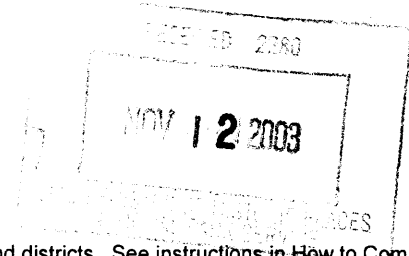


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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 Gas City High School  
other names/site number East Ward School 053-233-52025

2. Location

street & number 400 East South A Street N/A  not for publication  
city or town Gas City N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Grant code 053 zip code 46933

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 36CFR 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.)  
Signature of certifying official/Title [Signature] Date 11.8.03  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
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:) \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Patrick Andrews Date of Action 3/5/2004

**5. Classification**

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

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

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

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

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object
- landscape

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

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

Indiana's Public Common & High Schools

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: School

OTHER Storage

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

19th & 20th c. AMER.: Prairie School

foundation STONE: Limestone

walls BRICK

STONE: Limestone

roof STONE: Slate

other METAL

GLASS

**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 National Register listing.)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
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.
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:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

Period of Significance

1894-1953

Significant Dates

1923

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Waldron, John H

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic 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:



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetGas City High School  
Grant, IndianaSection number 7 Page 1

## GAS CITY HIGH SCHOOL DESCRIPTION:

The Gas City High School at 400 E. South A Street, Gas City Indiana, is a nearly square, two story, Romanesque Revival, brick and stone building. (See photo 1.) Constructed in 1894, it is topped with a pyramidal roof and offset gables on all four elevations. In 1923, a two-story rectangular brick addition and a separate heating plant were completed. (See photos 2 and 4.) The two buildings are constructed of similar materials, but the facade of the south addition was intentionally designed "un-adorned" to keep the building cost lower. (See photos 3 and 4.) A two story "bridge" connects the buildings with the intent to keep the high school and elementary school students apart. (See photo 10.) The school occupies the west half of a city block in a residential neighborhood.

## Exterior

The building's primary facade faces north on South A Street. (See photo 1.) It is divided into three sections of a central tower flanked by an east gabled section and a west section with small through-cornice dormer. Each section is set back from the one to its east.

The most outstanding feature is the tower's central entry. Six stone steps rise to the wood floor entry level. It has a large roughcut limestone Roman arch supported by short Frank Furness-style Doric columns below carved square impostes. (See photo 9.) Recessed under the arch, two wood single light doors with fixed side panels replace the original two eight panel wood doors. Original fluted pilasters with corner block paterae are present. The original fanlight window was replaced with four-part divided light Lucite windows. Bead board wainscot flanks entrance below painted smooth-surface plaster. The second story has two rectangular windows with 20 divided-light Lucite panels in the upper three-quarters of the original window opening. The lower quarter is a clear light awning-style window. Aluminum covers the wood jambs. Limestone beltcourse, which spans the entire north elevation, runs below the window at the level of the sill. A wider limestone beltcourse, also spanning the entire north elevation, tops the windows at the level of the header. The attic story is what remains of the original bell tower. Two, original, arched, double-hung windows are surmounted by a brick eyebrow arch and flanked by corner tourelles, foreshortened when the upper two-thirds of the tower was removed giving it a false machicolated appearance. (See photos 1 and 3.) A continuous limestone beltcourse spans the north elevation running under the windows at the sill level. A limestone beltcourse also circumvents the tower base at the level of the impostes and at the base of the deeply corbelled false machicolation. Missing from the tower are the large arched openings and the bell contained within, the steeply pitched pyramidal roof and its narrow metal spire, and the upper section of the corner tourelles, which rose above a metal frieze and ended in engaged conical peaks.

The east gabled section has four bays of windows and is topped by a gabled attic story. (See photo 1.) This section is visually anchored by a foundation of five courses of roughcut stone capped by a smooth stone water table. The building's lowest level is partially below grade and has four, square windows within the foundation wall. The glazing has been replaced with Lucite configured with five divided lights in the upper half and one clear light in the lower half. The next window to the west has two rows of five divided lights rather than a lower clear light. The alternating pattern continues in the two windows to the west. The jambs are covered with aluminum.

The first floor has four original arched windows surmounted with a brick semicircular arch and eyebrow arch. The rectangular windows have been replaced. The east window has 20 divided-light Lucite

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetGas City High School  
Grant, IndianaSection number 7 Page 2

panels in the upper three-quarters of the original window opening and the lower quarter is a clear light awning-style window. The next window is an all-Lucite divided light window. The last two windows alternate with a lower awning window first then an all Lucite window. Aluminum covers the wood jambs. A limestone beltcourse runs under the windows at the sill level and at the impost.

The four second floor rectangular windows alternate a lower quarter clear awning window with a full Lucite divided light window. A narrow limestone beltcourse runs at the sill level and wide stone banding is at the header level.

A large gable spans the attic. A brick semicircular arch and eyebrow arch surmount two small, arched, double-hung original wood windows centered in the gable. The gable is capped with stone and has a stone finial. (See photos 1 and 3.) Corner brick tourelles, whose stone bases begin just below the sill level of the second floor windows, flank the east section. A third limestone beltcourse spans the attic at the windowsill level. The tourelles have a conical stone cap.

The west section is similar to the east section from the foundation to the limestone beltcourse above the second story windows except there are five bays of windows rather than four bays. The windows alternate between clear awning and full Lucite windows with three awning windows in each story. The top of the second story is marked with a corbel table interrupted by a through-cornice dormer in the center of the section. A limestone beltcourse at the top of the corbel table is a continuation of the limestone beltcourse spanning the north elevation at the sill level of the attic windows. The small gable dormer is above the third and fourth window bays, and is flanked by small square pillars. (See photo 8 for similar dormer.) The gable has a stone cap and stone finial. The west end of the west section is finished with a small tourelle similar to those described in the east section, beginning just below the second story limestone beltcourse at the sill level and ending just above the terminus of the roofline.

The nearly square shaped building is surmounted by a pyramidal slate roof with decoratively patterned rectangular and segmental slates and topped with a louvered cupola. (See photos 3, 5, and 6.) The cupola has fluted corner boards with capitals, bracketed eave, louvered sides, but does not vent the attic. There is a small gabled triangular window with original mullions on north slope of pyramidal roof nearly obscured by the bell tower. The roof is intersected with the ridgepoles of large gabled sections. The east gable faces north with the roof sloping east and west. The north slope of the west elevation gable extends the west end of the roof.

The south elevation is similar to the north elevation, but is carried out in two sections rather than three. (See photos 4 and 6.) The gabled west section is similar to the gabled east section on the north elevation. As there is no central bell tower, the entrance and east section are on the same plane. The foundation is typical of the building, five courses of rough limestone capped by a smooth stone water table. The west two of the five square fixed Lucite windows in the foundation wall have clear light in the lower half of the window. The entrance is at grade and the entry is flush with the brick wall. The semicircular brick arch is higher, reaching the second story sill level limestone beltcourse. Below the arch, four sections of multi-light Lucite windows replace original windows. A wide steel horizontal band is at mid-arch. Steel entry doors are replacements of the original. The remainder of the east section is similar to the west section on the north elevation. However because of the lack of bell tower, the deeply corbelled cornice runs the width of the east section except at the through-cornice gabled dormer where the brick is laid in common bond. (See photo 8.) The dormer is the same as the dormer on the east section of the north elevation. A pyramidal slate roof with decoratively patterned rectangular and segmental slates is topped with a louvered cupola. The cupola has fluted corner boards with capitals, bracketed eave, louvered sides, but does not vent the attic. There is a small gabled triangular opening, originally a mullioned, on south slope of pyramidal roof. The roof is intersected with the ridgepoles of large gabled

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Gas City High School

Grant, Indiana

Section number 7 Page 3

sections. The west gable faces south with the roof sloping east and west. The south slope of the east elevation gable extends the east end of the roof.

The east elevation is similar to the south elevation except there is no entrance. (See photo 5.) The roughcut limestone foundation spans the entire elevation. The south section is virtually the identical to the west section of the south elevation. The north section has two bays of windows rather than an entry. The bays are set wide apart on either side of a centrally located multi-flue chimney. The windows follow the typical pattern for each floor, and all have a lower clear light awning window. A large metal multi-section tube vent runs diagonally from the first second floor window in the north section ending at ground level at the north window of the north section. The roof is similar to the south elevation. An additional element of a multi-flue chimney constructed of decoratively patterned brick pierces the base roof in the center of the east elevation.

The west elevation is similar to the east elevation. There is a centrally located multi-flue chimney constructed of decoratively patterned brick. The roughcut limestone foundation spans the entire elevation. The major difference is a three-story brick "bridge" located in the center of the west elevation connecting a 1923 annex to the original building. (See photos 4 and 10.)

#### 1923 Addition

In 1923, John Waldron designed a Prairie style rectangular annex set back and west of the original Gas City High School. (See photos 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 11.) It is primarily constructed of brick with an asphalt roof, stone windowsills and wood windows and doors. The building is longer than it is wide. Full-height pilasters on the north and west elevations add a decorative element to the building. (See photos 2, 3 and 11.) A beltcourse (a soldier course edged above and below with a stretcher course) between third and second levels reinforces the liner design on the north, west and south elevations. (See photos 2, 3, 4, and 11.) The windows do not align between the two buildings. (See photos 3 and 4.) All the windows are original. (See photos 2, and 11.)

The 1923 annex is connected to the original high school via a brick three-story bridge. (See photos 2, 4 and 10.) The flat roof structure retains the original north elevation single light double-hung window openings on both the first and second levels. There were never any openings on the main level or on the south elevation of the bridge.

The north elevation is the primary facade. (See photo 2.) It has five bays: a central bay of paired windows and doors flanked by two bays of single windows. The original wood double-hung windows have single-light sashes. The bullnose limestone foundation is smoothly finished. The first floor single story central projecting entry pavilion has double bi-directional doors with horizontally divided lights in the upper half. Light is admitted via a six-light transom and small side windows on the entry pavilion. The entry is just slightly above grade and achieved by a slightly inclined concrete slab inside the vestibule. Two window bays on each side flank the first floor entrance. The east bay of windows is two windows high with the first floor and stair-landing windows slightly shorter than the other north elevation windows. Raised sections of brick from foundation to roof imitate brick pilasters at the corners of the building and between the two bays flanking the entrance.

The second floor has five bays of windows. Two bays of single windows flank the central bay of paired single-light double hung windows. The windows are all of similar scale and proportion and have stone sills. A horizontal band of soldier brick edged in stretcher course runs between the first and second floors. The two-pitched roof is flat on top with shallow angles and wide overhangs.

The west elevation is longer than the north elevation. (See photo 11.) Six raised brick pilasters are evenly spaced along the elevation creating five sections with windows in between the pilasters. The bullnose

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

Section number 7 Page 4

limestone foundation is smoothly finished.

The first floor windows are of varying sizes and levels. The single long narrow rectangular double-hung window, centered in the lower half of the north section, has single light sashes, and matches the north elevation windows. The next section (south) has one small four-light window in the upper right quadrant of the section. The middle section has two double-hung wood windows with two divided lights in each sash centered in the upper two-thirds of the section. The fourth section windows are similar to the middle section, but are more widely spaced apart on the wall. Finally, the south section has two windows one above the other near the corner. The lower window is the same size and scale as the small window in the second section. The upper is a smaller version of the double-hung divided light window.

The second floor windows are situated directly above the first floor windows, and have uniform wall placement so the tops of the windows and sills are at the same level. All windows except the north section window (which matches the north elevation windows) are similar in design. The windows are wood double-hung with two lights in each sash. The north section has one window, the second and middle sections have two windows each, and the fourth section has three windows. Finally, the south section has two windows. A horizontal band of soldier brick edged in stretcher courses runs between the first and second floors. A louvered vent, just above the brick beltcourse, is in all but the north section. A large metal multi-section tube vent runs diagonally from the south second floor section ending at ground level in the middle section.

The two-pitched roof is flat on top with shallow angles and wide overhangs. Down spouts from roof to ground are on the north end of the north section and the south end of the fourth section. A large roof vent is located near the midpoint.

The south elevation is divided into three sections: a two-story central projecting section about half of the width of the elevation with east and west sections. (See photos 4 and 6.) The smooth bullnose-shaped stone foundation spans the south elevation. Two first floor two-over-two wood windows are set wide apart. The second story has four two-over-two wood windows set high on the wall. A louvered vent, just above the brick beltcourse, is below the windows at each end. The west section has a boarded lower square window opening that is slightly smaller the window above. The upper window is a single sash two-over-two window. The soldier belt course divides the wall. The second story has two windows with sills at the same level. The large two-over-two double hung wood windows appear to meet the roof overhang. A louvered vent is under the east window just above the beltcourse. The east section is a mirror image of the west section. The two-pitched roof has a hipped extension over the projecting center section. A tall square brick chimney intersects the southeast corner of the roof.

The east elevation has one pilaster near the south end. The stone foundation is smooth. The first floor has one two-over-two light window high on the wall toward the north end. The second floor windows are large two-over-two double-hung wood windows. There is one window in the south section, a pilaster, a group of three windows and a pair of windows to the north; the connecting bridge is at the north end of the elevation.

The two-pitch roof has a large roof vent near the midpoint and downspouts near the north and south ends of the building.

Interior

Original building

The first and second stories were designed for classrooms, and the basement was used for the lunchroom, restrooms and laboratory facilities. During this 1923 building project, the original Gas City High School building underwent changes that maximized the usable building space and upgraded the durability of the fin-



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5 Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

ishes. The original entrances and window openings are intact. The window sashes were replaced with fixed Lucite divided light windows; some windows have clear glass awning windows in the lowest part of the opening.

In general, wainscot in rotunda, first and second floor rooms varies in height depending on the room. Single, double, and in some cases triple rows of boards, are placed above the wainscot in the cloakrooms and around the rotunda; some still retain hooks. (See photo 17.) The original pine floors were replaced with oak in 1923. Original doors and hardware have been retained in most cases. All the door openings have an operable transom above. Wide fluted trim around windows and doors is embellished with carved plinth blocks. (See photo 16.) Nearly all chalk boards and the continuous cupped wood chalk trays are in place and in good condition. Functionally, the chalk tray is the dado rail. (See photos 14 and 15.) All the woodwork is painted. Most of the ceilings are acoustic tile. Plaster ceilings are exposed in some locations as acoustic tile has fallen from furring strips. Metal florescent lights are suspended from ceiling. Classrooms have steam heat. Ornate grills of original heating system still in place, but are blocked from behind. Plumbing pipes and electrical wiring installed as upgrades are surface mounted.

The basement is laid out with rooms or passageways surrounding an octagonal rotunda. The three ways to access the basement are split returns from the main floor on the south wall, through a west passageway from the 1923 addition or the primary entry via the original south doorway. (See photo 13.) Double doors open to a landing. Split returns go to the first floor and a doublewide stair leads down into the rotunda. The rotunda is a large, open space that was used for the lunchroom for many years. With no fixed seating, no evidence of such use remains. Large classrooms are located in the northeast and northwest corners. The old shop classroom and boys' toilet is in southwest corner. The girls' toilet and teacher lounge is in the southeast corner. Some of the original indoor plumbing fixtures, such as toilets and sinks, are present. All the square Lucite or Lucite and clear light windows are high on wall. (See photo 12.) The basement is constructed of cement block walls, iron support posts in the rotunda and concrete floor throughout.

The conceptual plan of classrooms surrounding an octagonal rotunda is carried out on the first floor. Primary entry is via double entry doors on the north wall lead that up a flight of six steps into the expansive rotunda. (See photo 18.) The first floor rotunda has four doors evenly spaced around sides that lead to classrooms in the northwest, northeast, southwest and southeast corners of the building; four doors lead to cloak rooms that lie between the classrooms with two on the east and two on the west sides of the building. The corner classrooms are large open spaces with multiple windows on the exterior walls and chalkboards on the interior walls. (See photo 20.) The rotunda is finished with bead board wainscot and painted plaster walls.

Traffic flow throughout the building is by way of a grand staircase at the east end of the rotunda. The staircase has a doublewide central rise to a landing and split returns to the second floor. (See photo 18.) Flanking the south stair are split staircases to the basement. (See photo 18 and 19.) The newel post has a square base, beaded embellishments of raised panels and corners, bull's-eye on upper section and graduated round cap on chamfered top plate. (See photo 19.) The stair has turned balustrades with square caps and bases.

The second floor central rotunda is virtually straight on the west side making it hexagonal. (See photo 21.) The west side is similar in plan to the first floor with corner classrooms and adjacent cloakrooms. An enclosed stair to the attic is between the cloakrooms. The east side is divided into two rooms, a very large north room and a typical size south classroom. This large space was partitioned in 1923 and still retains the original chalkboard partition walls recessed in the original double south entry. (See photo 22.) The north

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetGas City High School  
Grant, IndianaSection number 7 Page 6

entry door has not been altered, and can be seen here from the rotunda and from inside the room. (See photos 21, 22 and 24.) Later a more complete south partition wall was added to separate the large north room into two rooms. (See photo 23.) At the north end of the north room, a door communicating with the rotunda was added when a second partition wall was added, making a total of three classrooms on the west side of the rotunda. When the partition wall was later removed the communicating door was enclosed and is used as a "built-in" bookcase. (See photo 22.) The ghost of this second partition wall, added in the mid 20th century then removed, can be seen under the beam. (See photo 22 to locate the boxed beam.) The classrooms in the northwest and southwest corners of the second floor are much the same as those on the first floor. Glass front cabinets are noteworthy in both classrooms. The painted cabinets are in the southwest room, once the home economics room. (See photo 25.) Unpainted cabinets are in the northwest room where science was taught. This room is typical of all the classrooms. (See photo 26.) The bridge to 1923 addition is attached on the west side of the second floor.

The attic is a large, open, unimproved space. (See photo 27.) Two brick walls support the bell tower. A wood ladder leads to the first level of belfry. The central area has wood planks over the joists, but the remainder has open joists. Each elevation has double windows in the gabled end. Smaller dormer windows are at opposite end of each elevation; the bell tower on north elevation has two double windows. Each slope of the pyramidal roof has a small triangular window. Only the north window retains the original mullions, the others are boarded up. Large air handlers connected to the east chimney are still in place.

## Interior of 1923 Addition

The centrally located double entry doors of the 1923 addition open into a large stair hall. The first floor space, partially below grade, is largely gymnasium space. The gym, designed to be very flexible, used the stage area for seating at basketball games and the gym floor for seating at stage events. The original stage is intact. (See photo 29.) Small locker/shower rooms flank the stage and are accessible via stairs. The bleachers are original except where repaired for termite damage. The bleachers are arranged in two sections separated by the entry aisle. The magnificent pressed metal ceiling and boxed beams is completely intact. The original gym floor has been replaced with vinyl tile. The backboards and score boards are not original. Two rooms at the west end of the first floor were used for offices. The walls and ceiling are plaster.

The stair leading to the second floor has one landing and return where a door leads to the balcony over the gymnasium bleachers. At the second floor level, the bridge to the 1894 building is visible at the end of the hall. (See photo 28.) The second floor has a central hall with the boys and girls locker rooms midway down the hall and one large room at the south end. Lockers still line the central hall, and can also be found adjacent to the girls restroom. Smaller classrooms, three on the west and two on the east, have the original chalkboards, window sashes and doors. (See photo 30.) A long narrow room, used at one time for typing class, lies at the top of the second floor stairway. This room is longer and narrower than all the other second floor rooms. (See photo 31.) It has the unique feature that there are two openings in the wall that are visible from this and the adjoining room. The large south room has windows high on the wall to accommodate the tall library bookcases. An intact skylight is unique to the library room. A partition wall (the same design as the partition wall on the second floor of the 1894 building) divides the large space into two spaces: one is large and the other is the size of the corner classrooms (identified previously as one of the three classrooms on the west side of the second floor). The second floor's painted plaster walls and simple wood trim is intact.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7,8 Page 7 Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

## Boiler Room

The 1923 building project also included the one story power plant on the south side of the site. (See photos 4 and 6.) The flat multi-height roof has tiled edges. Original tall, narrow wood doors on the south elevation have upper divided lights and cross-braced bottom panels. (See photo 4.) The north elevation has a wood entry door. The east, north and south elevations have a bin door high on the wall.

## Building condition

The 1894 Gas City High School is in good condition. The wood windows are in need of paint and minor repair. The masonry walls are in generally good condition; very little mortar is missing and the bricks are not chipped or cracked. Minor cracks appear in the masonry above the second floor south windows and in the upper gables of all the dormer windows. There is only a minor amount of dirt on the brick and stone.

Overall the 1923 addition is in excellent condition. The wood windows are in need of paint and minor repair, but few of the windows have missing glass. The masonry is in good condition. The metal roof vents have some minor corrosion.

The interior is also overall in good condition. One room has severe plaster damage and missing plaster, but that is a singular occurrence. Water from a leaking roof has damaged some of the wood floors, especially on the second floor.

## Site

The 1894 Gas City High School shares a full city block with the 1923 addition, the 1967 elementary school (now the Mississinewa Consolidated Schools Administrative Offices) and two houses built on the southeast corner of the block. According to Grant County deed records, the school corporation never owned the land where the houses are located. (See site map.) A grass lawn and several trees occupy the west half of the north lot in front of the main entry, with an asphalt parking lot directly in front of the school. The 1967 elementary school sits on the remainder of the east portion of the lot. (See photos 32 and 33.) A funeral home is directly across South A Street. West of the 1923 addition is a grass lawn and a concrete sidewalk. A chain-link fence demarcates the southwest and south perimeter of the school grounds. A crude single-track drive crosses the grass lawn on the south lot. The east lot is asphalt with several trees in the southeast corner of the lot. One and two story late 19th and early 20th century residences and several late 20th century modular homes comprise the near neighborhood to the east, south and west of the school.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Gas City High School meets the requirements for listing under the Indiana Public Common and High School Multiple Property Listing under Criteria A and C. The transition of Mill Township's educational system from a county system to a consolidated locally governed educational system mirrors the transition of the early railroad and saw mill town of Harrisburg into the urban community of Gas City. This historic trend of the development of community education meets the requirements for listing under Criterion A. The Gas City High School meets the requirements for Criterion C because of its architectural significance. As the first Gas City building designated for the education of high school students, it was the largest and grandest building within the neighborhood and the community.

Harrisburg began as a speculative development in 1867, when John S. Harris platted 97 lots. Harris' entrepreneurial venture took advantage of the proposed Pittsburgh, Cincinnati and St. Louis Railroad, which began passenger service autumn 1867. (Whitson, p. 65.) By 1868, the town had grown and Harris platted the town's first addition. (Brant & Fuller, p. 581-583.) Two more additions were soon added. The town's

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

Section number 8 Page 8

population grew to 750, and then dropped prior to the discovery of natural gas in 1887. Free building sites and cheap energy propelled the influx of businesses and residents, including children. Capitalizing on economic development opportunities Harrisburg's name was changed to Gas City on March 21, 1892. Between May 1, 1892 and February 1, 1893, fifteen new factories located in Gas City, employing a total of 4025 workers. (*Gas City, Indiana - Where it is and Why You Should Move There.*) It was also during the period of rapid growth that the city services were improved. Water works were installed in 1892 and electricity was in place by 1894.

#### Education and School History:

Initially school was held in frame schoolhouses scattered around the area. The hiring of the teacher, the teacher's qualifications and the curriculum were individually and locally controlled. As early as 1870, Mill Township enumerated students and controlled which school each student attended. There were six school districts with a total of 298 students. (There was no data for district 2.) Districts 1, 3 and 7 are within the legal description of Harrisburg: Township 24, Range 8 East. District 7 had 34 colored students.

The county board of education administered the school system in the early days. The county was divided into thirteen townships. The responsibility for educational matters for each township was delegated to the township trustee. (Whitson, p. 325-6.) Harrisburg was in Mill Township. Some opposition to the consolidation of schools occurred because few of the students had adequate means of transportation beyond the rural school. (Whitson, p. 325.) In 1874 several of the frame schoolhouses were closed in favor of Harrisburg's first consolidated school building. (Whitson, p. 263.) A three-room brick structure at North "A" and First Streets was constructed in 1874, and served elementary students. This change is reflected in the sudden increase of students in District 2. There were 107 district 2 students enumerated in 1875. Harrisburg's high school students attended school in nearby Jonesboro. (The Reporter, July 13, 1967.) The 1877 Grant County Atlas lists one graded school in Harrisburg.

After the influx of factory workers during the gas boom, the high school students began attending school in Gas City. The first High School was held in a downtown building at 2nd Street, and later moved to a building at First and Main streets that was later used for the Indiana Dry Goods Store. (*Gas City's 50th Anniversary Jubilee*, p. 45) Students subsequently moved to the Mississinewa Hotel occupying the last downstairs room in the Hotel Annex. (1907 Epoch, p. 15.) Grades 7 and 8 also met in the Hotel. All these students moved to the newly constructed Gas City High School building January 1895. (Epoch, p. 15.) The class size varied, but steadily grew throughout the next 12 years, decreasing in the years when a January class was not admitted. Students did a mix of grade-levels work. By 1895, the State of Indiana approved the three-year course of study. Ten pupils were doing all high school work and 18 were doing part high school and part grade school work. From January 1895 to 1898: the seventh and eighth met in room eight, and the remainder of the building was used for high school students. The first high school class was graduated in 1897. (Whitson p. 328.)

Over the next 25 years room use was rearranged to meet the needs of the student population at any given time. For example, from 1898 to 1902 room eight was used only for the eighth grade. (Epoch 1907.) In 1900 the four-year course of high school study was commissioned. (Whitson, p. 328.) With the change of courses, more space was necessary. The chemistry lab was set up in the northwest room of the basement in 1900. (Epoch 1907.) And, in 1903, Physics and Botany began meeting in the northeast room of the basement. (Epoch 1907.) Superintendent Isaac W. Cripe instituted a completely new arrangement in 1915. Rooms on the east side of the hall were combined into two assemblies and the six and six plan instituted. (1920 Epoch.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

Section number 8 Page 9

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The student population completely outstripped the physical space of the school by the early 1920s. An addition was designed and built by the original builder, John H. Waldron in 1923. Improvements were also made to the original building with the removal of the old furnaces and the installation of a steam heating plant. The new furnace room, detached from both school buildings, was outside to the south of the main buildings. This change made two additional classrooms available in the old basement. One was used for manual training equipment; the other room was for the school nurse and janitorial supplies. Other improvements included replacing the old pine floors with hardwood floors, the addition of slate blackboards, and new window shades.

The 1923 building is connected with the old building by an enclosed passageway in the basement and on the second floor. This leaves the grade rooms on the first floor of the old building undisturbed by the high school. (Newspaper Reporter? Dec. 28, 1923.) The new building was dedicated and was put into use on January 1, 1924.

The lower floor of the new addition was a gymnasium. It had a fine basketball floor with baskets at the east and west ends. Bleacher seats along north wall would seat 500. Additional seating was available using chairs stored under bleachers. The room would seat 800 for entertainment using the basketball floor, and 700 for basketball games using stage for seating. (Reporter, Dec, 28, 1923) The south side of the room had a shower at each end with dressing room and toilet above.

There were also tennis courts, baseball diamond, 12' wide track, sidewalk, campus lights and landscaping. Summer athletics were popular at the school. (1937 Epoch.) Sadly, none of these outdoor athletic sites remain.

As the rural one-room schools became overcrowded and inadequate, citizens began requesting better facilities for the students. After a successful November 4, 1947 vote to establish a joint high school, a group was organized on March 11, 1948 to plan for the first consolidated high school. After the last class was graduated from Gas City High School in spring 1948, the name was changed to Mississinewa Joint High School. (Reporter.)

The first board of the consolidated Gas City and Jonesboro schools was functioning by August 1, 1948, the beginning of the fall term. The Mississinewa Joint High School began operation in the former Gas City High School building with students from Jonesboro also attending. The school was recognized as a first class commissioned school and was admitted into the North Central Association of Colleges and High Schools in 1949. The next year, by an act of the Indiana legislature, the elementary students were permitted to be included in the joint school system. The board voted as such on August 1, 1949. Thus the Mississinewa Joint School system was established consolidating all the Jonesboro, Gas City and Mill Township schools. Shortly thereafter the Mississinewa Holding Corporation with more than 500 shareholders established for the purpose of building a new high school building. After three years of fund raising, planning and building, the building was dedicated on March 13, 1951. With the removal of the high school students to the Mississinewa Joint High School building, the former Gas City High School became the East Ward School where junior high school and elementary students were educated. (Reporter) In 1977, a new Mississinewa High School was built. The 1951 building became the R.J. Basket Middle School, and the 1894-1923 building became the East Elementary School. A new elementary school was built on the north-east corner of the lot of the Gas City High School in 1967. (Reporter.) In 1992 the East Elementary School was closed for student use, but continued to be used by the school corporation for storage. It was remodeled in 2003 and is now the school corporation office.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetGas City High School  
Grant, IndianaSection number 8 Page 10

## Architecture:

The Gas City High School is an excellent example of Richardsonian Romanesque style of architectural design. It is the earliest example of a Gas City school and was constructed during the robust economic times of the gas boom era. The school is a local landmark to hundreds of former students. Popular from the 1940s until the mid 1960s were the signatures that boys left behind on the attic beams as testimony of their tenure as students. Annual class photographs that were taken under the massive Romanesque stone arch of the Gas City High School are evidence of its contribution to the community's sense of place. Each class is gathered on the steps with the beautiful multi-panel doors in the background. That the original exterior appearance of the 1894 building has retained much of its original appearance is also testament to the significance of the building in the community. The school also took advantage in the very latest modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing installed in the basement restrooms, and electric lighting. The 1923 addition was purposely of plain design so that it not detract from the original building. John H. Waldron, designer and builder of the original school and the addition, was no doubt influenced by the popularity of the Richardsonian Romanesque style for Indiana's public buildings in the latter part of the 19th century. Between 1886 and 1897, fifteen Indiana county Romanesque Revival courthouses were constructed. Many churches and schools also chose to use the style to signify their imposing presence in neighborhoods and communities. The Romanesque style had an enduring popularity in Gas City. The second Gas City School, West Ward School built between 1900- 1902, was also designed by John H. Waldron in the Romanesque style. West Ward School has some design elements in common with Gas City High School; it is a large massed brick building with roughcut limestone foundation, three levels and attic, central projecting entry with large arch entry and stone banding. West Ward School also has some unique characteristics. Among them are that the corners of the building are defined by a conical-roofed tower, and no bell tower exists. The interior also very different. It has nine classrooms located among the basement, main and second floors, but where Gas City High School has a grand rotunda, West Ward School has a small rectangular common area on the main floor. Rather than the grand staircase of Gas City High School, West Ward School has only a small staircase to the second floor located at the back of the building. The school is now a museum owned and operated by the Gas City Historical Society. The walls are covered with faux-wood paneling in most of the classrooms and in the central common area. The building is in good condition. West Ward School was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1985. Waldron also designed and built several residences in Gas City. The best known is the John L. Thompson House located at 407 East Main Street and rated outstanding in the Grant County, Indiana Interim Report of Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. It is a large two and a half-story brick house designed in the Colonial Revival style and built during the same time as West Ward School, 1902 - 1906. It is in very poor condition, but has had few exterior changes. Waldron's styles changed with current trends in the design and construction of the Nesbitt House in 1906. It is a Craftsman bungalow that is also located on East Main Street. Waldron also distinguished himself in the community as the city's first treasurer and city councilman. Perhaps the most prominently located Romanesque Revival building in Gas City was the Mississinewa Hotel at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and East Main Streets. Described as a massive building that dominated the downtown area in the Indiana Inventory, unfortunately the building was razed and replaced with a gas station in the 1990s. Built in 1893, it was used for temporary school classrooms during the construction of Gas City High School.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9, 10 Page 11 Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

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The Epoch. The Gas city High School Senior Class. Gas City, Indiana, 1932.

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## Verbal Boundary

The following lots or parts of lots in Gas City Land Companys First Edition:

Lots 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311

West 1/4 Lot 312, South 1/2 Lot 332, South 1/2 Lot 331, South 1/2 lot 330, South 1/2 Lot 329, South 1/2 Lot 328, Southwest 1/8 Lot 327, Lots 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311

West 1/4 Lot 312, West 1/2 Alley 165

Map Key Number: 0734-301-062.000-23

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10, Additional Documentation Page 12 Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

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## Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the 1894 school and 1923 addition, and is the legal description of the property. That part of the property occupied by the free-standing 1967 elementary school is excluded from the verbal boundary description.

## PHOTOGRAPH LIST

Photographer: Judy K. Cowling

Date: All the exterior and interior photographs were taken on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2003.

Original negatives: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology  
402 West Washington Street, Room W274  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Gas City High School, 1894 building will be referred to as GCHS.

Gas City High School Addition, 1923 building will be referred to as Addition.

1. GCHS, north elevation, looking south.
2. Addition, north elevation, looking south.
3. GCHS and Addition, north and west elevations, looking southeast.
4. Addition and GCHS, south elevation, looking north.
5. GCHS, east elevation, looking west.
6. GCHS and Addition, south and east elevations, looking northwest.
7. GCHS, west elevation; Addition, north elevation, looking east.
8. GCHS, south elevation, looking north.
9. GCHS, north elevation, looking south-southwest.
10. GCHS, west elevation; Bridge, north elevation; Addition, North elevation, looking south.
11. Addition, north and west elevations, looking southeast
12. Basement, GCHS, looking northwest.
13. Basement GCHS, looking north.
14. First floor GCHS, looking west.
15. First floor GCHS, looking northwest.
16. Second floor GCHS, looking northeast.
17. Second floor GCHS, looking northwest.
18. First floor GCHS, looking south.
19. First Floor GCHS, looking northwest.
20. First Floor GCHS, looking southeast.
21. Second floor, GCHS, looking southeast.
22. Second floor, GCHS, looking southwest.
23. Second floor GCHS, looking northwest.
24. Second floor GCHS, looking northeast.
25. Second floor GCHS, looking south.
26. Second floor, GCHS, looking southwest.
27. Attic GCHS, looking south.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number            Additional Documentation            Page 13 Gas City High School  
Grant, Indiana

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28. Second floor Addition, looking east northeast.
29. First floor Addition, looking southeast.
30. Second floor Addition, looking southeast.
31. Second floor Addition, looking west southwest.
32. Looking northeast from in front of north elevation GCHS.
33. Looking southeast from parking lot of Funeral Home.

Site Maps and Floor Plans with photograph location:

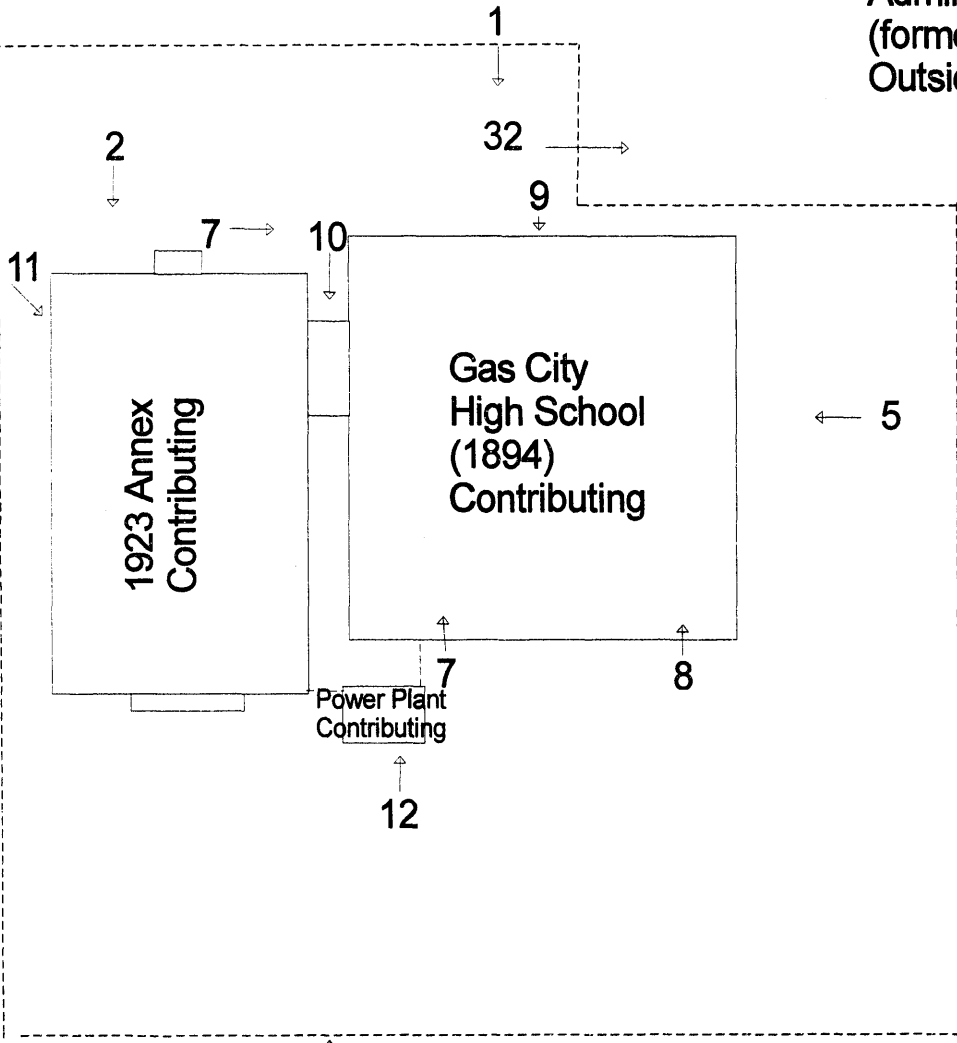
1. Site Map Gas City High School
2. Basement Floor Plan, Gas City High School
3. First Floor Plan, Gas City High School
4. Second Floor Plan, Gas City High School
5. Attic Plan, Gas City High School
6. First Floor Plan, Gas City High School Addition
7. Second Floor Plan, Gas City High School Addition

E. South "A" Street

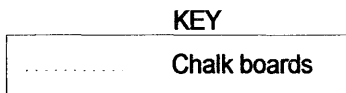
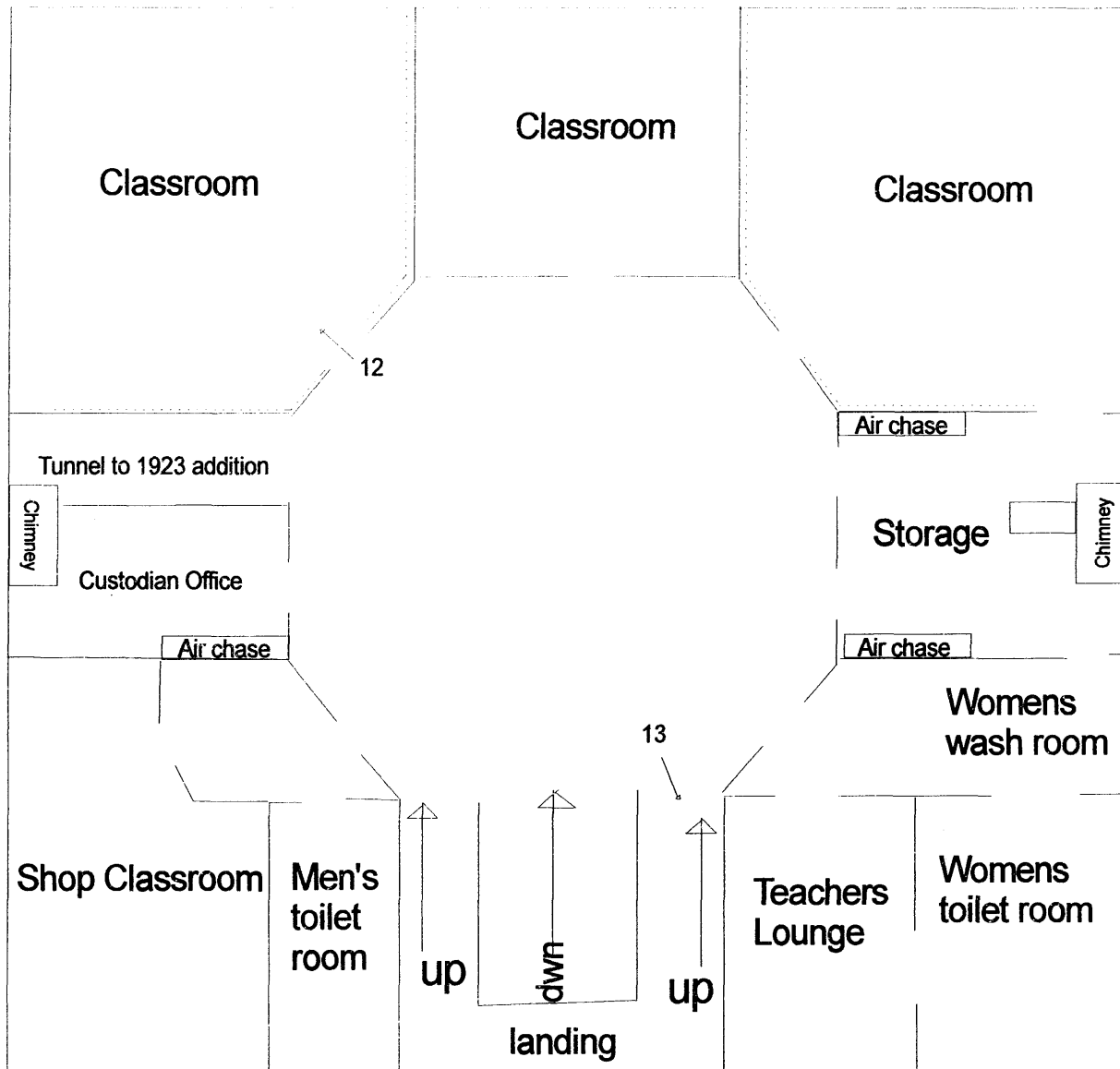
Mississinewa School Corporation  
Administrative Offices  
(former Elementary School) 1967  
Outside the boundary

South Fourth Street

South Fifth Street

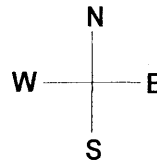


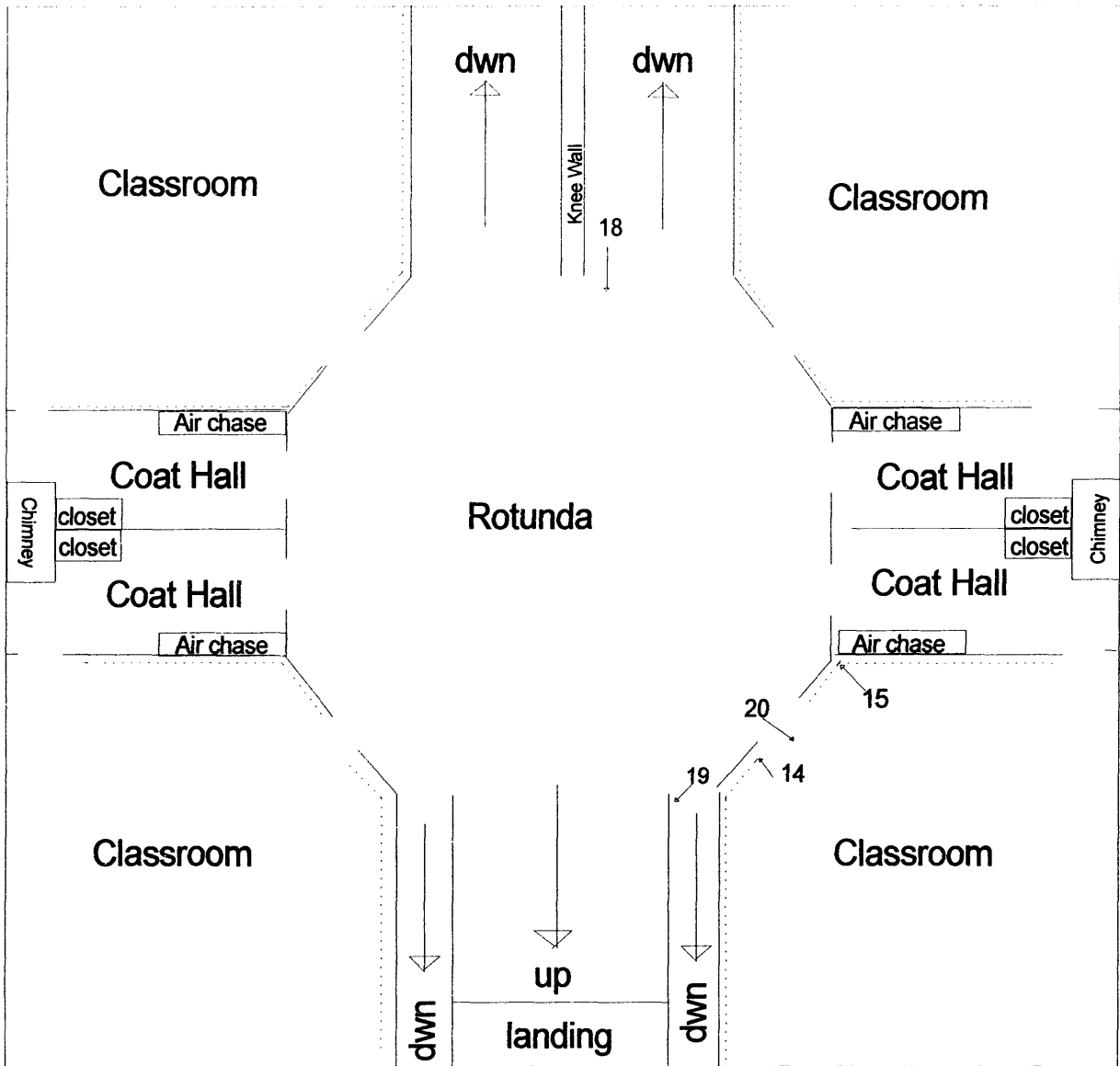
E. South "B" Street



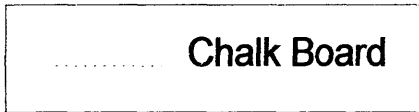
**Basement Floor Plan  
Gas City High School  
Gas City, Indiana  
6th June 2003**

Drawing not to scale.

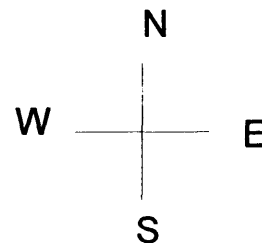


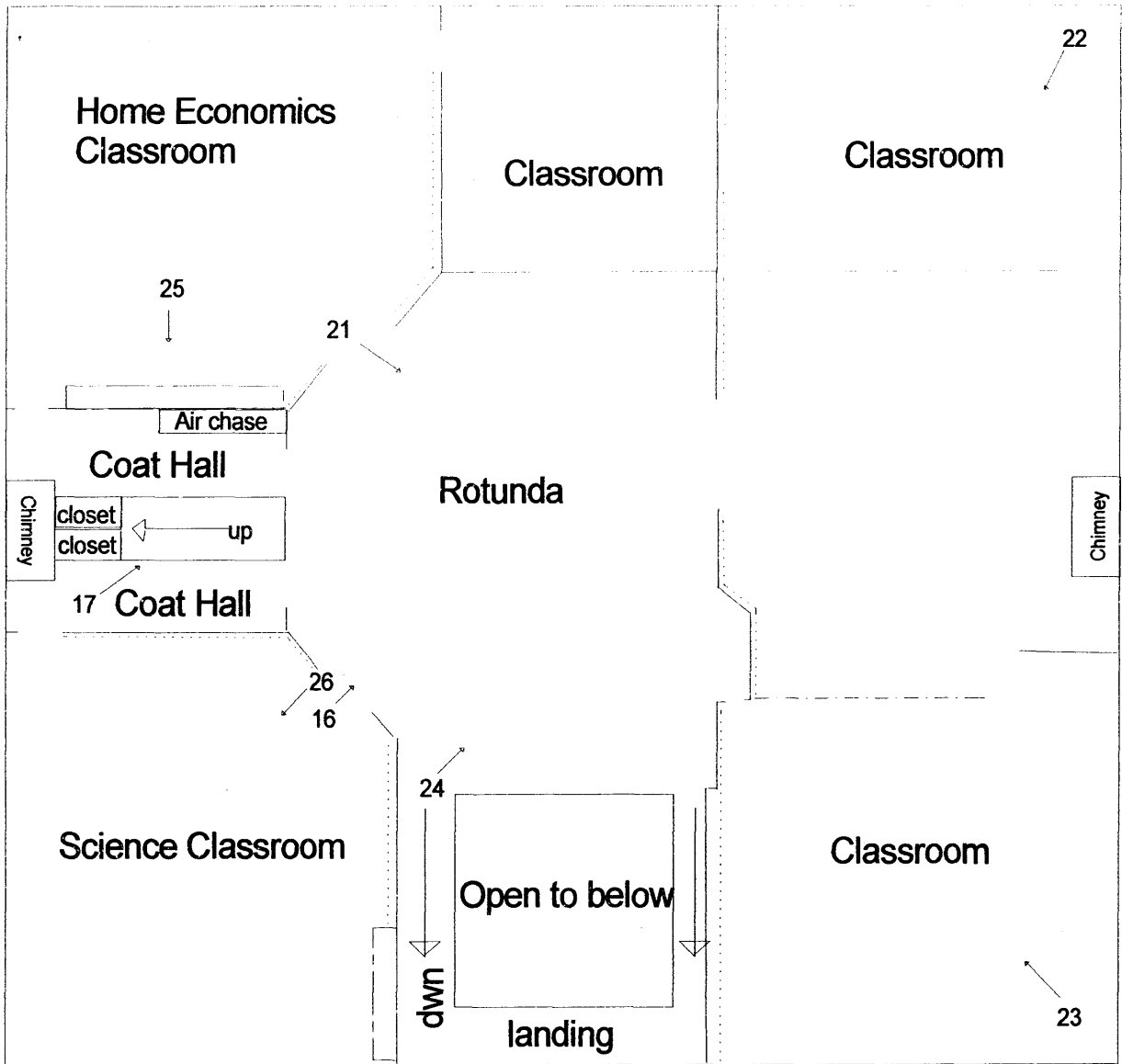


**KEY**



**First Floor Plan**  
**Gas City High School**  
**Gas City, Indiana**  
**6th June 2003**  
 Drawing not to scale



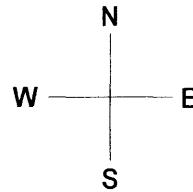


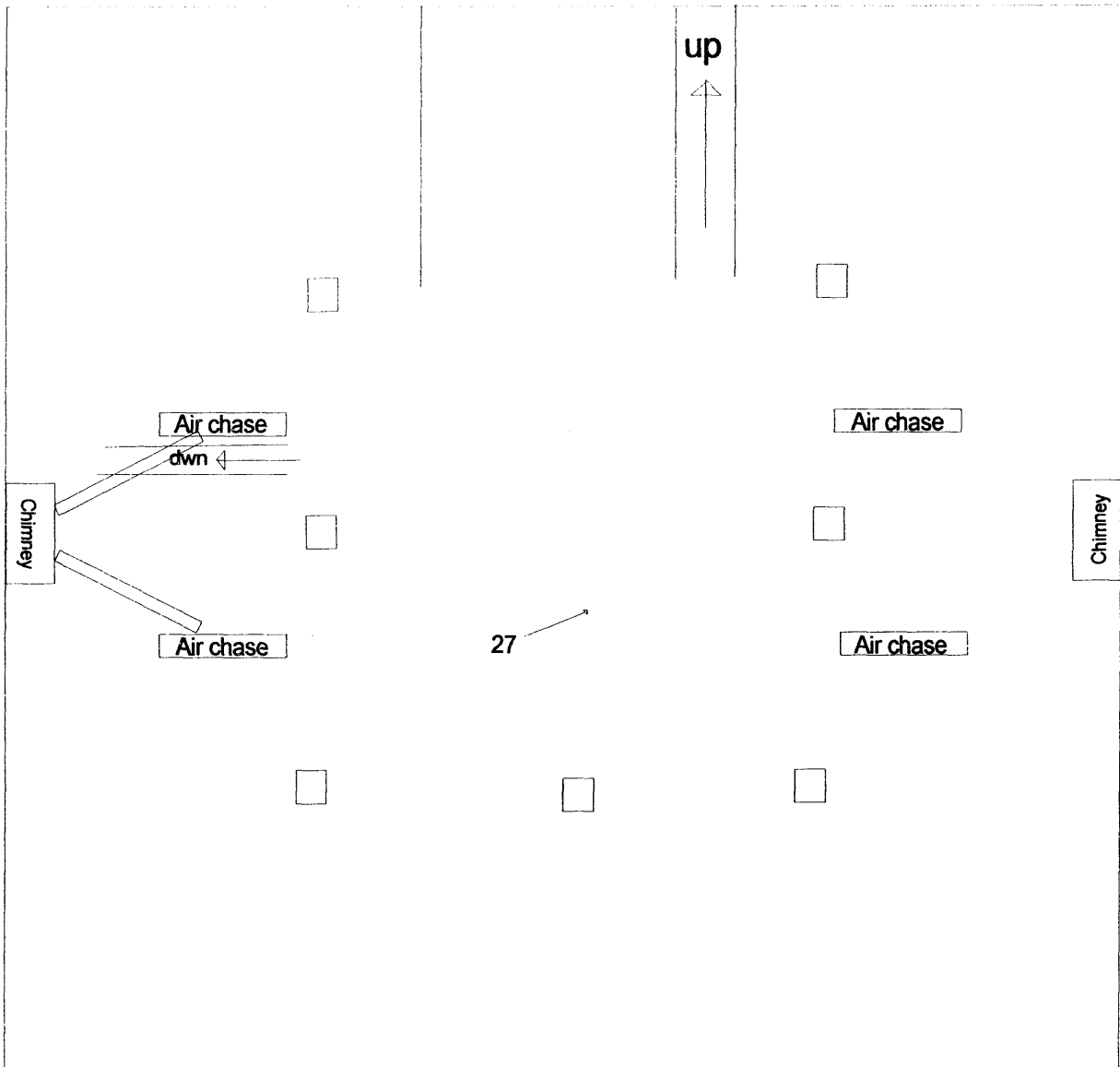
**KEY**

.....	Chalk boards
-----	Wood and glass cupboards
- - - - -	Partition wall
- . - . -	Ghost of partition wall

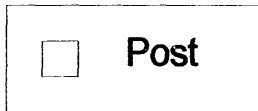
**Second Floor Plan  
Gas City High School  
Gas City, Indiana  
6th June 2003**

Drawing not to scale.

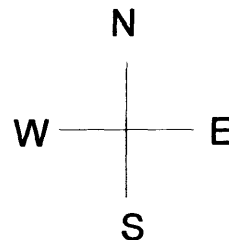




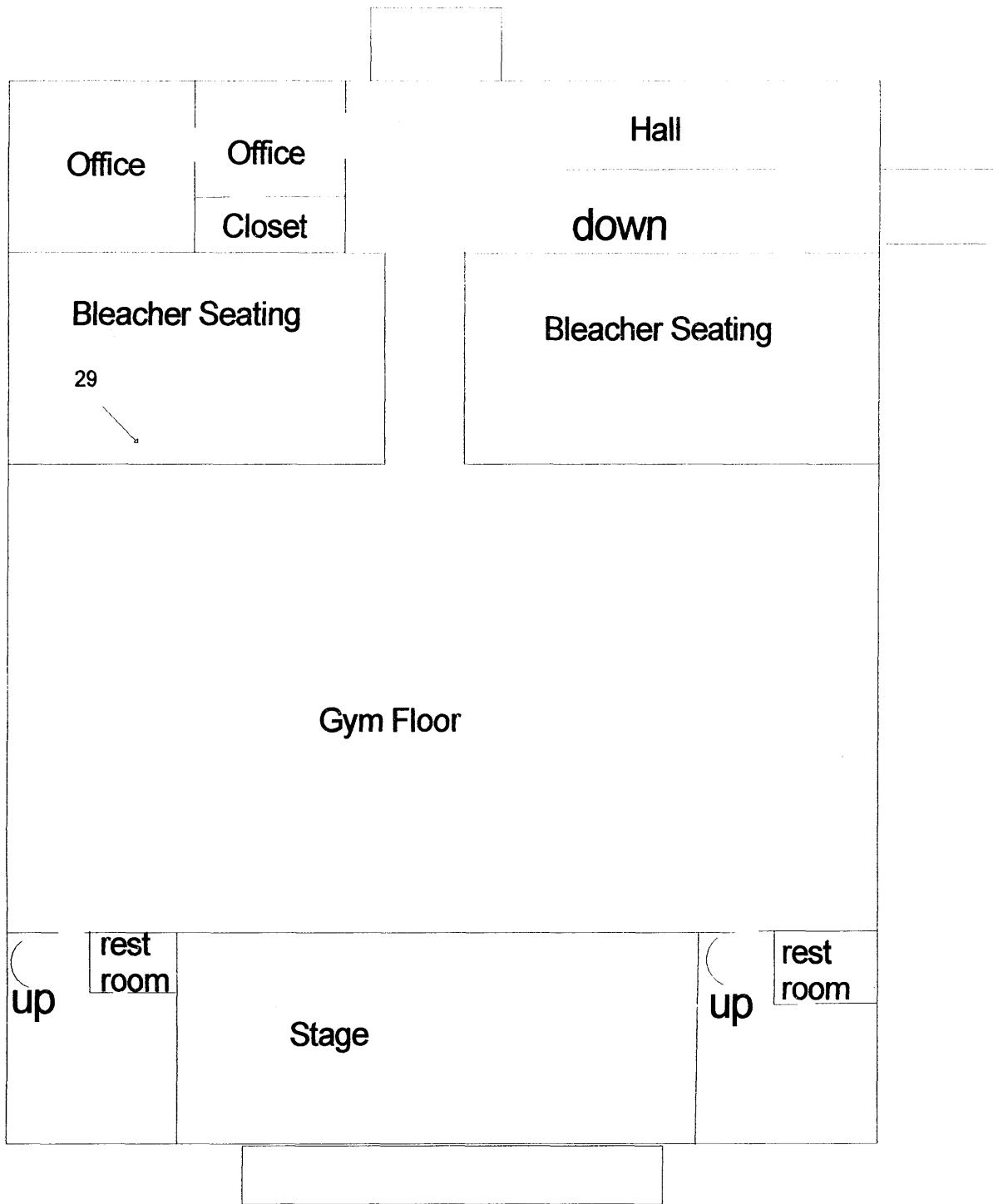
**KEY**



**Attic Plan**  
**Gas City High School**  
**Gas City, Indiana**  
**6th June 2003**  
**Drawing not to scale**







First Floor Plan  
 Gas City High School Addition  
 Gas City, Indiana  
 6th June 2003  
 Drawing not to scale.

