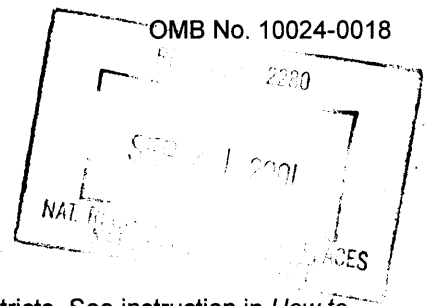


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1194



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Central Platoon School

other names/site number Central Elementary School; 5MR470

2. Location

street & number 411 Clayton Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Brush [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Morgan code 087 zip code 80723

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Marjorie Cortez
Signature of certifying official/Title

State Historic Preservation Officer

August 31, 2001
Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
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 certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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.
- removed from the
National Register
- other, explain
[] See continuation sheet.

Entered in the
Signature of the Keeper
National Register

Date of Action

11-5-01

Central Platoon School
Name of Property

Morgan County, Colorado
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italian Renaissance

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Ceramic Tile
Synthetic
other Terra Cotta
Metal

Narrative Description

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

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

DESCRIPTION

The 1928 Central Platoon School occupies a full block north of the commercial center of Brush, Colorado. The block is bounded on the south by Eaton Street, on the north by Emerson Street, on the west by Clayton Street, and on the east by Colorado Avenue (Colorado Highway 71). The campus block is located diagonally across the intersection of Emerson and Clayton Streets from the 1915 Carnegie Library. The L-shaped plan fronts west onto Clayton. Landscaping consists of grass lawn along the west and south elevations with the remainder forming a playground area covered either with sand or asphalt. Mature cottonwood trees line the west edge of the property. Clayton Street contains a narrow landscaped median in front of the school.

The original portion of the building is an I-plan with the central portion consisting of a two-story classroom section with side wings containing a gymnasium on the north and an auditorium on the south (see fig. 1). The tan brick school sits on a concrete foundation and is accented by terra cotta belt courses, stamped metal frieze and cornices and a truncated hip roof covered in original clay tiles over the classroom portion of the building. The wings are flat-roofed with parapet surrounds. A tall brick chimney rises through the hipped roof. The school retains almost all of its original wood framed, double-hung, multi-light sash. The gymnasium wing contains multi-light, segmental arched windows with terra cotta surrounds. Similar windows on the auditorium wing are infilled with brick. The building entrances have terra cotta surrounds, the most elaborate being on the east elevation entrances that include metal doors, multi-light transoms with segmental arches, and elaborate keystones.

A one-story 1952 addition extends east from the rear of the auditorium. The addition is also of tan brick with a bowed roof of built-up composition punctuated by metal ventilators.

The symmetrical west (Clayton Street) elevation contains the primary entrances to the classroom section as well as the gymnasium and the auditorium. All three entrances are on low concrete stoops and are accessed by concrete sidewalks from the street. The main school entrance is centrally located in the middle of five bays which form the classroom fenestration. The entry is surrounded by a wide terra cotta surround with a Corinthian frieze which forms a semicircular arch punctuated by a large scrolled keystone surmounted by acanthus leaves. The multi-light transom includes a semicircular fanlight. The double doors are metal with single narrow lights. The doors and transom are recessed resulting in a deep reveal.

The entry is flanked by multi-light sash with terra cotta surrounds topped by terra cotta plaques with floral ornamentation. The sills are formed by a terra cotta water table that wraps the entire building, excluding the 1952 addition. The remaining four first-story bays are identical, each containing five-part multi-light, double hung sash. This fenestration is repeated on the second story. The second-story sills are also formed by a terra cotta belt course which runs the full-width of the facade. The area above the windows is filled by an elaborate stamped metal entablature. The wide Corinthian frieze is surmounted by a cornice consisting of egg and dart molding, dentils, modillions and floral eaves molding with

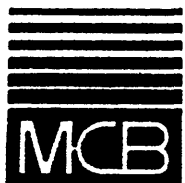
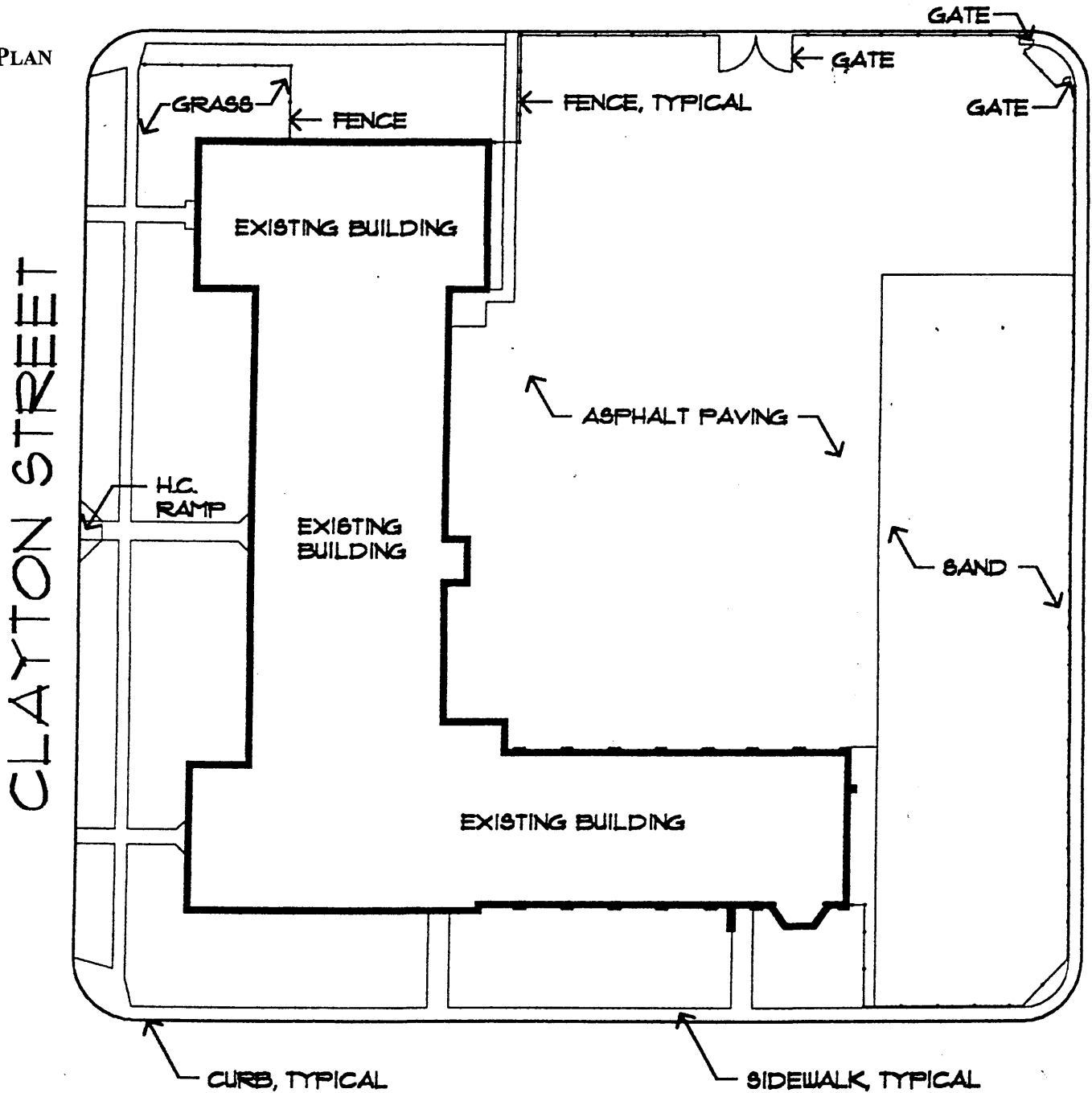
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

SITE PLAN



MCB ARCHITECTS
1780 S. BELLAIRE ST.
SUITE 800
DENVER, CO. 80222
(303) 758-7858
(303) 758-7984 FAX

EATON STREET

EXISTING
SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 50'-0"



PLAN NORTH

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 3

anthemion cresting. The entablature wraps around all elevations of the classroom section of the building.

The west elevation of the gymnasium and auditorium wings are identical. The central entries match the main building entry in design and materials. The doors and transoms are less deeply recessed resulting in much shallower reveals. Each entry is flanked by pairs of six-over-six windows surmounted by terra cotta plaques with foliated decorations. A stamped metal cornice wraps around the wings below the parapets. The cornice is a simplified version of the entablature on the classroom section. A wide foliated frieze is separated from the cornice by dentil molding. Terra cotta forms the coping along the parapet. The short south elevation of the gymnasium wing and the matching north elevation of the auditorium wing each contain a pair of windows matching those on the west elevation.

The north (gymnasium) elevation of the original building contains five tall multi-light, single-hung sash with semicircular arches. The windows have full terra cotta surrounds. Pairs of small sash, identical to those on the west elevation, occupy each end of the elevation.

The south elevation of the auditorium wing is similar to the north elevation of the gymnasium wing. An entry with double metal doors and terra cotta surround replaces one of the double windows found in the north elevation. All the tall semicircular arch windows are now infilled with brick.

The east (rear) elevation fenestration follows the pattern established on the west elevation. The elevation is divided into seven bays. The middle three repeat the west elevation five-sash bays. These are flanked by shorter sash with terra cotta plaques on both stories. The outside bays are composed of second-story paired windows over first-story entries. Originally these entries were identical. The southern entry was modified as a result of the construction of the 1952 addition. The north entry consists of double metal doors with a flat arch, multi-light transom in a terra cotta surround with segmental pediment.

The east elevation of the gymnasium wing contains three first-story sash with terra cotta plaques and a metal pedestrian door. The upper level contains six windows of similar size. The 1952 addition largely obscures the east elevation of the auditorium.

The north elevation of the addition is divided into eight bays defined by brick pilasters. From east to west, the first bay contains a single sash, the second bay contains two sash, the third a metal door with narrow light and a high horizontal sash, and the fourth contains three horizontal sash. The next three bays each contain nearly full-height glazing. The final bay contains a one-story flat-roofed building extension that joins with the entry in the original building.

The east elevation of the addition contains three pairs of casement windows topped by large glass block upper lights and a metal door protected by a flat-roofed canopy supported by metal posts. A large ventilator fills the gable end.

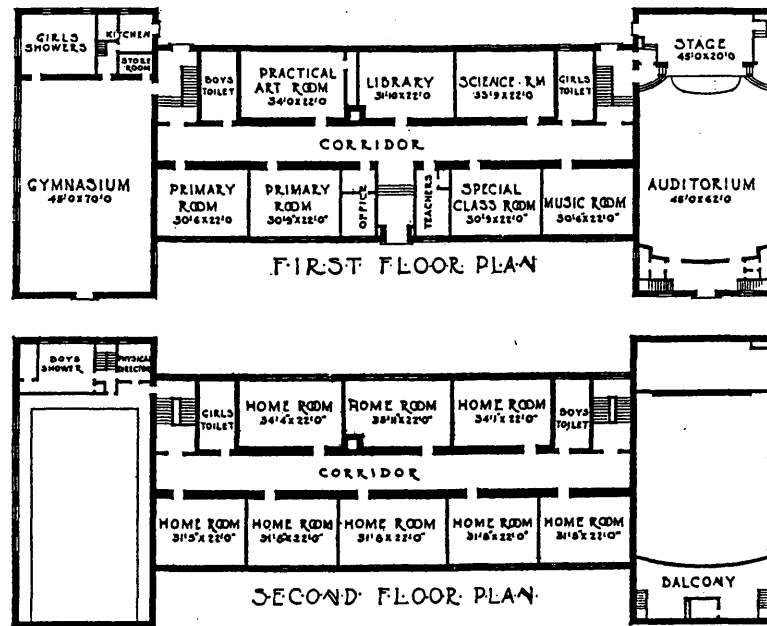
United States Department of the Interior
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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

Figure 2. FLOOR PLANS



Floor plans of Central School, Brush, Colorado, a platoon school with home rooms above and special rooms below.

Source: Case, *The Platoon School in America*.

The five western-most bays on the south elevation of the addition contain the same paired casement windows with glass block upper lights as found on the east elevation. The sixth bay contains a pedestrian door sheltered by a brick wall extension which partially supports the cantilevered roof over the last bay. The cantilevered roof protects a large bay window consisting of large horizontal lights.

INTERIOR

The first and second floor interior spaces are oriented along corridors which run down the center of the classroom portion of the original building (see fig. 2). The corridors access the fourteen classrooms and the library. Stairwells are located at each end of the central corridors where they also provide access to the gymnasium and auditorium. The corridor floors are tiled with plaster walls and ceilings. Banks of student lockers are inset into the walls. Original wood trim, doors and transoms remain throughout the building, including the French doors with spindlework at the entrances to the stairwells. The stairs have oak railings and molding.

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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

The classroom interiors retain much of their original design and materials. Douglas fir floors remain and each classroom contains original wood trim, chalkboards and built-in shelving. The library also retains its original wood shelving units. The gymnasium remains intact, though a leaking roof has resulted in damage to the wood flooring.

The basement contains the heating plant, coal bin, and other storage rooms.

The auditorium space has been significantly altered. A partial second floor was constructed and partitions now divide the first-floor space. The upper floor has begun to fail and is unsafe for occupancy.

The 1952 addition contains a large multipurpose room with kitchen, staff lounge and a music room to the east. The music room originally served as the kindergarten.

The Central Platoon School retains a high degree of integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and historical association. Particularly noteworthy in a school building is the continual existence of nearly all the original sash. The building is fully capable of conveying its architectural and historical significance.

Figure 3.

**Central Platoon School
Interior Square Footage**

Original (First floor)	18,800
Additional (First floor)	<u>6,400</u>
Total of First Floor	25,200
Second Floor	17,100
Basement	<u>5,500</u>
Total Building	47,800

Central Platoon School
Name of Property

Morgan County, Colorado
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

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

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

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

Property is:

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

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education
Architecture

Periods of Significance
1928 – 1952

Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person(s)
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Mountjoy, Frederick E.
Frewen, Frank W., Jr.
Tamminga, William

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State Agency
 - Federal Agency
 - Local Government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository:
Colorado Historical Society

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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

Section number 8 Page 6

SIGNIFICANCE

The 1928 Central Platoon School in Brush is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A in the area of education. The elementary school was an early Colorado adapter of the platoon form of student organization. The fundamental object of platoon organization was to provide an administrative device by which all the subjects of the curriculum received proper emphasis and were presented under conditions best able to realize the social aims of education. Only eight other school districts in the state had adopted the platoon system at the time the local school board instituted the system at Central School. The school used the platoon system until its closure in January 1997. The period of significance begins with the school's opening in 1928 and ends in 1952 with the construction of the rear addition.

The building is also eligible under Criterion C for its architectural significance. The building typifies the design principles for an effective platoon school as set forth by Roscoe David Case. Case served as superintendent of the Brush school district during the design and construction of the Central School. He had previously held a similar position in Iowa as well as being an instructor at the University of Denver, the University of Colorado and Colorado State Teachers College. He later held a position as assistant professor of education at Stanford University. His interest and advocacy of the platoon system of education caused him to correspond extensively with school superintendents across the county. He compiled the information he obtained and in 1931 authored the book *The Platoon School in America*, a brief national history of the platoon system and guide to its plan, organization and function. Case argued that the platoon system made unique demands on its physical plant, requiring specific architectural design to maximize the effectiveness of the system. The Central School typifies a school specifically designed to meet the organizational requirements of the platoon system.

THE PLATOON SYSTEM

In his book length examination and promotion of the platoon system, *The Platoon School in America*, Roscoe Case credited William A. Wirt as being the father of the new system. Building on efforts by many late nineteenth century educators to make education more flexible and caring of individual student needs, Wirt introduced the platoon system in an elementary school in Bluffton, Indiana. He quickly moved on to the Gary, Indiana, school system where in 1908 he also introduced the platoon, or as it was often called, work-study-play schools.

Case characterized the system as:

...a school with a greatly enriched curriculum, one that incorporates well the educational principle of learning through self-activity, a school with new types of instruction, and a plan that provides for the maximum use of the educational plant and its instructional facilities through the maintenance of a double school in each school building. This particular type of organization, however, was devised

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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

originally not so much for economy as to enable the school to provide and operate economically an enriched and a complicated school program.

Its essentials lie in the double organization – an A and a B school – an enriched curriculum, specialized and departmental instruction, a number of classrooms fitted up as special rooms, auditorium and gymnasium work scheduled as regular school subjects, good play facilities, and shops and science instruction.

In the 1920s, most schools operated using the “traditional school” system. In the traditional school a class consisted of students of a single grade that spent each day in one classroom under the instruction of one teacher. The single teacher taught the entire curriculum. This form of educational organization evolved from the one-room classrooms typical of rural education.

In general, the platoon system was a plan of organization which provided for dividing the school into two groups, called platoons, and for such a schedule that while one platoon was mastering the fundamental subjects in home rooms, the other platoon was engaged with activity subjects in special rooms. Each platoon was divided into sections, often with each grade split into two sections. One section of each grade would be in a different platoon. The sections of one platoon would be in their “home rooms” under the instruction of a single teacher per room. The sections in the other platoon would be in one of several special instructional rooms. The special rooms consisted of music, art, and science plus the gymnasium and the library. Half-way through each day the platoons switched assignments – the home room platoon moved into the specialized rooms and the other platoon moved into their home rooms.

In most platoon schools, grades three through eight participated in the platoon system. The students in each grade were often divided into two sections. This resulted in a two platoon system with six sections in each platoon. Exact schedules varied between schools and districts, but the shift between home rooms and special rooms constituted the organizational heart of the system (see fig. 4). The two-platoon, twelve-section schedule was adopted for the Brush Central School.

The aim of education was to enable each individual to develop to the fullest extent of his

Figure 4.

**Twelve-Section Platoon-School
Organization**

**12 sections – 2 platoons
6 home rooms**

Each home room accommodates two sections
of the same grade.

6 special rooms

Auditorium, Gymnasium, Library, Music, Art, Social
Studies

6-hour day

**4 periods of 1½ hours each
3 special activity periods during each
1½ hour period**

Pupils alternate in their programs, one 1½ hour
period in home room, then one 1½ hour period in
special room, or visa versa, throughout the day. One
section taught in each special room, except
Auditorium.

Auditorium, 2 sections per period.

Source: Case *The Platoon School in America*

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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

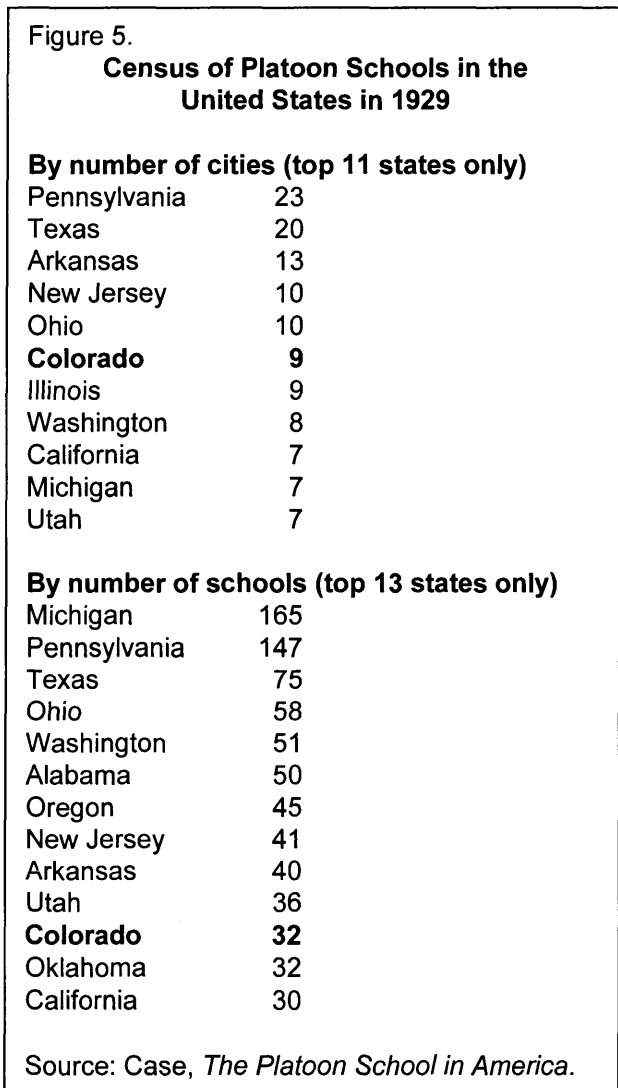
individual powers while encouraging actions beneficial to society as a whole. The platoon system helped to develop ethical character because it appealed to so many aspects of a child's nature. It offered a variety of experiences which required self control and self direction. The platoon school utilized teachers with subject specialties in classrooms designed best for that subject area. By switching platoons of students through the building, the school effectively utilized both teachers and classroom space. Every room was in use practically every minute of the day. Another decided advantage of the platoon system was the increase in the number of pupils that could be educated without increasing the size of the school.

The adoption of the platoon system grew slowly but steadily from 1908. By 1928, when the Brush school district decided to implement the system in the new Central School, 177 cities in 39 states had established the platoon system in some 963 new or remodeled schools (see fig. 5). Colorado ranked within the top ten states in 1929 by number of cities having one or more platoon schools. Colorado also tied with Oklahoma as the eleventh ranking state in terms of the total number of platoon schools in operation.

When school opened that fall of 1928, Brush had one of the most modern and up-to-date school plants in the nation, organized and operated under the most modern systems known to public educators of the day.

DESIGNING A PLATOON SCHOOL

Roscoe Case devoted a good portion of his study of platoon schools to examining the link between the school building and this new educational philosophy. In addition to the philosophical rethinking and the new organizational and staffing requirements necessary for a school district to make the switch, Case stated that a successful platoon system requires "a reconstructed and expanded school plant." The effective use of the platoon system required either remodeled schools or new buildings built around the platoon system. In his discussion of new school construction, Case explained that a "standard" platoon-school plan did not exist. Basic questions about enrollment, non-platooned grades, non-platooned programs, number of periods and length of school day, among others, needed to be answered to insure a functional building. However, he did provide guidance



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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

in many areas of site and building planning that had been proven by districts operating with the platoon system.

Building orientation, Case said, should assure that regular classrooms received light from the east or west. Art and drawing instructors preferred north light or their special room. Science departments with a need for direct sunlight should be on the south, southeast or southwest. Sunlight in gymnasiums was also very desirable. Gyms should be near the playgrounds or athletic fields. Recreational facilities were an important part of the platoon school. In order to allow adequate space for playgrounds and athletic fields, Case advocated shifting the school building to one side of the site, a departure from the traditional center of the site location. He suggested that the site itself need be no bigger than that for a traditional elementary school. For a student enrollment of 600 he recommended a site of not less than five acres.

While orientation and recreational facilities should come first, Case suggested that much value could be derived by children from daily seeing a beautiful layout dedicated to their own education. Beauty did not mean extra expense, just extra care in planning.

In regard to the external appearance of the school building, Case discussed two factors related to planning – architectural style and building plan. No one style was appropriate for the platoon school. “The major consideration is that the external appearance be an inspiration to the child and the community, as it stands for the ideals of education.” In relation to building plans, Case found that two types were in use – the closed and the open.

Closed plans consisted of the hollow rectangle, the solid rectangle, and the rectangle with interior rooms used as gymnasiums, auditoriums or other special features. The open plans, the more widely used among platoon schools built by 1930, were shaped like letters of the alphabet. Plans included the I, U, H, T, E and Y. Two-story buildings tended to be more effective than either one- or three-story designs. Standardization was not needed and had not occurred in school districts. In a comment on recently constructed buildings, Case pointed to Denver, “where a building program covering a period of several years and costing eleven million dollars was begun recently, the first 27 school buildings were planned by 22 different architect, thus eliminating standardization.”

Based on his extensive correspondence and own experience, Case set forth several fundamental principles for planning and constructing the platoon school building. The first of these was expandability. The building should facilitate easy and economical expansion. Specialized departments were the most likely candidates for additions in a platoon school. Flexibility was another important principle. The design should allow for the alteration of the interior without great difficulty or expense. Interior walls should be nonbearing so they could be easily moved or altered.

Closely related to flexibility is adaptability. The building should adapt to the school program. One of the most serious problems which must be solved in the administration of a platoon school is traffic flow.

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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

Students move within the building several times each day and the building must be designed to effectively and efficiently handle this traffic. Several design considerations could improve traffic:

1. **Allocation of rooms.** Home rooms should be on the second floor with special educational rooms on the first. This relegates most traffic to the first floor, except for the twice daily platoon change. The auditorium and gymnasium, in which two or more sections meet each period, should be widely separated.
2. **Entrances and exits.** There should be enough to accommodate the expected traffic. Entrances should be free of unnecessary doors, steps and obstacle, such as radiators.
3. **Corridors.** Main corridors should be 12-feet wide with space for lockers. Lateral halls should be 9-feet wide.
4. **Stairways.** For 500 students, two stairways would be sufficient. A school for 1,000 should have three stairways.
5. **Drinking fountains.** These should be evenly spaced along the main corridors. A 150-foot long corridor should have four or more.
6. **Allocation of toilets.** The restrooms should be near the stairs, one for each sex on each floor but not together. The boys' restroom should be directly above the girls' on one end of the building and the reverse configuration used at the building's other end.
7. **Auditorium, gymnasium and library use.** Outside doors should be provided to these spaces if they are to be used by the public or after regular school hours. Separate heating and ventilating systems for these rooms could reduce total operating costs. Toilets for both sexes and drinking fountains should also be nearby.
8. **Size and plan of rooms.** The appropriate room size depends on such criteria as maximum anticipated enrollments, desired seating plan, recitation plan (speaking from one's seat or the front of the room) and the method of instruction. Most home and special classrooms tend to be about 22 by 30 feet in size. A small gymnasium might be 35 by 70 feet (including showers) while a large double gym could be 60 by 90 feet (exclusive of showers). Auditoriums vary greatly with the size of the enrollment. A 40 by 65 foot space could accommodate 300 students, twice that number would require a space of 45 by 80 feet, and a student population of 1,200 to 1,500 would necessitate a 60 by 110 foot space. Of course, a balcony could accommodate more students in the same square footage. Special rooms should be flexible but should contain necessary fixtures, such as built-in cupboards, display cases and lockers, appropriate plumbing, electric outlets, blackboards, poster boards, etc.
9. **Teacher facilities.** Separate restrooms for teachers are desirable and often a teachers' office is included, something particularly useful for special subject teachers without permanent classroom space.

Economy was another fundamental design principal. Case urged districts to build for the platoon system and remember that a platoon school typically housed one-third more students than a traditional school. Plan for additions, avoid expensive decoration, and build for low cost upkeep. In a specific example of the last point, he suggested that:

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Central Platoon School
Morgan County, Colorado

The initial cost of a tile cornice is much higher than the same cornice of galvanized iron, but the cost of upkeep of the terra cotta is nothing, while the galvanized iron cornice needs to be painted from time to time, involving considerable expense due to its inaccessibility.

In a final note on additional design considerations, Case pointed out the important use of lockers in a platoon school. Although coats could be kept in cloakrooms, on wardrobe hooks placed in rooms or corridors, or in lockers placed in locker rooms, the ideal arrangement is the placing of lockers along the corridor walls, recessed so that the front of the lockers are flush with the wall. The lockers would be easily accessible by students passing through the corridors several times a day.

When it came to hiring an architect, Case warned that "the selection of an architect cannot be made with too much caution...in view of the important part that the building plays in determining the success of a platoon-school program." Not every architect could design an effective platoon school building:

The architect to be a reputable designer of school buildings must be familiar with modern school programs, and be willing to co-operate with the school authorities in the planning of structures which facilitate administration and instruction. Likewise the superintendent of schools must know enough about building construction to be able to converse intelligently with an architect concerning the various phases of planning and building.

The planning of platoon schools not only requires an architect who understands the construction of school buildings, but also one who is familiar with the problems of the platoon school and knows how to build to meet its needs. Capable architects in the platoon-school field are usually not found outside cities using the plan, thus necessitating the use of city architects or those who are not versed in platoon-school construction.

Case noted that architects with the requisite experience and skills may not be readily available. If such an architect cannot be found, then much greater design responsibility will fall on the school staff.

BUILDING THE CENTRAL SCHOOL

School District No. 2 in Brush scheduled a bond election for February 1928 to finance the construction of a replacement school for the fire ravaged Central School. Fire destroyed the school, Brush's first brick building, on December 9, 1927. The proposal called for the issuance of \$150,000 in coupon bonds. The electorate approved the proposal on February 11, 1928, and two weeks later the school board authorized the issuance of the bonds. The design and construction of the new Central School had to be expedited due to the unexpected loss of the original school building. The school board wanted the new building to be ready for classes on September 1, 1928.

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The Brush School Board appears to have followed the advice of its superintendent, Roscoe Case, and hired an architectural firm with extensive school design experience, the Denver firm of Mountjoy and Frewen. While it is not known if the firm had actually designed any platoon schools, their recent completion of elementary school designs in Denver, a district using the platoon system, suggests that the architects were at least familiar with the concept.

Frederick Mountjoy and Frank Frewen brought considerable experience to the Central School project. By 1928 the firm could count among its completed projects the high school in Del Norte (c. 1919), the Cedaredge Consolidated School (1920; State Register listed), the Cheyenne Wells Middle School (1921), the elementary schools in Holly and Limon (1922 & 1923), Denver's Ebert Elementary School (1924), the Blackstock-O'Leary Elementary School in Gunnison (1926), and an addition to the Park Hill Elementary School in Denver (1928). Other important Mountjoy and Frewen designs include the St. Ignacious Loyola Church in Denver (1923; National Register listed), the Infirmary at the Monte Vista State Soldiers and Sailors Home (1928; State Register listed), the Rocky Mountain Bank Note Company Building in Denver (1929; National Register), and the Gunnison Municipal Building (1931; State Register).

Frank Frewen was born in Denver on September 28, 1887, and attended Manual High School. He trained in architecture at the University of Colorado and entered the Denver office of Harry Manning, becoming a partner in 1913. He established his own practice in partnership with Frederick Mountjoy in 1916. Frewen is credited with some eighty buildings throughout Colorado and Wyoming. He is noted for his school building designs. In addition to high school buildings in Boulder, Idaho Springs and Englewood, he also designed buildings at Western State College in Gunnison. He was elected to the Colorado Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1921, and at the time of his death in 1937, was serving as president. He was also a long time member and officer of the State Board of Architectural Examiners.

In 1934 he was selected to head the Denver office of the federal Home Owners Loan Corporation with a main office in Denver and branches in Pueblo, Grand Junction and Colorado Springs. The corporation offered federal mortgage loans to recondition and modernize homes while providing work for carpenters, masons, plumbers and others.

Frederick E. Mountjoy was born on February 8, 1870, with the first Denver directory listing occurring in 1900. Mountjoy was a draftsman for the architectural firm of Gove & Walsh through 1908. In 1909, Mountjoy formed the firm of Eagleton and Mountjoy with Frederick M. Eagleton. That partnership dissolved after two years and Mountjoy briefly practiced alone in 1911. He joined with Park M. French in 1911-1912 to form Mountjoy and French. Frank Frewen joined the firm in 1917 and French left two years later. The partnership of Mountjoy and Frewen practiced from 1920 to 1931.

Although Mountjoy practiced alone after 1931, he often worked with other Denver architects. His interests included an active membership on Denver's Municipal Art Commission. Mountjoy died on

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October 25, 1941, at the age of seventy-one. He died during the construction of the addition to the Denver Municipal Auditorium, which he designed with C. Meredith Musick. At the time of his death, Mountjoy resided at 2901 York Street, where he had lived since 1916. He is interred in the Classical Revival-style Fairmount Cemetery mausoleum, a Denver landmark he designed with Frewen in 1930.

The general contractor for the Central School project, William Tamminga of Denver, signed the construction contract on March 30, 1928. The contract specified that the building must be ready for occupancy on September 1st or the contractor would pay the school district \$20 per day for each day of delay.

The contract included an addenda eliminating certain elements in the original architectural design. Color was to be omitted from the terra cotta ornament. Tile wainscoting was to be omitted throughout the building, except for the boys' shower. Painted cement plaster was to be used instead. In place of the original specifications for reinforced concrete floors, the contract now specified 3 x 14 in. joists on 16 in. centers. Concrete floors would only be used over the boiler room, coal room and all toilets and showers, stairs and corridors.

A final item eliminated from the original design may have been a point of contention between Superintendent Case and his board. The change called for the terra cotta cornice originally planned for the auditorium, gymnasium and central portion of the building to be replaced with a galvanized iron cornice, painted to match the remaining terra cotta. In his 1931 book, Case specifically urged those planning platoon school to carefully weigh the long term maintenance costs before making design decisions that promised only short-term savings. He cited as a specific example of poor planning just such a substitution of a painted iron cornice for one of terra cotta. Whatever may have been the motivation for the alterations to the Central School design, the changes resulted in a total cost savings of \$14,000.

Additional local contracts were signed with Clatworthy Hardware Company of Fort Morgan for the heating and ventilating work and with William H. Turpin of Brush for the plumbing. Other materials came from suppliers in Denver, including steel fabricated by E. Burkardt & Sons Steel & Iron Works, terra cotta manufactured by Northwestern Terra Cotta Co., mill work provided by Hallack & Howard Lumber Co., and miscellaneous materials from Colorado Builders' Supply.

Work on the school began immediately. On Memorial Day 1928 a large crowd gathered for the laying of the cornerstone. Judge Haslett P. Burke of the State Supreme Court delivered the oration. Within the cornerstone were placed: *The Colorado Masonic Directory*; a list of school board, faculty, and school children of District No. 2; a booklet of pictures and descriptions of Brush businesses; a telephone directory; copies of the *Brush Tribune*; a copy of the Platte River compact; and a list of the membership of the Brush Civic Club.

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CENTRAL SCHOOL AND THE PLATOON SYSTEM

The opening ceremonies for the new school finally occurred on April 4, 1929. E.W. Thompson presided as principal while Superintendent Roscoe Case led the slate of dignitaries. Faculty for the new school consisted of four primary teachers, six home-room teachers (one each for grades three through eight), and seven special subject teachers. The special subject teachers, the heart of the platoon system, included specialties related to the auditorium and library, gymnasium, music, art, social studies and penmanship. Central School operated as a platoon school from its opening. In the Brush platoon system, the third through the eighth grades were each divided into two sections. This made a total of twelve sections.

The question of concern here is "how does the architectural design of the Central School reflect the platoon-school design principles cataloged and publicized by Roscoe Case?" The overall floor plan of the Central School clearly reflects the platoon school system (see fig. 2). In fact, Case included the floor plans of the Central School in his book and referred readers to the plan as "a building of the I-type, which, although simple in its architecture, is attractive in appearance and has floor plans which include many of the qualities that are desired in platoon-school buildings." The central two-story classroom section contains home rooms on the upper level and special classrooms on the lower. The home rooms and special classrooms are close to the suggested sizes and each contains necessary built-in blackboards, poster boards, shelves, and storage cabinets. Lockers line both sides of the central corridor to allow students easy access as they move between classes. The auditorium and gymnasium are widely spaced at opposite ends of the central corridor. Both these special rooms have direct access to the outside so that they could be used by the public after school hours without the necessity of opening the whole building. Shower and toilet rooms are stacked for economy. The toilets are placed next to the end of corridor stairs for the best traffic management.

Entrances to the school are numerous and close to grade to facilitate easy access. The primary classrooms and the gymnasium have easy access to the playground and athletic field. The school is located at the western edge of its block to allow for a large unobstructed playground on the east.

Some compromises were made when the platoon-school design principles were applied to the Central School. Such compromises are always to be expected when the reality of budgets, politics, and personalities intersect with the planning process. The replacement of the terra cotta has already been mentioned. The orientation of particular rooms was not optimal. In particular, the gymnasium ended up in the north wing where its large north facing windows failed to admit any direct sunlight.

The two and one-half acre site also fell well below the five-acre minimum suggested by Case. The school board relegated the new Central School to the block previously occupied by its predecessor facility rather than to a more spacious campus. The site plan did shift the school to the west third of the block to allow for the largest playground area possible.

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Taken in total, the compromises made in the construction of Central School were minimal. The design incorporated all the important fundamentals of the platoon system. The building also conveys Case's principal that "the external appearance be an inspiration to the child and the community, as it stand for the ideals of education." Mountjoy and Frewen designed an elegant Late Renaissance Revival building that exhibits the community's care and concern for its children and their education. Quality materials are used throughout the interior, though decoration is kept to a minimum. The building's size, commanding presence, and the quality of its materials and construction reflect well on Superintendent Case, the school board, and the town at large.

Central's first students graduated in May 1929. For nearly seven decades, until its closure in 1997, the school educated the community's children. The lack of changes to the building over that time indicates the soundness of the original design and construction, and the design philosophy of adaptability within the platoon system. Even when changing program requirements resulted in the 1952 addition, the building was able to be easily enlarged to accommodate the new facilities without major disruption to the existing school building. The Central Platoon School successfully represents the platoon school concept in design and operation.

When the voters of Brush approved a mill increase to fund a new elementary school, it was with the promise from civic leaders that attempts would be made to save the abandoned Central Platoon School. Plans for rehabilitation are now under development to insure that Central School remains an active part of the Brush community for generations to come.

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Mills, James E. *The History Of Brush, Colorado The First 100 Years*. Published by the *Brush News Tribune*, Brush, Colorado, 1982

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Central Platoon School
Name of Property

Morgan County, Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.4

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 617170 4457090
Zone Easting Northing

2. _____
Zone Easting Northing

3. _____
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 Kenneth M. Portuese, Executive Director (additional material by OAHP staff)

organization Brush Area Museum and Cultural Center date 5/12/2001

street & number PO Box 341 telephone 970-842-0382

city or town Brush state CO zip code 80723

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.)

name William Scott

street & number 1901 Union Blvd., Suite 204 telephone 800-348-6264

city or town Colorado Springs state CO zip code 80909-2283

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.*)

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of Block 3, Original Town of Brush, Morgan County, Colorado.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nomination includes all the land historically associated with the school building.

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-36, except as noted:

Name of Property: Central Platoon School
Location: Morgan County, Colorado
Photographer: Kenneth M. Portuese
Date of Photographs: June 2001
Negatives: Brush Area Museum and Cultural Center

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 West (Clayton Street) elevation; view to the east.
- 2 West elevation, entry detail; view to the southeast.
- 3 West elevation, gymnasium entry; view to the east.
- 4 West elevation; view to the northeast.
- 5 West elevation; view to the northeast.
- 6 West elevation, central classroom section; view to the northeast.
- 7 West elevation, northern classrooms and gymnasium;
view to the northeast.
- 8 West elevation, gymnasium wing; view to the southeast.
- 9 North elevation; view to the east.
- 10 West elevation, southern classrooms and auditorium;
view to the southeast.

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<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Photographic Information</u>
11	West and south elevations of auditorium wing; view to the east.
12	South elevation of auditorium, addition in background; view to the northeast.
13	Rear (east) elevation; view to the northwest.
14	Rear (east) elevation; view to the northwest.
15	Rear (east) elevation; view to the southwest.
16	South elevation of addition; view to the northeast. Photographer: Dale Heckendorn. Date: June 19, 2001. Negatives: Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
17	Interior, first floor entrance lobby; view to the west.
18	Corridor outside library; view to the east.
19	Library; view to the southwest.
20	Library; view to the south.
21	First-floor corridor; view to south.
22	First-floor corridor; view to south.
23	Second-floor "home room."
24	Second-floor "home room."
25	Staircase; view from first floor.
26	First-floor staircase doors; view down from landing.
27	Second-floor staircase doors; view from corridor.
28	Typical restroom.
29	Gymnasium; view to the northwest from the balcony.
30	Gymnasium; view to the northeast.
31	Gymnasium; view to the southeast
32	Auditorium lobby; view to the south.
33	Auditorium lobby; view to the south.
34	Second-floor corridor, view to the south.
35	Multipurpose room, 1952 addition; view to the southeast.
36	Kindergarten room, 1952 addition; view to the south.

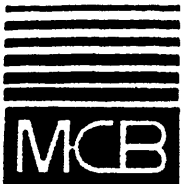
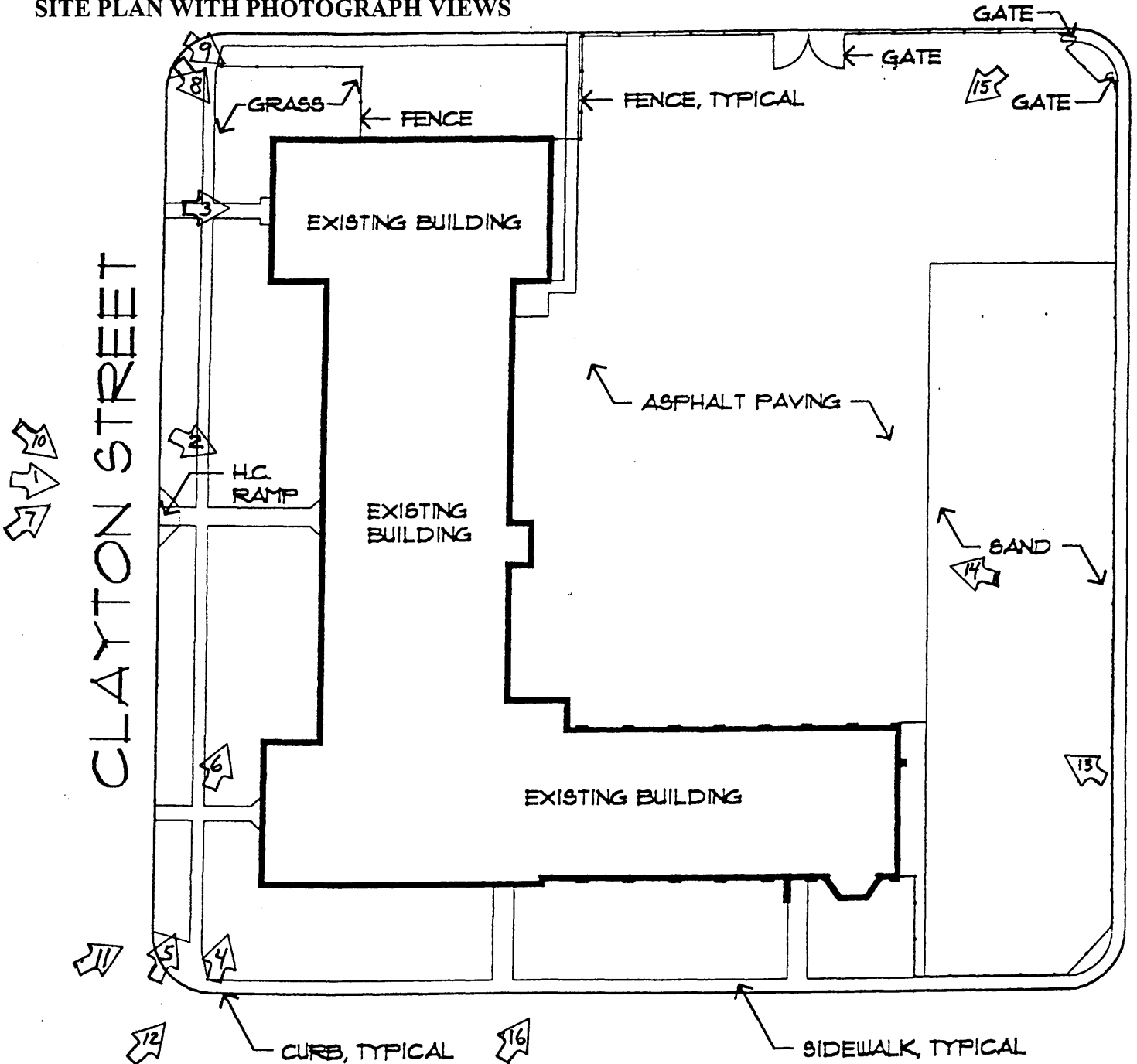
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SITE PLAN WITH PHOTOGRAPH VIEWS



MCB ARCHITECTS
 1780 S. BELLAIRE ST.
 SUITE 800
 DENVER, CO. 80222
 (303) 758-7858
 (303) 758-7984 FAX

EATON STREET

EXISTING
SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1" = 50'-0"



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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Brush East Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series, 1982

