectangular lights. The fifth bay on each story contains a short rectangular glass block window.

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**Interior Description**

The Muskego School is comprised of the 1926 original school building and four additions constructed in 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956. The 1926 building has a square footprint with a main floor over a raised basement. The rear additions are two stories and form one cohesive interconnected block with a rectangular footprint. The main organizing open stair is located along the south side of the 1951 addition's corridor. A secondary enclosed stairwell is located at the south end of the 1952 addition and another is at the northeast side of the 1956 addition. Two short flights of stairs connect the north side of the 1926 school at the main floor to the second-floor corridor at the south end of the 1951 addition. There are no elevators in the building. The school retains its historic layout and a mixture of historic and non-historic finishes.

*1926 Original School Building*

The 1926 school lacks organizational corridors. The raised basement level features a teachers' lounge, storage rooms, and an art classroom with vinyl composite tile (VCT) flooring, furred drywall walls, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings. Portions of the acoustic tile ceiling have been removed, revealing historic painted tin ceiling tiles. The entrance vestibule at the south end has VCT flooring, plaster walls, and historic oak trim remaining around the non-historic double-leaf metal doors. A small furnace room at the north end of the raised basement was created in 1951.

The main floor of the 1926 school is divided into a west library and an east classroom. The library has carpet tile flooring, plaster walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling (*Photo 15*). Historic painted wood trim is retained around the windows. The east classroom has carpet tile floors, plaster walls with historic painted wood baseboards, historic painted wood windowsills, a historic painted wood built-in cabinet, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling (*Photo 16*). A small service room created at the south end of the east classroom retains historic wood plank flooring. The south end of the floor, within the entrance pavilion wing, contains a visual aids room with carpet tile flooring, plaster walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling. A small office and storage room at the north end of the main floor were created in 1951, along with two short flights of stairs with terrazzo steps that lead up to the east-west corridor of the rear block.

*Rear Additions – 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956*

The rear block of additions is characterized by a rectangular corridor with the double-height 1951 combination gymnasium-auditorium in the center of the corridor and classrooms, bathrooms, and administrative rooms lining the outer sides of the corridor on each floor. The interiors of the rear additions are cohesive and thus are described together below by floor.

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*Rear Additions – First Floor*

The primary entrance to the Muskego School is at the south entrance of the 1952 addition on the first floor, where a small entrance vestibule with non-historic finishes opens onto the southeast corner of the rectangular corridor (*Photo 7*). An enclosed stairwell to the east of the entrance vestibule has a metal staircase with wood handrails. The east portion of the rectangular corridor, which is oriented north-south, corresponds to the 1952 addition and has VCT flooring, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling. Built-in wood coat racks and cubbies line west side of the corridor. At the south end of the east side of the corridor are the interconnected administrative and principle's offices, which have non-historic finishes. A restroom, music room, and staff meeting room line the remaining portion of the east side of the corridor. The room entrances have historic single-leaf wood doors with glazed viewing panels. The bathroom has small square ceramic tile flooring and larger square ceramic tile wainscot. The music and meeting rooms have non-historic finishes. A boiler room to the north of the staff meeting room corresponds to the 1956 addition and has a historic metal fire safe door and utilitarian finishes.

The north portion of the rectangular corridor is oriented east-west and corresponds to the 1956 addition. It has VCT flooring, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling (*Photo 9*). Built-in wood coat racks and cubbies line the south and north sides of the corridor. A kitchen is along the south side of the corridor and has non-historic finishes. Two kindergarten classrooms are along the north side of the corridor. The classroom entrances have non-historic wood composite doors. The classrooms have VCT flooring, historic wood built-in cabinet, furred drywall walls, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings (*Photo 10*). A bathroom at the west end of the corridor has small square ceramic tile flooring and larger square ceramic tile wainscot. An enclosed stairwell at the east end of the corridor has a metal staircase with rubber treads and a metal and wood handrail.

The west portion of the rectangular corridor is oriented north-south and corresponds to the 1949 addition. The corridor has historic terrazzo flooring and baseboards, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling (*Photo 11*). Wood coat racks line the west side of the corridor. Two classrooms and a bathroom are along the west side of the corridor. The entrances have non-historic wood doors. The classrooms have non-historic VCT flooring, some historic wood windowsills, non-historic wood built-in cabinetry, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings (*Photo 12*). The bathroom has historic terrazzo flooring and wainscot (*Photo 13*). Historic double-leaf wood doors at the south end of the corridor open into a small entrance vestibule with historic terrazzo flooring and wainscot.

The south portion of the rectangular corridor is oriented east-west and corresponds to the 1951 addition. The corridor has historic terrazzo flooring and baseboards, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling. Along the south side of the corridor is an open metal staircase with

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terrazzo treads and metal handrails that leads up to the second floor (*Photo 14*). The 1951 combination gymnasium/auditorium is accessed from the north side of the corridor. The gymnasium-auditorium is double-height and has historic cinder block walls with projecting cinder block piers, VCT flooring, and an acoustic tile ceiling with fluorescent lighting fixtures (*Photo 8*).

*Rear Additions – Second Floor*

The second floor of the rear block is organized like the first floor with a rectangular corridor lined with classrooms. The east portion of the second-floor corridor corresponds to the 1952 addition and has carpet tile flooring, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling (*Photo 17*). Built-in wood coat racks and cubbies line west side of the corridor. Three classrooms and a bathroom line the east side of the corridor. The room entrances have historic single-leaf wood doors with glazed viewing panels. The classrooms have carpet tile or VCT flooring, painted drywall walls or wood wall paneling, some historic wood built-in cabinets, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings (*Photo 18*).

The north portion of the second-floor corridor corresponds to the 1956 addition and has carpet tile flooring, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling. Built-in wood coat racks and cubbies line the south and north sides of the corridor. Four classrooms line the north side of the corridor, and a bathroom is located at the west end of the corridor. Classroom entrances have non-historic single-leaf wood composite doors with glazed viewing panes. Classrooms have VCT flooring, painted drywall walls, some historic wood built-in shelving, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings.

The west portion of the second-floor corridor corresponds to the 1949 addition and has historic terrazzo flooring and baseboards, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling. Two classrooms and a bathroom line the west side of the corridor. The room entrances have non-historic wood doors with small glazed viewing panels. The classrooms have carpet tile flooring, some historic wood windowsills and historic wood built-in cabinetry, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings. The bathroom has historic terrazzo flooring and wainscot.

The south portion of the second-floor corridor corresponds to the 1951 addition and has historic terrazzo flooring and baseboards, painted drywall walls, and an acoustic tile dropped ceiling. The school's main organizing open staircase is along the south side of the corridor (*Photo 14*).

**Summary of Alterations and Integrity**

The Muskego State Graded School retains good integrity to convey its significance in the area of Education. The additions to the rear of the original 1926 school were constructed in 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956 and contribute to the significance of the school because they were constructed to accommodate Muskego's rapidly expanding student population in the post-World War II era. The

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Muskego School's historic setting is largely preserved, and the repaving of the grounds' parking lot and paved play area do not negatively diminish the school's setting overall.

The Muskego School retains its historic exterior design and window openings. The 1926 building retains its historic design characteristics that reflect the Prairie style, including decorative stone corner blocks and a hipped roof with overhanging eaves. The rear additions retain their historic design characteristics that reflect the Modern Movement style, including a lack of decorative ornamentation, horizontal bands of windows, and a flat roof. The only exterior change to the school is the replacement of historic window sashes with aluminum-frame windows with rust-colored asbestos upper panels and the replacement of historic doors with metal fire-rated doors. These alterations occurred in 1963 and are common for public schools in Wisconsin. The replacement windows and doors are within the historic openings, and ultimately do not negate the building's ability to convey its historic significance as a school.

The historic interior layout of the school is preserved and retains many historic finishes, such as terrazzo flooring, baseboards, wainscot, and stairwell treads in the 1949 and 1951 additions; historic classroom doors in the 1952 addition; historic wood built-in cabinetry throughout; and some historic wood windowsills throughout. Concealed but retained historic finishes in the 1926 building include historic tin ceiling tiles in the raised basement level and historic hardwood flooring on the second level. The 1951 combination gymnasium/auditorium retains its historic painted cinder block walls and double-height volume of space. The non-historic finishes in the building include VCT flooring, some furred drywall walls, and acoustic tile dropped ceilings in the 1926 school. These non-historic finishes do not greatly impact the interior's reflection of the building's significant historic function as a school.



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**Summary of Significance**

The Muskego State Graded School at S75 W17476 Janesville Road in Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for local significance under Criterion A in the area of Education. The school was constructed in 1926, when Muskego was a rural community, and designed by Racine architect William J. Redden. The Muskego School provided education at the kindergarten through eighth-grade levels and was the only school in the Muskego School District until a high school was built in 1957. The Muskego School was expanded with four rear additions in 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956 to meet the needs of Muskego's rapidly growing population. The school is significant in Muskego and embodies the history of education in the community.

The original 1926 building reflects Wisconsin's early-twentieth-century efforts to provide public education to children in rural communities, and the mid-twentieth-century rear additions represent the school district's efforts to serve its growing student population as Muskego expanded from a rural into a suburban community. In 1960, voters in Muskego and the region elected to consolidate their schools under the newly-formed Muskego-Norway School District. In 1964, the seventh and the eighth grades were removed from the Muskego School, and it became Muskego Elementary School. The building continued to function as an elementary school until 2017, when voters elected to close the building.

The Muskego School retains integrity and reflects its historic significance. The period of significance begins in 1926 with the construction of the original two-room school and ends in 1960, when the Muskego School became integrated into a larger, newly-formed consolidated school district.

**Rural Schools in Wisconsin**

The effort to introduce public education in Wisconsin has a history that begins before the founding of the state and is tied to national reform movements of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. As early as 1789, the Northwest Ordinance, which defined the upper Midwest as part of the United States, contained written provisions for school lands. By the 1810s and 1820s, some of the first subscription-based schools were open in the Wisconsin settlements of Green Bay, Fort Howard, and Prairie du Chien. The Wisconsin Territory was organized in 1836 and its new legislature gave the responsibility of education to town officials and allowed for funds to be secured through property taxes. Initially, due to the territory's sparse settlement, funding was not always enough to open or maintain schools.

Settlers continued arriving from eastern states and created many new villages and towns in the Wisconsin territory, and often founded new community-sponsored schools that were paid for by

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subscription.<sup>3</sup> Small, single-room school houses were built across the territory during the 1830s and 1840s, with the most concentrated in the southeastern and southwestern areas where settlement was greatest. By 1836, there were eight schoolhouses in the territory with 275 pupils.<sup>4</sup> In Waukesha County, the first schoolhouse was a single-room log cabin erected in 1837 in the Village of Waukesha. The structure also served the community as a meeting house and a space for local debates and various events.<sup>5</sup>

In 1841, the Wisconsin Territory was officially divided into geopolitical areas consisting of counties, towns, and, for the first time, school districts. School districts became the basis for Wisconsin's public school organization when the territory became the 30<sup>th</sup> state in 1848. Funding for schools and public education was to be created through the sale and leasing of specially-designated township "school sections" and the levying of property taxes.<sup>6</sup> By 1849, there were over 700 schoolhouses in nearly 2,000 school districts with approximately 40,000 pupils.<sup>7</sup>

Early education reformers were concerned with the alleged irregularity of standards across the state's locally-controlled districts. State superintendents often pushed to transfer control of schools away from local governments to the higher county level. This effort resulted in 1861 with the establishment of the Office of County Superintendent of Schools. The County Superintendent and a rural school inspector were responsible for certifying teachers and ensuring that rural schools met state standards. Rural school districts were typically governed by three local elected officials, and usually contained only one school to serve the district area.<sup>8</sup> In 1861, 4,211 schoolhouses were located across Wisconsin in 4,558 school districts, with 194,200 pupils. By 1875, there were 5,260 schoolhouses in 5,489 school districts, and 279,854 pupils.<sup>9</sup> This expansive growth of the state public school system mirrored the greater population, which expanded significantly during the mid- and late-nineteenth century through waves of European immigration.

Of the state's schoolhouses, the majority were small, frame buildings, although many were built of logs. In 1869, only 545 schoolhouses were built of brick or stone.<sup>10</sup> Only thirty, or one quarter, of

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<sup>3</sup> Stephen Kretzmann, "Primary Education," Barbara Wyatt, Ed., in *Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan*, (The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), 2.

<sup>4</sup> William C. Whitford, *Historical Sketch of Education in Wisconsin*, (Madison, WI: Atwood & Culver, 1876) 20.

<sup>5</sup> *The History of Waukesha County, Wisconsin*, (Chicago: Western Historical Company, 1880) 436, 641.

<sup>6</sup> Kretzmann, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Whitford, 64.

<sup>8</sup> Kretzmann, 7.

<sup>9</sup> Whitford, 64.

<sup>10</sup> A. J. Craig, *Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Wisconsin, for the School Year ending August 31, 1869*, (Madison, WI: Atwood & Rublee, State Printers, 1869) 12.

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Waukesha County's schoolhouses were of masonry.<sup>11</sup> Typical late-nineteenth century rural schools were one-room buildings with a single entrance opposite the teacher's desk. Windows allowed in natural light, stoves served as heat sources, and chalkboards were hung to present lessons. Each school had a single teacher in charge of instructing children ranging in age from five to eighteen. Students were not assigned material based on graded levels, but were instead taught together, with coursework limited to reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and arithmetic. In contrast, urban centers and larger towns that accommodated hundreds and thousands of students built larger multi-room masonry school buildings.

Books, maps, and chalkboards were not always present at every schoolhouse. Frequently, children brought their own books from home that covered a range of subjects. Generally, the single-room school was intended to teach children to, at a minimum, read a newspaper, compose a clear paragraph, become familiar with the history of their country, and complete basic arithmetic for accounting. Yet, because students typically attended school only when possible (such as during the winter when farm chores were fewer) and there was little continuity or progression in learning from year to year in the single-room setting, students were often limited in their educational advancement.<sup>12</sup>

Reform movements during the late-nineteenth century led to Wisconsin's first compulsory school attendance law, which required all children between the ages of seven and fifteen to attend school for at least twelve weeks per year. Like many other state compulsory laws of the time, it was not strongly enforced and children living over two miles from a school did not have to meet the requirement. Through several revisions of the law, by 1900, almost all Wisconsin children were required to attend school for at least portion of the year.<sup>13</sup>

The twentieth-century education reform movement ushered in an era of modern school design. In the early 1900s, Wisconsin began actively encouraging communities to replace their older primary schools with modern "state graded" schools. As discussed in *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*, 'graded school' was generally used to refer to any school that had more than one room and therefore contained more than one grade. A 1901 act of the state legislature provided special funding for the construction of new graded schools, and a second act passed in 1905 required schools with more than 65 pupils to provide at least two rooms and two teachers.<sup>14</sup> These legislative acts had a direct impact on the form and design of schools across Wisconsin. In marked contrast to the frame single-room schoolhouse, graded schools were large, solidly-built buildings. They were typically architect-designed

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<sup>11</sup> Craig, appendix, 154-155.

<sup>12</sup> Kretzmann, 10-11; National Register of Historic Places, "Laney School," Maple Grove, Shawano County, Wisconsin, Ref. no 98001463, 13.

<sup>13</sup> Kretzmann, 10.

<sup>14</sup> Wyatt, ed. *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin*.

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and of fireproof construction with modern amenities such as central heating, electricity, and indoor plumbing. Spacious classrooms were well-lit and ventilated with large windows. The interior reflected the programming needs of the students it was built to serve, with secondary schools generally featuring more specialized spaces to accommodate a diverse curriculum. Primary schools typically featured a kindergarten space and some type of open assembly space that could serve multiple functions. By 1924, Wisconsin's Department of Instruction began to employ architects to design new graded schools, in both rural and urban areas. The Muskego State Graded School, a two-room school completed in 1926 and designed by architect William J. Redden, reflects this trend towards larger, architect-designed graded schools built to serve rural communities.

### **Development of Muskego**

The Town of Muskego was legally established in March of 1839. The word "Muskego" was derived from a Pottawatomie term meaning "sunfish." The Pottawatomie Indians inhabited large portions of southern Wisconsin, including the present-day Muskego area, prior to the arrival of white settlers.<sup>15</sup> Waukesha County was formed from western Milwaukee County in 1846, after which a steady influx of settlers arrived in the Muskego area, located in the southeast portion of Waukesha County.

One of Muskego's earliest settlers was Anson Taylor, who arrived from New York in 1838 and purchased 800 acres of land, eventually building the area's first sawmill, general store, and hotel.<sup>16</sup> In 1840, a post office was established in a log cabin owned by Cynthia Reynolds.<sup>17</sup> Construction on the Janesville Plank Road (present-day Janesville Road) began in 1848; the road extended from Milwaukee to Janesville and passed through Muskego along the way.<sup>18</sup> The construction of the plank road increased the flow of commerce through the town, and the rural region surrounding the township was developed with agricultural cropland and dairy farms.

The population in Muskego increased at the turn of the twentieth century as Little Muskego Lake became a popular resort area for leisure travelers from Milwaukee, who could arrive at the lake after a day's drive by horse and buggy.<sup>19</sup> In 1904, when Muskego's population was slightly under 100, an inter-urban trolley was built between the town and Milwaukee by the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company. The trolley further increased the number of visitors to Muskego, and several resorts

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<sup>15</sup> Charles H. Damaske, *A Pathway to a City: A Historical Profile of Muskego, 1834-1967* (Muskego, WI: Charles Damaske, 2014), 1.

<sup>16</sup> "Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School," (Muskego, WI: 1963), 3. Muskego State Graded School Vertical File, Waukesha County Historical Society.

<sup>17</sup> Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School, 3.

<sup>18</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 10.

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were established along Little Muskego Lake. One of the most popular of these was Schuet's Resort on the south side of the lake, operated by John Schuet. The Muskego Beach Amusement Park, constructed on land purchased from Schuet's holdings, was established in 1925. This amusement park was immediately west of the Muskego State Graded School.

By the 1920s, the population of Muskego was rapidly increasing due to the economic opportunities fostered by the Janesville Plank Road, Little Muskego Lake, and the inter-urban trolley. Established and incoming residents constructed houses along Janesville Plank Road and cottages around the shores of the lake, and in 1926 the two-room Muskego State Graded School was built on Janesville Plank Road to replace the township's one-room schoolhouse. The school was constructed on a one-acre plot of land from the Muskego Beach Amusement Park parcel.<sup>20</sup>

Muskego's population dramatically expanded after the end of World War II as returning veterans settled in the area and started families, transforming it from a rural agricultural community into a growing suburb. In 1940 there were 2,495 residents in the township, but by 1950 the population was 4,156. During the 1950s Muskego's population more than doubled, reaching 8,858 in 1960.<sup>21</sup> It was during this time of great expansion that four additions were completed to the rear of the Muskego School to accommodate the growing student population. In 1964, facing annexation by the nearby city of New Berlin, the township of Muskego voted to incorporate as a city. A special census was conducted at that time and recorded over 10,497 residents in Muskego.<sup>22</sup> Muskego's population has continued to expand, as reflected in the 2010 Census which recorded a population of 24,135.<sup>23</sup>

### **Education in Muskego, 1836-1925**

The earliest school in the Muskego area was housed in a log cabin owned by Cynthia Reynolds from circa 1836 to 1839 (this log cabin was designated a post office in 1840). The cabin was located about two miles northwest of the site of the Muskego State Graded School, at the intersection of Highway Y (Racine Avenue) and Highway HH (College Avenue). In 1839, a school was created in a temporary building on a farm owned by Michael Meyers.<sup>24</sup> In 1842, a purpose-built schoolhouse was constructed on present-day Tess Corners Drive, about one-half mile south of Janesville Road (about 2.7 miles east of the Muskego State Graded School site).<sup>25</sup> Funds for the new schoolhouse were raised primarily

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<sup>20</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 14.

<sup>21</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 11.

<sup>22</sup> Lindsey Rindo, "Muskego," Encyclopedia of Milwaukee, accessed May 15, 2019. <https://emke.uwm.edu/entry/muskego/>.

<sup>23</sup> Rindo, "Muskego."

<sup>24</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 16.

<sup>25</sup> The Tess Corners site is now subdivided and the former school has been demolished.

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through resident donations. The one-room log-frame schoolhouse was 20 feet long and 16 feet wide.<sup>26</sup> The interior walls were lined with writing benches, and a stove in the center of the room provided heating. James Simpson of Milwaukee was hired as the school's first teacher, and the first class had twenty-five students.

The log schoolhouse was used until 1858, when Muskego residents raised funds for a new building (the log schoolhouse was demolished at an unknown date). In Muskego's first recorded school meeting on September 21, 1858, an appointed committee selected a site for the new schoolhouse "at the southeast quarter of Section 9, in said town of Muskego, on the north side of Janesville Plank Road" and to the east of the plank road's toll gate.<sup>27</sup> The new school was a frame, front-gabled one-room building. The building also served as a social hall when classes were not in session, housing business lunches and dinners, dances, and plays.<sup>28</sup>

School District No. 2, serving the Muskego township, was formed in 1867. The District adopted rules that year specifying expected student behavior as well as teacher responsibilities, which included arriving thirty-five minutes prior to class to light the stove. In 1889, Wisconsin's State Superintendent adopted standards and a course of study for all district schools. The new standards recognized three levels of study: primary, middle, and upper. Students who graduated from all three could receive a diploma and were eligible to enter a district high school.

In the 1920s, the population in Muskego was rapidly expanding and the one-room frame schoolhouse was at capacity. In 1925, the Muskego School District No. 2 sold the school grounds and the one-room frame schoolhouse, which was incorporated into the Muskego Amusement Park grounds and used to house one of the park's games. The one-room frame schoolhouse was demolished later at an unknown date.<sup>29</sup> After selling the former schoolhouse and grounds, the Muskego School District No. 2 acquired a new site from J.C. Schuet, immediately to the east of the former site, for the construction of a new state graded school. At the same time, two other nearby school districts were also replacing their one-room schools with larger buildings. The Joint District No. 3, comprised of part of the city of New Berlin and the northwest corner of the Muskego Township, constructed a new Mill Valley School, located at W191 S6445 Hillendale Drive and dedicated in September 1926.<sup>30</sup> The Tess Corners School District No. 1, serving the Village of Tess Corners to the east of the Muskego School District No. 2,

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<sup>26</sup> Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School, 3.

<sup>27</sup> Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School, 3.

<sup>28</sup> Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 78.

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dedicated a new two-room schoolhouse in 1925 at W147 S6800 Durham Drive.<sup>31</sup> Overall, Waukesha County had twenty state graded schools in 1926.<sup>32</sup> The Mill Valley and Tess Corners schools were within, and maintained by, separate school districts from the Muskego State Graded School until 1960, when the three schools were consolidated into the newly-formed Muskego-Norway School District.

### **Muskego State Graded School**

As Muskego's population expanded in the 1920s, the District decided to replace the former one-room frame schoolhouse with a new, larger state graded school. On July 20, 1925, the District moved to sell the former school grounds and selected the present-day site (located just to the east of the previous site) for the new Muskego State Graded School.<sup>33</sup> Racine architect William J. Redden designed the Muskego State Graded School to have two classrooms on the ground floor and an assembly hall in the raised basement.<sup>34</sup> The brick school building cost \$15,000 and was dedicated on February 15, 1926.<sup>35</sup>

Sixty students were enrolled at the Muskego State Graded School in its first year. Two teachers, Mrs. Harris and Miss Margaret Schultz, were hired, as well as a janitor. A musical program was adopted at the school in 1929, and a music teacher was hired in 1940. In 1937, a new heating and ventilation system was installed in the building. As school enrollment increased in the late 1930s, the assembly room in the raised basement was used as two classrooms. In 1941, the Town of Muskego acquired a small lot immediately north of the school and a five-acre tract of farmland to the east of the school owned by farmer Frederick Kellner. These acquisitions enlarged the school's grounds to its current size.<sup>36</sup> The expansion included the purchase of a residential house, formerly owned by the Bauman family, at the southeast corner of the grounds. Muskego's population continued to grow, causing crowding in the 1926 school, so beginning in 1946 the town used the former Bauman residence to house the Muskego School's seventh and eighth grades. In 1948, the Muskego School had 283 enrolled students.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 81. Mill Valley and Tess Corners schools were in separate districts from the Muskego State Graded School until 1960, when they were consolidated under the newly formed Muskego-Norway School District.

<sup>32</sup> Arthur Tews, *Waukesha County Annual* (Waukesha, WI: County Superintendent of Schools of Waukesha County, 1926), 4.

<sup>33</sup> Centennial Log: Muskego Elementary School, 5; Plat of the Muskego Beach Park Addition (April 1927), Waukesha County Register of Deeds.

<sup>34</sup> Architect's card, 8/27/25, Education File, Wisconsin Historical Society Archives.

<sup>35</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 196.

<sup>36</sup> Waukesha County Register of Deeds, Book 9-20 (Northeast and Southeast quarter sections of Section 9, Town 5, Range 20 East), pages 343 and 346; The Muskego-Norway Schools district operations manager, Steve Cianciolo, noted in April 2019 that the open field on the Muskego School grounds historically served as a play area and also as a practice area for youth football and soccer organizations.

<sup>37</sup> Winston Brown, *Waukesha County School Annual* (Waukesha, WI: County Board Educational Committee, 1948), 28. That year, Mill Valley School had 171 students and Tess Corners had 233.

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Muskego's population continued to expand, particularly after the end of World War II as returning veterans settled in the area and started families. The Muskego School, as well as the Mill Valley and Tess Corners schools, received additions in the mid-twentieth century to keep pace with the rising population and relieve overcrowding. In 1949, a four-room brick addition with a narrow rectangular footprint was constructed at the northwest corner of the 1926 school building. Shortly thereafter, Muskego resident Lillian Kingston donated \$30,000 for a school auditorium.<sup>38</sup> The new brick Kingston Auditorium was constructed on the north (rear) façade of the 1926 school, abutting the east side of the 1949 addition. The new auditorium was dedicated on November 18, 1951.

In 1950, the Muskego School had 376 registered students.<sup>39</sup> Despite the completion of the 1949 four-room addition, rising enrollment at the Muskego School continued to stress the school's capacity.<sup>40</sup> After voters approved yet another expansion to the Muskego School, a brick rectangular addition with five classrooms, an office, and a teacher's room was constructed in 1952 on the east side of the 1951 auditorium. In circa 1955, the Bauman residence was demolished, and the acreage to the east of the school was paved with asphalt for a parking area and playground.

The final addition to the school was completed in 1956 at a cost of \$125,000.<sup>41</sup> It contained five classrooms, a library, two bathrooms, and a kitchen, marking the beginning of the school's lunch program.<sup>42</sup> John H. Flad and Associates of Madison designed the addition, which was constructed on the north sides of the 1949, 1951, and 1952 blocks.<sup>43</sup> With the completion of the 1956 addition, the four mid-century additions formed a cohesive rectangular footprint that was easily distinguishable from the original cube-shaped 1926 school building. The contrast of the Prairie-style, cube-shaped 1926 building with the larger 1950s Modern Movement additions demonstrates the evolution of Muskego from a rural community in the early 1900s into a rapidly expanding suburban town after World War II.

Enrollment at the Muskego School for the 1956-1957 year was 1,061 students, making it one of the largest grade schools in Waukesha County at the time.<sup>44</sup> Muskego's first high school opened in 1957 at W185 S8750 Racine Avenue, marking the first time that graduates of the Muskego School could

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<sup>38</sup> "Plan Dedication of \$30,000 New School Addition," *Waukesha Daily Freeman*, November 9, 1951.

<sup>39</sup> County School Committee, *Preliminary Report to the Citizens of Waukesha County* (Waukesha, WI: County School Committee, 1950), 20. In 1950, the Muskego School had the largest student enrollment in the township. Mill Valley had 204 enrolled students, and Tess Corners had 358.

<sup>40</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 247.

<sup>41</sup> "Muskego Residents Vote for Addition," *Waukesha Freeman*, January 6, 1956.

<sup>42</sup> "New Classrooms Seen by Parents," *Waukesha Freeman*, November 14, 1956.

<sup>43</sup> "New Classrooms Seen by Parents," *Waukesha Freeman*, November 14, 1956.

<sup>44</sup> Winston Brown, *Waukesha County School Directory* (Waukesha, WI: Superintendent of Schools, 1956), 28.



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Muskego State Graded School  
Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

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continue their education at a high school in their own community. On July 1, 1960, voters in Muskego elected for consolidation, and the Muskego School became part of the newly formed Muskego-Norway Consolidated School District.<sup>45</sup> The consolidation marked a new era for the town of Muskego and was the culmination of the town's evolution from a small rural community, and dependence on a singular school district, to a larger suburban city that cooperated with other nearby towns to operate a network of multiple schools. After the consolidation, the Muskego School functioned as part of a larger region, encompassing parts of Waukesha and Racine counties. The 1960 district consolidation also included the nearby Tess Corners and Mill Valley schools (described in further detail below), which previously had been operated under separate school districts and served distinct student bodies from the Muskego School. Thus, 1960 is considered the end of the period of significance for the Muskego School, as it marks the transition away from the school's important localized role in education.

Enrollment at the Muskego School increased in the 1960s and by 1963, the school's faculty had increased to twenty. This reflected its expanding curriculum, which by then included art, music, and physical education programs. The exterior windows of the school (including the additions) were also replaced with new windows in the historic openings in 1963. In 1964, the Muskego-Norway District constructed a new Intermediate School on the south end of Muskego High School. This served as a new middle school, eliminating the seventh and the eighth grades at the Muskego School. The Muskego School was then renamed Muskego Elementary School.<sup>46</sup> It functioned as Muskego Elementary School, serving the Muskego-Norway District, until 2017 when it was closed.

### **Architect William J. Redden**

William J. Redden, the architect of the 1926 original Muskego School building, was born in 1888 in Storm Lake, Iowa. Redden received his architecture degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1914. His practice was originally based in Racine, Wisconsin, and he designed several buildings, including schools, in the southern region of the state. Redden designed the Neo-Gothic Revival-style First Congregational Church at 214 E. Capitol Drive in Hartland, Wisconsin in 1923 (NR-listed 1986, NRIS #86003405). He also designed the Beebe School (Architecture and History Inventory #11391, extant) in Elmwood Park, Racine County in 1926, the same year the Muskego School was completed. Both schools are designed with decorative stone corner blocks, although the Muskego School is smaller and has a distinctive hipped roof with deep eaves, while the Beebe School has a flat roof with a raised parapet.

In 1929, Redden designed the Bigelow School (NR-listed 2000, NRIS #00000851) at 4228 W.

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<sup>45</sup> Norway is in Racine County.

<sup>46</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 84.

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Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

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Bonniwell Road in Mequon, Wisconsin.<sup>47</sup> The Bigelow School served the rural population of Mequon, Wisconsin. Mequon remained largely rural, and in 1960 the Bigelow School was closed due to district consolidation and converted into a single-family residence. In contrast, the Muskego School was located in a rural area that evolved into an expanding suburban area, and the school was adapted for the expanding student enrollment through the addition of rear blocks in the 1950s. Redden employed a similar massing and architectural style for both schools, which are one-story on a raised basement with brick cladding, decorative limestone corner blocks, an arched entrance, and a hipped roof with deep eaves.

Redden also designed the Linwood School (AHI #135921, extant) at 7630 Linwood Road in Caledonia, Wisconsin in 1929. The Linwood School is slightly larger than the Muskego School and features a side ell, but employs a similar architectural motif of brick cladding, decorative corner blocks, and hipped roof with deep eaves. The Linwood School was converted into a clubhouse for the Lions Club at an unknown date.

Redden continued to practice architecture in Wisconsin and lived in Milwaukee before moving to Florida in 1945.<sup>48</sup> Redden continued his solo practice, designing single-family residences and apartment buildings. He passed away in 1972 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

### Comparable School Buildings

The Muskego State Graded School was the only kindergarten through eighth-grade (primary-intermediate) school in the Muskego School District No. 2, and it served a distinct student body within the district's boundary (*Figure 8*). Thus, it is a locally-significant building in the educational history of Muskego. The Muskego School District No. 2 was dissolved in 1960 and the Muskego School became part of the larger Muskego-Norway Consolidated School District, which encompassed a larger region spanning Waukesha and Racine counties. The Tess Corners and Mill Valley schools, two other primary-intermediate schools were built in adjacent but distinct school districts and would become part of the Muskego-Norway Consolidated School District in 1960.

The Tess Corners School was completed in 1925 at W147 S6800 Durham Drive to serve the Village of Tess Corners, located to the east of the Muskego School District No. 2 area. It was operated by the Tess Corners District No. 1 and served the Village of Tess Corners. The original two-room school house is similar in plan to the Muskego State Graded School, with a cube-shaped main building and a projecting front entrance pavilion. Although an architect of record has not been confirmed, the architectural style suggests it was also designed by William Redden. Five additions were completed to

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<sup>47</sup> National Register of Historic Places, "Bigelow School," Mequon, Ozaukee County, Wisconsin, p 7.

<sup>48</sup> Obituary of William J. Redden, *Fort Lauderdale News*, February 23, 1972.

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the south and east of the original building through the 1960s. The additions form an H-pattern, with two rows of two-story additions in pairs connected by a single-story addition. All windows on the original portion are replacements and feature infilled upper panels. The Tess Corners School was included in the consolidation effort in 1960 that resulted in the Muskego-Norway District. The school was closed in 2018.

The Mill Valley School at W191 S6445 Hillendale Drive was dedicated in 1926 and operated by the Joint District No. 3, comprised of the city of New Berlin and the northwest corner of the Muskego Township. The original portion is similar to both the Muskego and Tess Corners schools, but has a larger irregular footprint with an entrance pavilion located off its northeastern corner. A brick addition was completed to the north in 1939 and twin, long, single-story classroom additions were built to the west during the 1950s.<sup>49</sup> The original school retains its overall form, but the original entrance has been infilled with glass block. Original window openings have been partially infilled and feature pairs of smaller casement windows. The school was consolidated as part of the Muskego-Norway school district in 1960 and the building remains in use as an elementary school.

When compared with the Tess Corners and Mill Valley schools, the Muskego State Graded School most appropriately represents the history of public education in Muskego and within the Muskego School District No. 2 during the period of significance from 1926 through 1960.

### **Conclusion**

The Muskego State Graded School at S75 W17476 Janesville Road in Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin, is eligible for listing in the National Register at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Education. The 1926 original two-room school was designed by William J. Redden for the Muskego School District No. 2, at a time when the town was a rural area. The cube-shaped building features brick cladding, decorative stone corner blocks, an arched entrance, and a hipped roof with overhanging eaves that evokes the Prairie style. As Muskego's population expanded in the post-World War II era, four additions designed in the Modern Movement style were completed to the rear of the 1926 school in 1949, 1951, 1952, and 1956; this building represents the history of education in the community.

In the post-World War II era, the town of Muskego's population grew rapidly and the Muskego School was expanded with additions to the rear to relieve overcrowding and provide students with amenities such as an auditorium, a library, and school lunches. The Muskego School's expansion demonstrates Muskego's growth from a rural community into a suburban town.

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<sup>49</sup> Damaske, *A Pathway to a City*, 83-84.

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The period of significance begins in 1926 with the construction of the original school building and ends in 1960, when Muskego's citizens voted to consolidate with other suburban and rural districts in Waukesha and Racine counties, creating the new Muskego-Norway School District and signaling the end of the rural Muskego School District No. 2. By 1964, the Muskego School's intermediate levels were removed and it became an elementary school. The Muskego Elementary School closed in 2017. The school retains sufficient integrity and conveys its significance as an important educational building in the town of Muskego.

**Preservation Activities**

The Muskego-Norway School District sold the Muskego Elementary School building to the Commonwealth Companies, based in Fond du Lac, in 2017. The Commonwealth Companies will utilize state and federal historic tax credits to preserve the historic character-defining features of the school while converting it into affordable housing for seniors. Features such as existing chalkboards and terrazzo and wood flooring will be incorporated into the new units. The rehabilitated building will be renamed the Muskego School Apartments and is expected to be completed by 2021.

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

The Muskego State Graded School is situated at the south end of a 6.5-acre L-shaped parcel that is defined by the legal parcel boundary as follows: "LOT 16 BLK A MUSKEGO BEACH PARK ADDITION & PT E1/2 SEC 9 T5N R20E."

The National Register boundary follows the legal parcel boundary, and can be further defined by Janesville Road to the south, Michi Drive to the east, the legal parcel line to the north, and the legal parcel line and Park Drive to the west.

The boundary is shown on the accompanying Site Map in Figure 1.

**Boundary Justification:**

The National Register boundary coincides with the legal parcel for the school property, and encompasses the entire building and grounds associated with the Muskego State Graded School during the period of significance.

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Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

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**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Muskego State Graded School

**City or Vicinity:** Muskego

**County:** Waukesha **State:** Wisconsin

**Photographer:** Rachel Barnhart

**Date Photographed:** October 2018

**Location of Original Digital Files:** State Historic Preservation Office, Wisconsin Historical Society

Photo 1  
South Façade  
Camera facing north

Photo 2  
South and East Façades, 1926 School and 1952 Addition  
Camera facing northwest

Photo 3  
East and North Façades, 1952 and 1956 Additions  
Camera facing southwest

Photo 4  
North and West Façades, 1956 and 1949 Additions  
Camera facing southeast

Photo 5  
South and West Façades, 1926 School and 1949 Addition  
Camera facing northeast

Photo 6  
Rear of Muskego School and Grounds  
Camera facing southwest

Photo 7  
1952 School Addition, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Entrance  
Camera facing north



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Photo 8  
1951 Combination Gymnasium & Auditorium  
Camera facing northwest

Photo 9  
1956 School Addition, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor  
Camera facing west

Photo 10  
1956 School Addition, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Kindergarten Classroom  
Camera facing southwest

Photo 11  
1949 School Addition, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Corridor  
Camera facing south

Photo 12  
1949 School Addition, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Classroom  
Camera facing northeast

Photo 13  
1949 School Addition, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Bathroom  
Camera facing west

Photo 14  
1949 and 1951 School Additions, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Stairwell and Corridor  
Camera facing west

Photo 15  
1926 School, Main Floor Library  
Camera facing southwest

Photo 16  
1926 School, Main Floor Classroom  
Camera facing northwest

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Photo 17  
1952 School Addition, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Corridor  
Camera facing north

Photo 18  
1952 School Addition, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Classroom  
Camera facing northeast

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**Figure 2.** Muskego State Graded School Chronology Map

**Figure 3.** Muskego State Graded School, First Floor – Current Floorplan and Photo Key

**Figure 4.** Muskego State Graded School, Second Floor – Current Floorplan and Photo Key

**Figure 5.** Muskego State Graded School, Context Map

**Figure 6.** Muskego State Graded School, USGS Map and UTM Coordinates

**Figure 7.** 1926 photograph of Muskego State Graded School

**Figure 8.** 1948 map of school districts in Muskego and surrounding area

**Figure 9.** 1951 photograph of Muskego School, view NE

**Figure 10.** 1951 photograph of Muskego School, view SW

**Figure 11.** Current photograph of historic tin ceiling panels in raised basement of the 1926 Muskego School

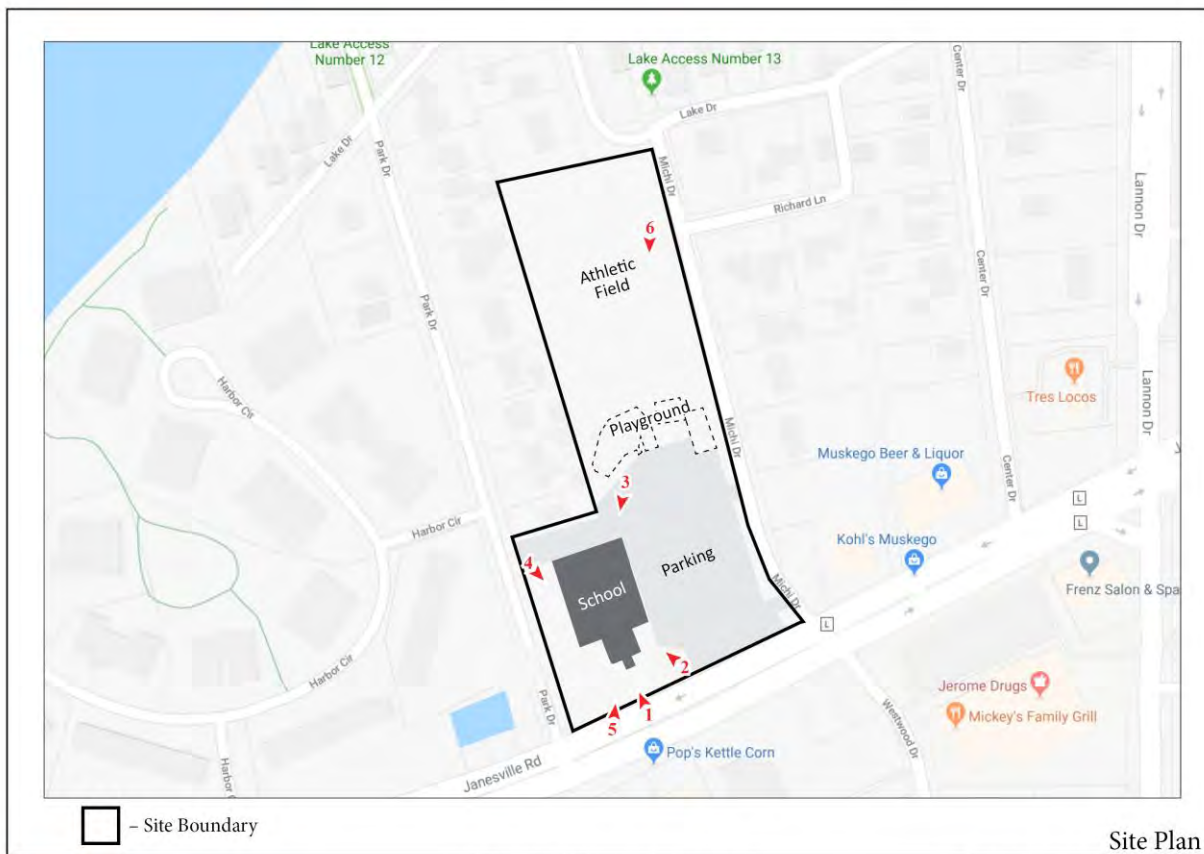
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Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

**Figure 1.** Muskego State Graded School Site Map and Exterior Photo Key  
Not to scale



Muskego State Graded School  
S75 W17476 Janesville Road  
Muskego, Waukesha County, WI

National Park Service  
NR Photo Key



\*Note: Plans are for photokey reference only

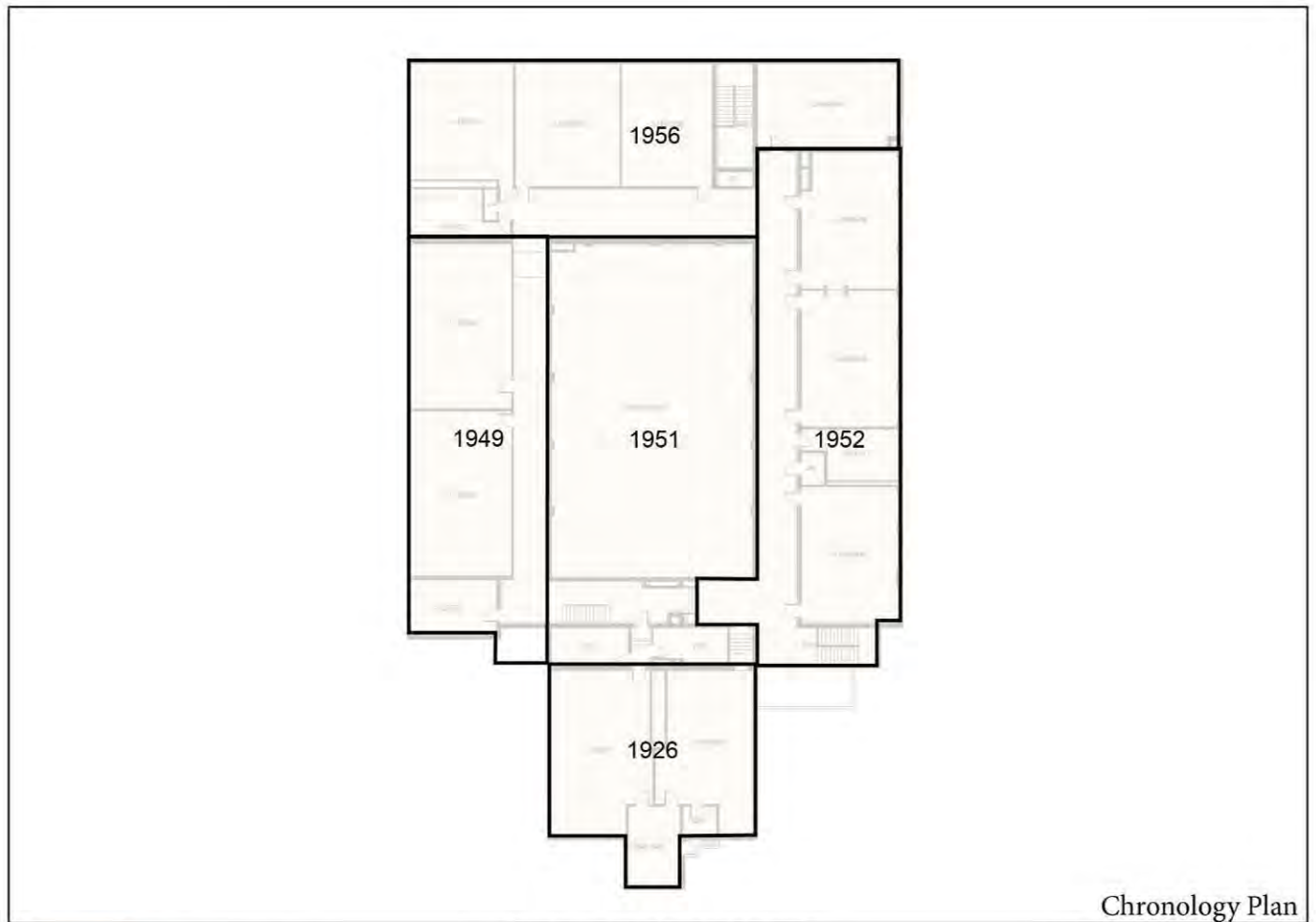
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Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

**Figure 2.** Muskego State Graded School Chronology Map  
Not to scale



Chronology Plan

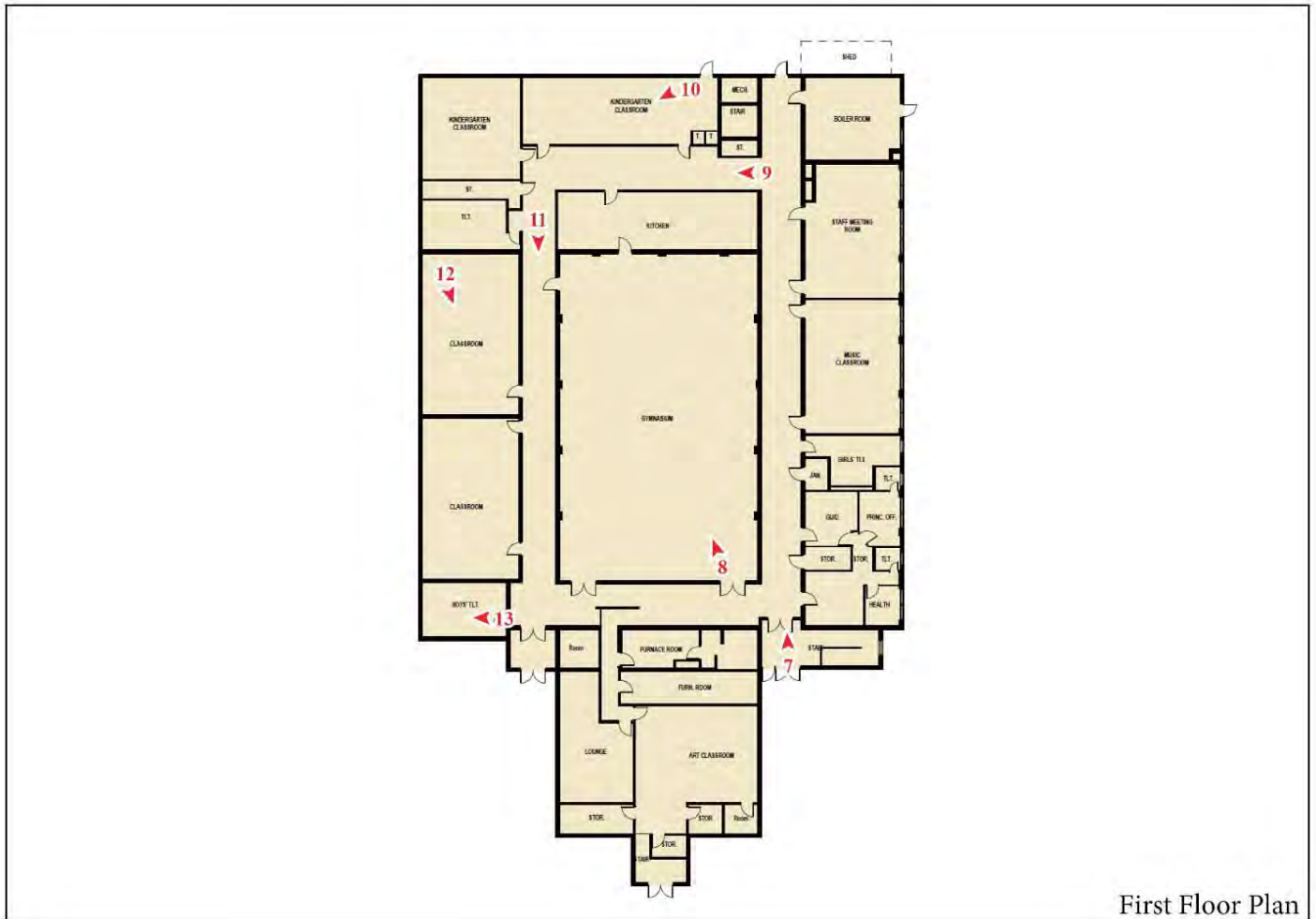
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Muskego State Graded School  
Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin


Figure 3. Muskego State Graded School, First Floor – Current Floorplan and Photo Key  
Not to scale



First Floor Plan



Muskego State Graded School  
S75 W17476 Janesville Road  
Muskego, Waukesha County, WI

National Park Service  
NR Photo Key   
\*Note: Plans are for photokey reference only



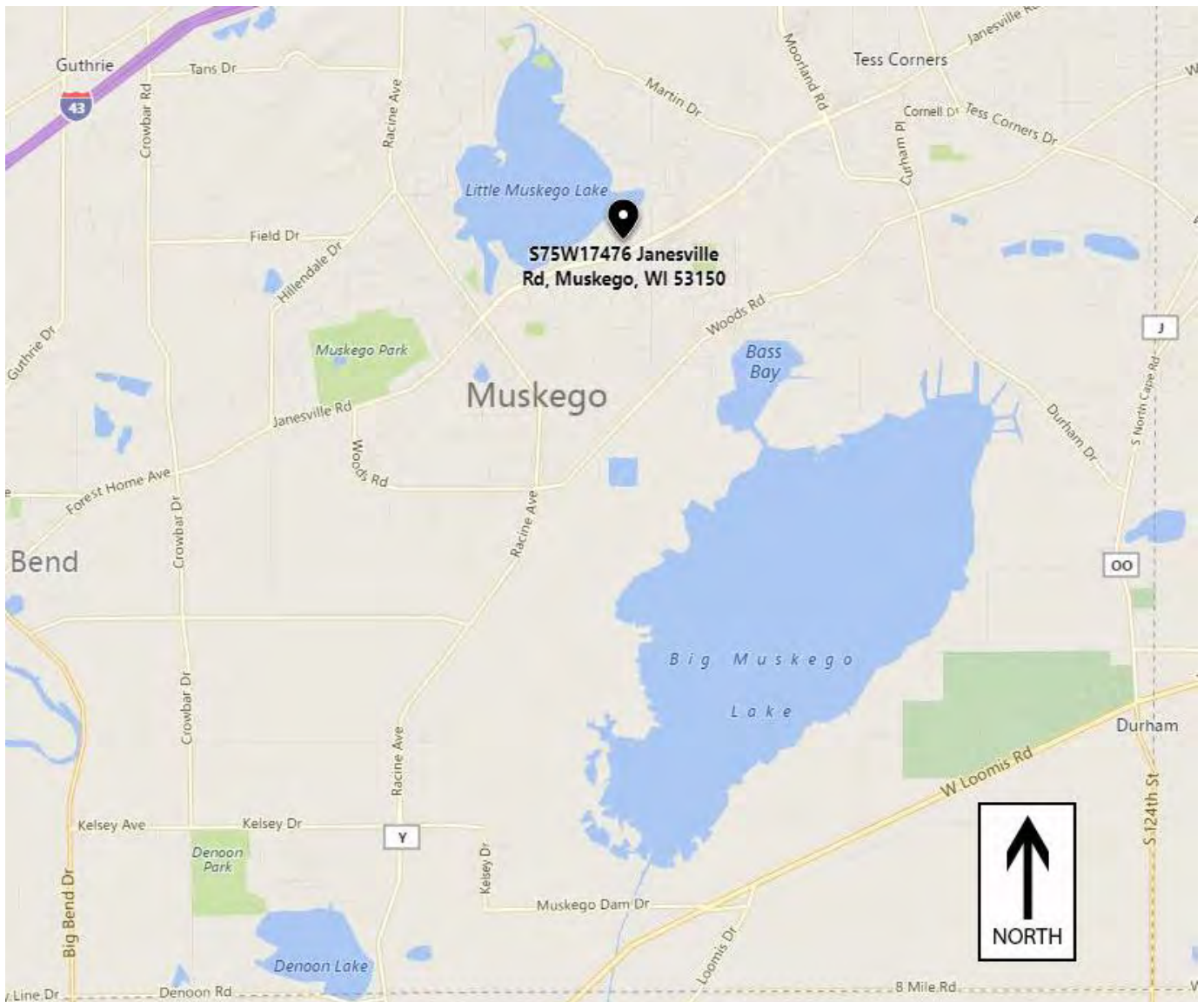
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**Figure 5.** Muskego State Graded School, Context Map. *Source: Bing Maps, 2019.*





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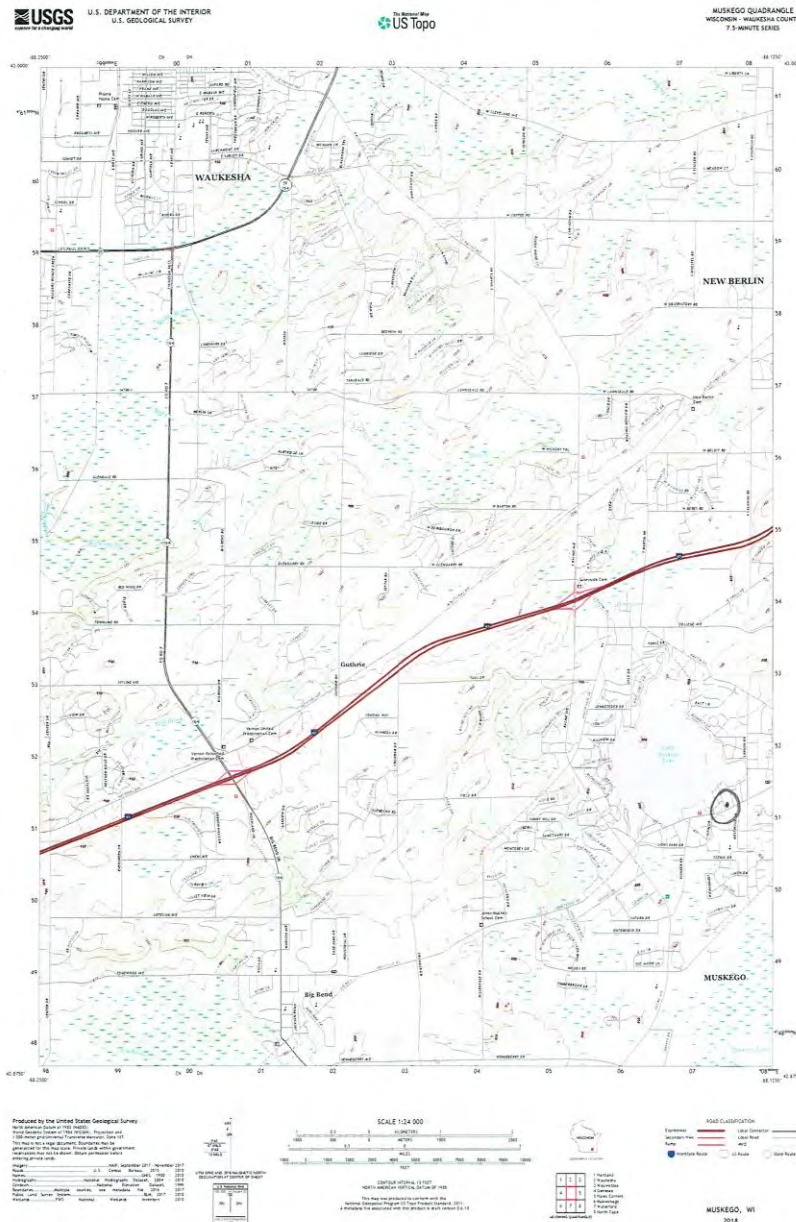
Muskego State Graded School  
Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

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**Figure 6.** Muskego State Graded School, USGS Map and UTM Coordinates

Muskego State Graded School  
875 WI 7476 Janesville Road  
Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

Easting      Northing      Zone  
407527.56    4751204.42    16T



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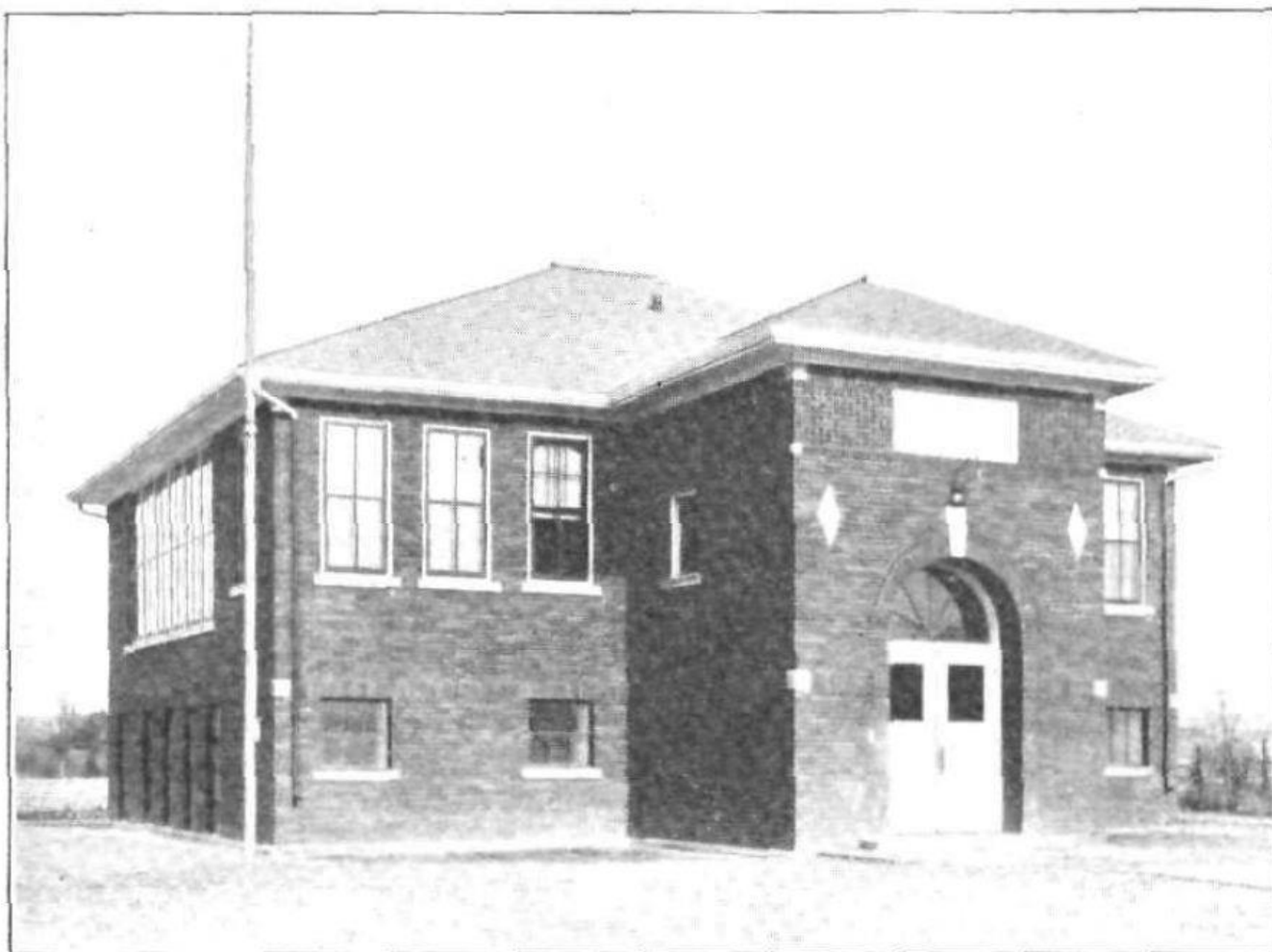
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Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

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**Figure 7.** 1926 photograph of Muskego State Graded School. *Source: Arthur Tews, "Waukesha County Annual," 1926.*



**MUSKEGO CENTER STATE GRADED SCHOOL**  
Erected 1926

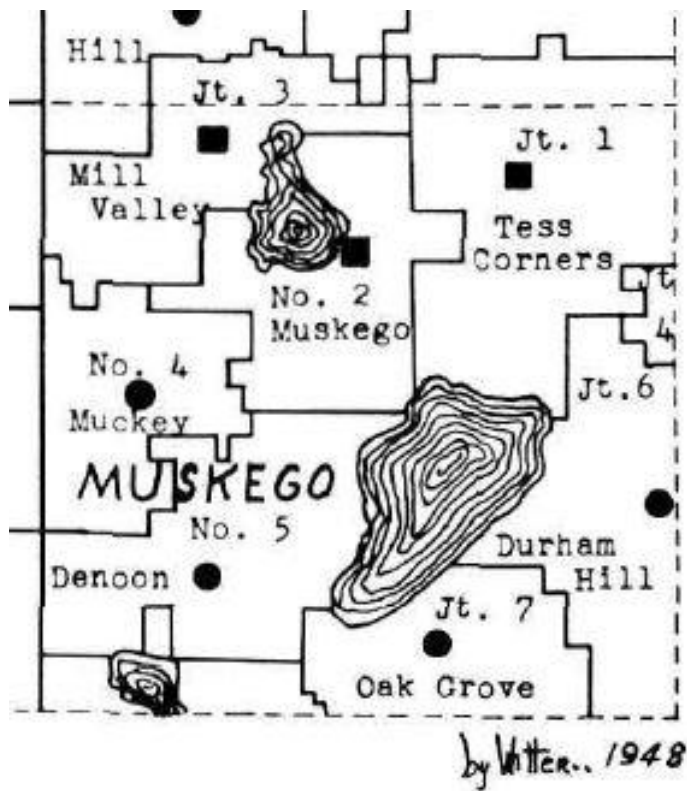
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**Figure 8.** 1948 map of school districts in Muskego and surrounding area. Squares indicate a state graded school and circles indicate a rural school. *Source: County School Committee, "Preliminary Report to the Citizens of Waukesha County," 1950.*



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**Figure 9.** 1951 photograph of Muskego School, view NE. *Source: Waukesha County Historical Society.*



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**Figure 10.** 1951 photograph of Muskego School, view SW. The 1949 addition and the 1951 gymnasium-auditorium are visible. *Source: Waukesha County Historical Society.*



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**Figure 11.** Current photograph of historic tin ceiling panels in raised basement of the 1926 Muskego School. *Source: MacRostie Historic Advisors, 2018.*



Muskego State Graded School  
 875 WI 7476 Janesville Road  
 Muskego, Waukesha County, Wisconsin

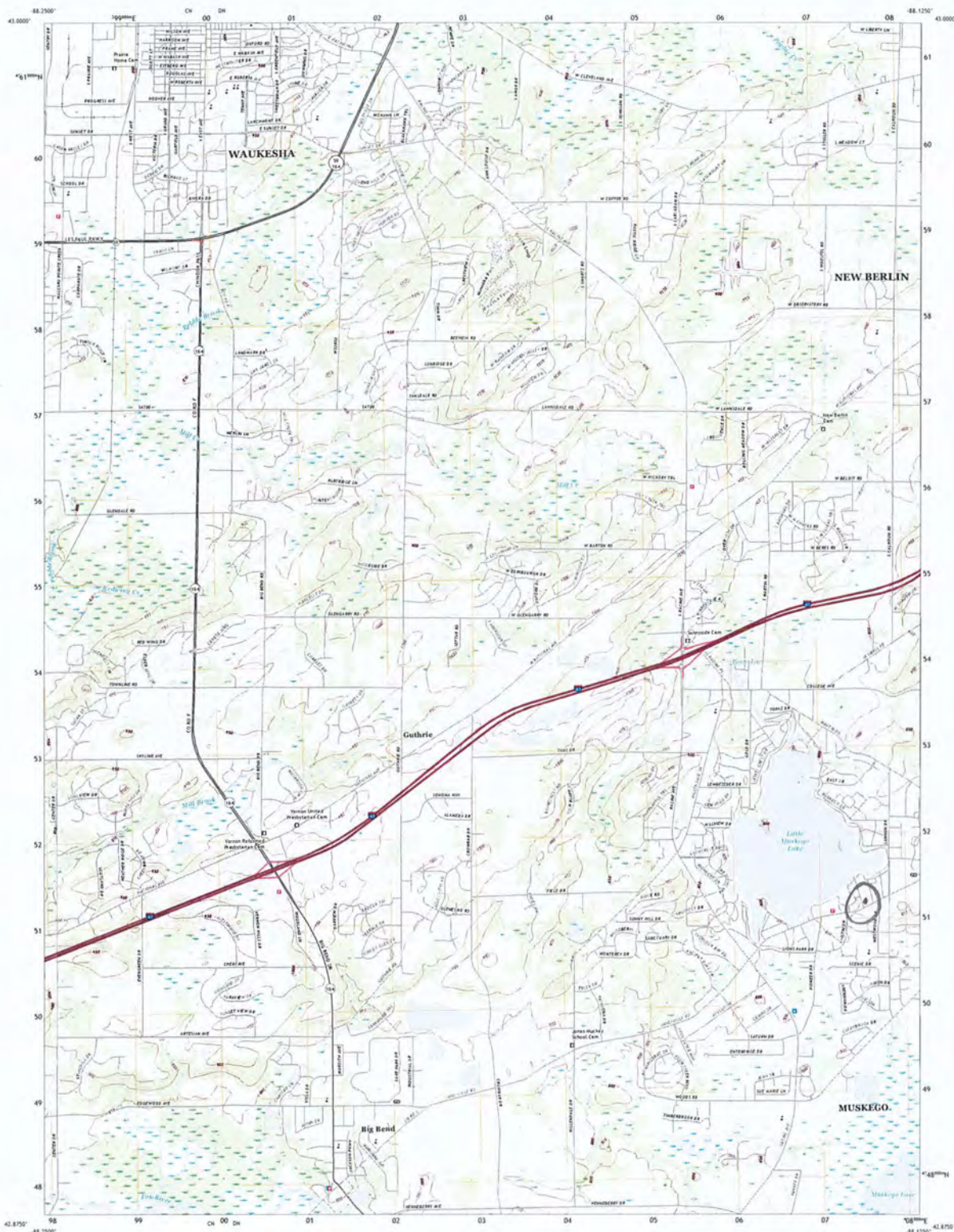
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 U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

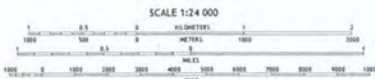
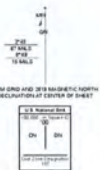


MUSKEGO QUADRANGLE  
 WISCONSIN - WAUKESHA COUNTY  
 7.5-MINUTE SERIES



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
 North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
 World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84), Projection and  
 3 000-meter grid (National Transverse Mercator, Zone 16T)  
 This map is not a legal document. Boundaries may be  
 generalized for this map scale. Property lines within government  
 subdivisions may not be shown. Obtain permission before  
 entering private lands.

Imagery:      NADP, September 2017 - November 2017  
 Base:        U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 - 2018  
 Hydrography:      National Hydrography Dataset, 2004 - 2010  
 Contours:        National Elevation Dataset, 1990  
 Boundaries:      State of Wisconsin, 2014 - 2017  
 Roads:        Land Survey System, 1840 - 1910  
 Water:        National Wetlands Inventory, 2010



1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

40-MINUTE QUADRANGLES

MUSKEGO, WI  
 2018



MUSKEGO  
SCHOOL







MUSKEGO  
SCHOOL



MUSKEGO  
ELEMENTARY  
SCHOOL







MUSEUM



Muskego Elementary  
*Thinking students...changing the world.*





























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/5/2019      Date of Pending List: 9/20/2019      Date of 16th Day: 10/7/2019      Date of 45th Day: 10/21/2019      Date of Weekly List: 10/18/2019

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input checked="" 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 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      10/17/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:    see attached comments : No    see attached SLR : No

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



WISCONSIN  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



TO: Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places

FROM: Peggy Veregin  
National Register Coordinator

SUBJECT: National Register Nomination

The following materials are submitted on this Fourth day of September 2019, for the nomination of the Muskego State Graded School to the National Register of Historic Places:

- 1 Original National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form
- 1 CD with NRHP Nomination form PDF
- Multiple Property Nomination form
- 18 Photograph(s)
- 1 CD with image files
- 1 Map(s)
- 11 Sketch map(s)/figures(s)/exhibit(s)
- Piece(s) of correspondence
- Other:

COMMENTS:

- Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed
- x This property has been certified under 36 CFR 67
- The enclosed owner objection(s) do or do not constitute a majority of property owners
- Other: