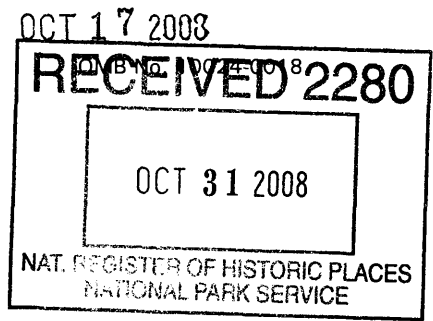


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

1163



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 Ulysses Simpson Grant Elementary School
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 715 B Avenue East [N/A] not for publication
city or town Oskaloosa [N/A] vicinity
state Iowa code IA county Mahaska code 123 zip code 52577

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).

Barbara Mitchell, DSHPO October 27 2008
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA
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

- 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:)

for
Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall Date of Action 12-10-08

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 include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		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 Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/School _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th & 20th Century Revivals/Classical Revival _____

Other/Contemporary _____

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____ concrete

walls _____ brick

roof _____ asphalt

other _____

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.)

- 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.)

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History
Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1913-1914 (education)
1956-1957 (social history)

Significant Dates

1914
1956
1957

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Trafzer, John W.

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Three acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 [1]5 [5]3[0]5[0]0 [4]5[7]1[6]0[0]
Zone Easting Northing

2 [1]5 [5]3[0]5[5]0 [4]5[7]1[7]5[0]
Zone Easting Northing

3 [1]5 [5]3[0]4[0]0 [4]5[7]1[7]5[0]

4 [1]5 [5]3[0]4[0]0 [4]5[7]1[6]0[0]

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 James E. Jacobsen

organization History Pays! Historic Preservation Consulting Firm date October 15, 2008

street & number 4411 Ingersoll Avenue telephone 515-274-3625

city or town Des Moines state IA zip code 50312-2415

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the complete 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 City of Oskaloosa

street & number 220 South Market Street telephone 641-673-9431

city or town Oskaloosa state Iowa zip code 52577

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

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

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Section number 7 Page 1
Ulysses Simpson Grant Elementary School

Mahaska County, Iowa

7. Narrative Description:

Grant Elementary School, built 1913-14, is located in northeast Oskaloosa, a few blocks north of Highway 92, the principal east/west thoroughfare. Oskaloosa is the county seat of Mahaska County, Iowa, and that county is in the third tier of counties from the south state boundary, and is the fourth county west from the Mississippi River, the state's eastern boundary. The school occupies the central half of a full city block. The original school is placed slightly off-center to the west and south, and the east-end additions are to the east and northeast. Open lawn and a paved parking lot (southeast corner) fill the south open approach. The north approach includes a drive (northwest corner), playground (northwest of the original building) and a playing field. The schoolyard is fenced on all but the south sides.

The Original School Building Exterior:

The Grant Elementary School building was built in 1913-14 and was designed in the Classical Revival style. Reflective of its style, the building layout was symmetrical, with matching front and rear, primary (south) and secondary (north) entryways and mirror-image facades. The school is placed just west of center within the central section of a city block, the east and west ends of that block being platted and developed for residential use. The majority of the open playground area is to the north of the school. The present school setting conveys a crowded and tightly-spaced appearance, particularly from the south, due mostly to the several east-end additions that date from 1957 and afterwards. The loss of much of the historic tree canopy is another visual factor.

This building is deemed to be an excellent architectural expression of an otherwise standard building type. The Classical Revival style employs the expected base (raised basement level), shaft (the intervening two stories) and capital (parapet and cornice) divisions. The raised basement exterior is veneered with a darker brown-almost purple paving brick. A ground level broad water table, also veneered with the same brick, is curiously laid with vertical joints in textural contrast to the foundation proper above it. The foundation is of concrete and is visible, due to erosion in the northwest corner of the original building.

The building exterior, above the foundation level, is veneered with a lighter brown to rust shaded Oskaloosa Face (local brand name) brick veneer (having no faux rowlock courses). The sub-wall is of two-chambered tile. The building support system is of reinforced concrete columns, flat tile arch floors/ceilings, and concrete floors. All lower level decorative materials, and all sills are of cast concrete, while the higher level belt courses, capitals, corner blocks and carved features are of limestone.

In accordance with its style, broader front and back entrance pavilions are centered on each main façade. These pavilions are boldly brought forth from the main wall plane. Half-pavilions with half-capitals are inserted into each of the resulting inner corners. An interesting feature of the overall design is the architect's use of brick "frames" on all of the sides of the building. These consist of stack or soldier bond ranks/rows of brick (combined with plain square and side-midpoint stone corner inserts on the end walls, see Figure 3) that outline each single or two-story window set, or infill the blank wall surfaces of the end walls. The cadence, from the most projected forward to the wall plane itself then, is the upper story brick frame, the pavilion wall plane, the corner pilaster, the main brick

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Ulysses Simpson Grant Elementary School

Mahaska County, Iowa

“frame” and then finally the main wall plane. The front and rear “frames” have no bases, but simply terminate at the concrete belt course on the foundation cap. The corner pilasters, found on each exterior corner and within each inner pavilion corner, have plain square stone bases at the point where they too, make contact with the foundation belt course.

A decorative stone cornice surrounds the whole building, wraps around each of the four pavilions, and is set above the midpoint of the parapet. The parapet front above the cornice is quite short and has a stone cap. A plain stone belt course, continuous around the building, defines the base of the parapet. Carved stone open books, are centered above each of the principal entrances on the lower parapet front. Other decorative features include the use of a blonde brick in recessed rectangular panels that separate the two floors. These panels are set beneath the sill level of the upper floor. The same colored brick is used in projecting decorative work, Greek crosses on the parapet base and an unidentified elongated figure on each corner pavilion top (Figures 2, 3).



Figure 1: South façade, view northeast
(photo by J. Jacobsen, May 6, 2008)

The building has a flat roof. Structurally the roof consists of heavy timber beams that project above the interior walls. Composite beams support rafters that are 15 inch by three inch in section. The attic is open in plan,

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Ulysses Simpson Grant Elementary School

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being accessed by a west end hallway hatch. Carved stone entrance canopies, supported by stone brackets are set atop each of the four entrances, the principal entries having the name of the school inscribed on them. All four canopies feature a triglyph on each corner. The canopies also have boldly projecting cornices and parapet caps (Figures 1, 2).

The end entries, as noted, are miniature versions of the two principal entrance/pavilion treatments. A striking feature on all of the pavilions is that their bases interrupt or are carried through the raised foundation, resulting in an interesting contrast of material and color (Figure 3)



Figure 2: End-entry pavilion, view east
(photo by J. Jacobsen, May 6, 2008)

Fenestration is symmetrical, apart from the pavilion fronts. On the building core exterior window bands consisting of five openings each and are set into all three levels in the outer bays. All of the window sets are rather deeply recessed. The basement windows appear to be all the more recessed due to the shadow line caused by the projecting concrete belt course that caps the foundation level above the windows. Within the sets, the windows are again distinguished by oversized and continuous mullions. The original windows were one over one sash with no

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transoms. On each end wall pavilion, a double window set is placed in line with the second story window openings, but raised half-flight floor sections place the lower sash at floor level (Figure 4). This is an interesting example of symmetry over safety. Safety bars were added to the window interiors to keep persons from falling through them and there are no exterior fire escape structures apart from the basement emergency doors.

Single narrow windows flank the principal entrances at the ground, first and second floor levels, and single window sets are placed alongside the half-pilasters inside of the full window sets on the upper floors. The lowest openings provided light into basement rooms, while those above illuminated the cloak room halls (see below).



Figure 3: End wall decorative treatment
(photo by J. Jacobsen, May 6, 2008)

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Ulysses Simpson Grant Elementary School

Mahaska County, Iowa



Figure 4: Floor-level end windows, view southwest
(photo by J. Jacobsen, May 6, 2008)

The school was designed as a fireproof building with interior walls and floors being of hollow tile construction. The overall plan measures 112 feet in length, with sidewalls that measure 66 feet. The foundation and footings are of concrete construction.

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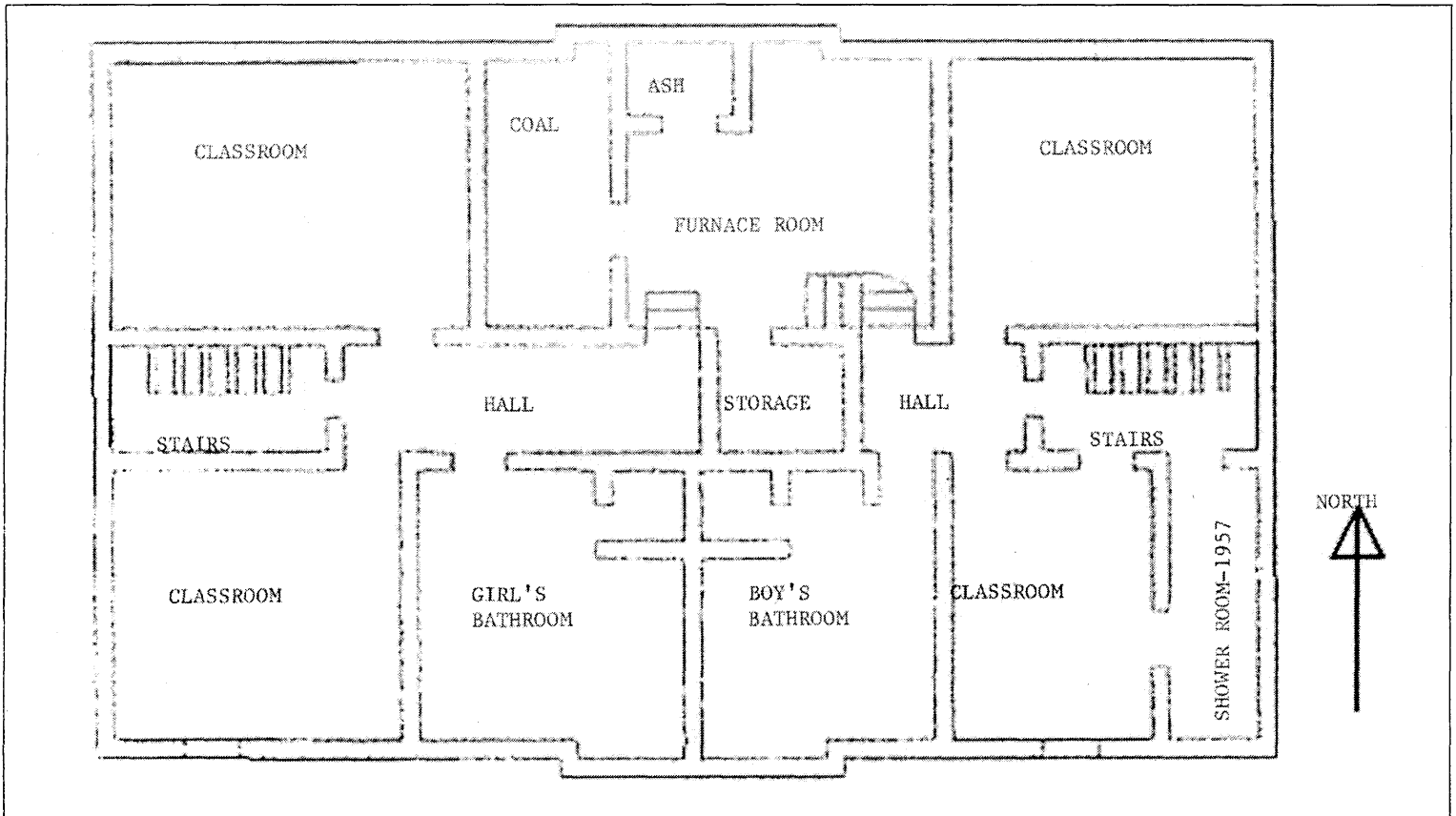


Figure 5: Current/original basement floor plan
(Oskaloosa Community School District)

The basement floor plan is physically divided into two separated sections. The only connection between the two halves is via the boiler room. The apparent reason for this demarcation was the placement of the school bathrooms on the basement level. Note also that the main stairwells, front and back, do not communicate with the basement. Only the end stairwells link all of the floor levels. The original Kewanee Boiler remains in place. The chimney, not drawn, is located in the southeast corner of the coal room. The storage room to the south of the boiler room is fire-proofed and features a great many tile and concrete block infilled patches in its walls. The classrooms on this level evidence later-date remodeling and it is probable that in the early years, few of these classrooms were in regular usage. All of the classrooms have drywall furred-out walls (apparently due to extensive water damage), and few have chalkboards (substituting a few bulletin boards) and none exhibit any original trim work. The classrooms in the northwest and southeast corners have sinks and cabinet sets of recent vintage. The southeastern classroom was divided to allow for a four-stall shower in 1957. The other bathrooms also have shower sections. The partition walls in the bathrooms are made of a concrete or stucco conglomerate. Privacy doors were added in recent years but they were originally open. Each classroom on this level was allocated a fire escape short door and each of these replaced a pre-existing window opening, with no regular placement pattern. The west staircase base also functioned as a cloakroom. The partition walls with doors at each end of the basement halls, were later-date fire code additions. The

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basement floor surface is scored in five foot square patterns. The southwest classroom has a knotty pine wainscot and does retain some chalkboards.

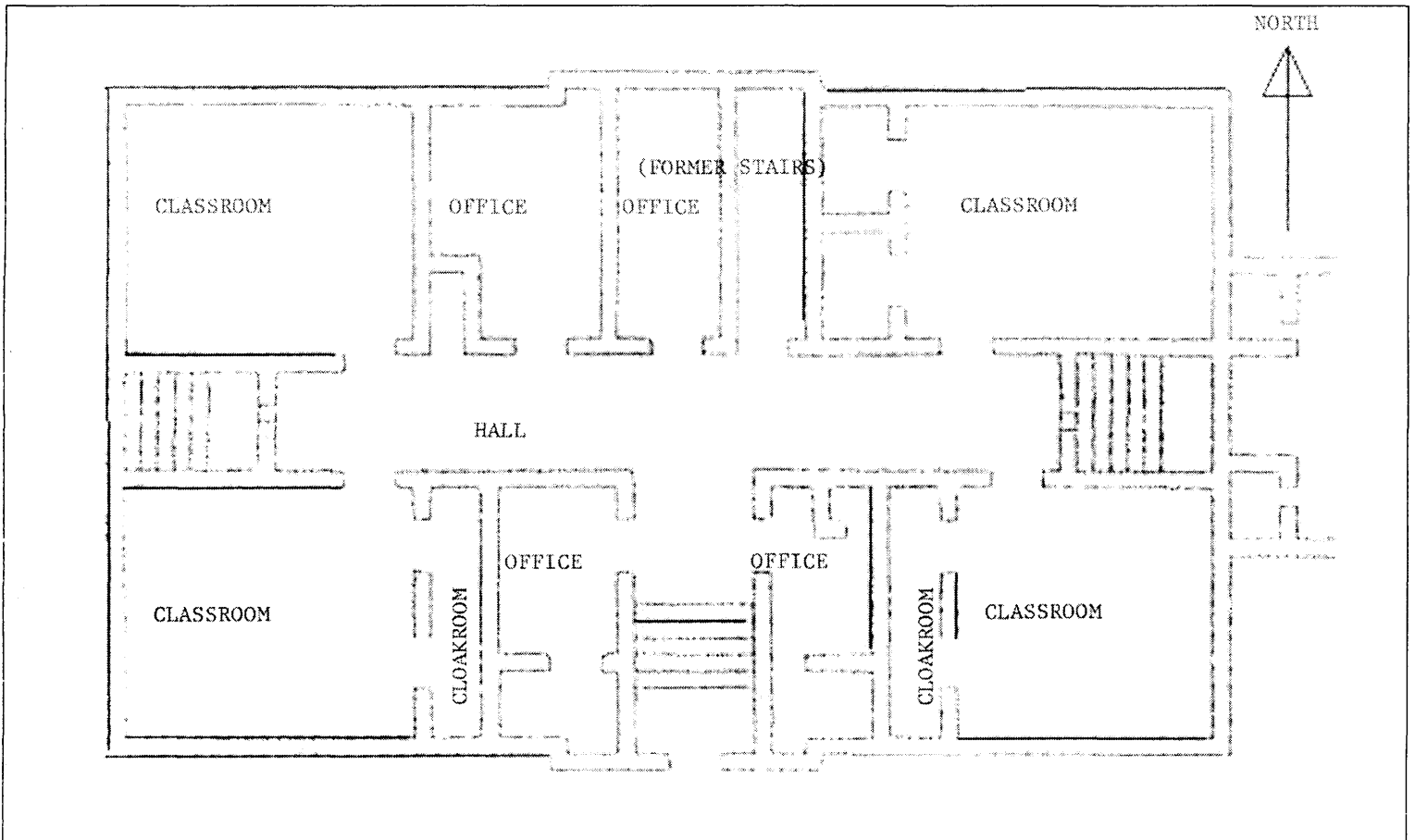


Figure 6: Current/original first floor plan
(Oskaloosa Community School District)

The main floor contains four corner classrooms and three of four original stairs and entrances. The north entrance remains intact and in place but the stairway has been built over and offices now occupy its original location. Glassed double door partition walls, original to the plan, close off the east and west stairwells. A quaint feature of the building plan is the provision of narrow cloakrooms for each class. On this floor, these are provided only for the two southern classrooms (17 feet by 4.6 feet), and unlike those on the second floor, there are no separate hallway entrances into the cloakrooms, egress is gained only through the classroom door. Oak trim work remains intact within the hall and classroom areas. This consists of a five-inch baseboard with angled cap (and a quarter-round base), a bold chair rail that is ubiquitous in the hall and stair areas, picture rail in the classrooms, and butt-jointed window trim (with rounded edges), and an upper thin cornice insert set beneath the upper horizontal trim piece. All original doors are five-panel solid wood doors. All floors are smooth concrete (unlike the basement which is scored as noted). The original ceiling was first covered with acoustical tile, supported by furring strips, and later, a dropped ceiling with

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recessed fluorescent light panels was installed two feet below the original ceiling height. When the windows were replaced, a three-part sash replaced the original double sash pattern, the uppermost section being a blank that was set in line with the dropped ceiling. No original slate chalkboards survive in any classroom and in most classrooms, some of the green chalk boards, particularly those sections in isolated corners, have been replaced with bulletin boards. Some classrooms retain twelve-foot long free-standing short cabinets, set in front of the windows. Each classroom has one or more radiators in place, in various mixtures of short and long units. These are painted silver and several feature "Johnson Heat Control" valves. The classrooms have hardwood floors (three-inch boards) laid on concrete.

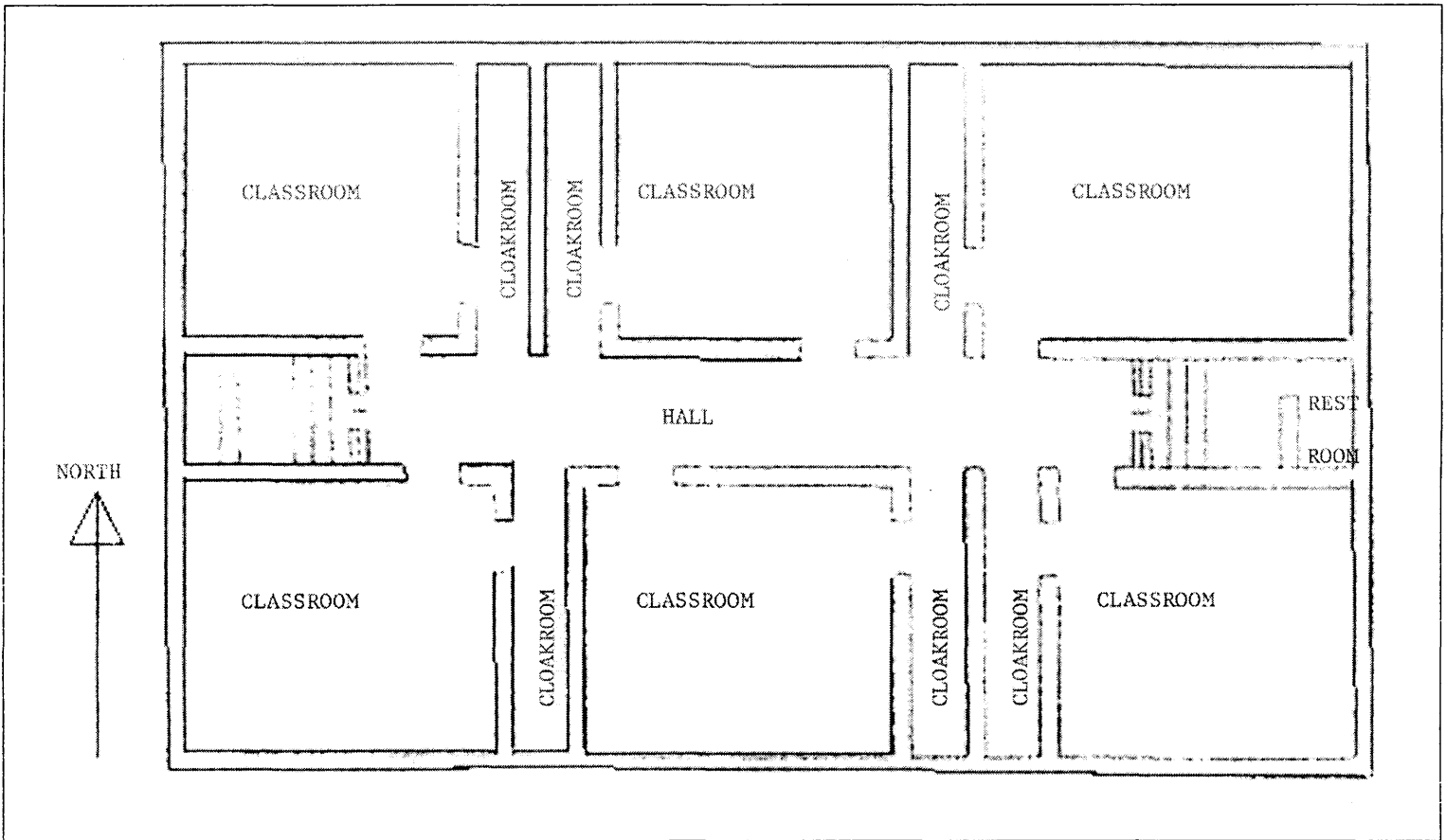


Figure 7 Current/original second floor plan
(Oskaloosa Community School District)

The second floor contains six classrooms, each of which has its own associated cloakroom. The end stairwells have elevated half-story levels, that on the west provides ladder access to the attic via a hatch, and the area served as a storage room. That on the east was originally open, but gained a half-bath (presumably for the teachers and emergency use). The originally open balustrades have been walled off and internal fire doors were also added at each end of the hall. The classrooms have the same attributes of those on the main floor. Trim work is well preserved as

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are doors, cabinets, floors, and radiators. Isolated wooden cabinets are located in corners and some former doors have been infilled with wooden shelves.

One system feature of the building is the incorporation of what appears to be a very extensive ventilation system throughout the plan. While not indicated in the plans presented above, the classroom interior end walls have broadened pavilion sections, and large angled air-intake flues are located within these sections at the baseboard level. On the upper floors, vertical systems are built out into both interior and exterior corners and, these too, contain identical flues, although these are set at ceiling rather than floor level. The "storage room" in the basement center played a central role in this ventilation system and a large air return grate is centered above this room in the first floor hallway. The infilling of voids in the walls of this lower room likely mark the removal of ventilation pipes that served the larger system. The absence of original plans prevents any thorough investigation of this building design feature.

The East-end Additions And Building Alterations:

A single-story gymnasium was added to east side of the school building in 1957. The architects were George Russell (Des Moines), Savage and Ver Ploeg (West Des Moines), and Consulting Engineer Frank Pulley (Des Moines). Robert E. Savage (1922-2007) and Stanley C. Ver Ploeg (1924-2007), both Iowa State University School of Design graduates, formed a partnership in 1953 and their firm is deemed to be one of the state's premier modern design firms. Savage was the founder of *Iowa Architect Magazine* and was a leading figure in architectural professional organizations. The initial addition is significance due to its association with the Mother's Crusade (see Section 8). The addition contained a multi-use gymnasium, kitchen and associated storage areas. The work included the creation of a shower room in the southeast corner of the original school building. Two small bathrooms flanked the new east end stairs (the original exterior stairs were removed).

The 1978 addition, to the east of the 1957 wing, added two classrooms, a north hallway and a new north entrance to the overall plan. The north school entrance was eliminated at this same time and an office area was created in the former north lobby.

In 1980 two additional classrooms, two bathrooms and a new north entrance, were added to the north of the first addition (see aerial photo, Figure 20, page 34). The nature of the addition allows for the school building proper to be treated as a separate building from the addition and its reuse plan seeks to do so. The addition also preserves much of the east end wall architecture of the original school.

At some time after 1956, each of the basement classrooms gained an emergency fire escape door, the outside window sash being replaced with the metal door.

The east-end additions are single-story in height, with concrete footings, concrete block walls and slab concrete floors. The 1957 multi-purpose addition added a vestibule/breezeway link with the original building, with north and south glassed entry doors. The lower portion of the east entrance was removed (door, exterior stairs) and replacement stairs led up half a flight to the main floor. Small bathrooms were added alongside the new tile stairs.

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Some attention was paid to exterior walls inasmuch as the brick veneer included rowlock courses. Several former exterior 1957 walls are now subsumed within the enlarged layout. A projecting cornice along the east frontage, separates the brick veneer wall below and the stuccoed over-story of the taller multi-purpose room. The latter has a flat roof and three large steel I-beams divides the ceiling into three bays. Six skylights, two per bay, provide additional light. The kitchen area is just that, a glazed tile wall rectangular space having no other storage or associated rooms. Twin sliding overhead window screens cover openings that front into the gym space. Immediately east, with an overhead door, a small room contains electrical service and serves as a table storage area. On the east endwall, two mechanical corner closets contain electric heaters and their floor-level compartments house chairs and a piano. The 1978 addition to the immediate east added an additional north double door entrance, a narrow east/west-running hall to the east of the table storage room. Two years later, two more classrooms were added to the north along with a north/south running hall and two bathrooms. The north entrance was relocated to the north. These additions have the same material and structural makeup. The red brick veneer lacks the faux rowlock courses. There is a short parapet extension on the south endwall and that wall projects a few feet south of the 1957 addition wall plane. The later additions have single double window sets along the east sidewall. There is no fenestration in the two end walls.

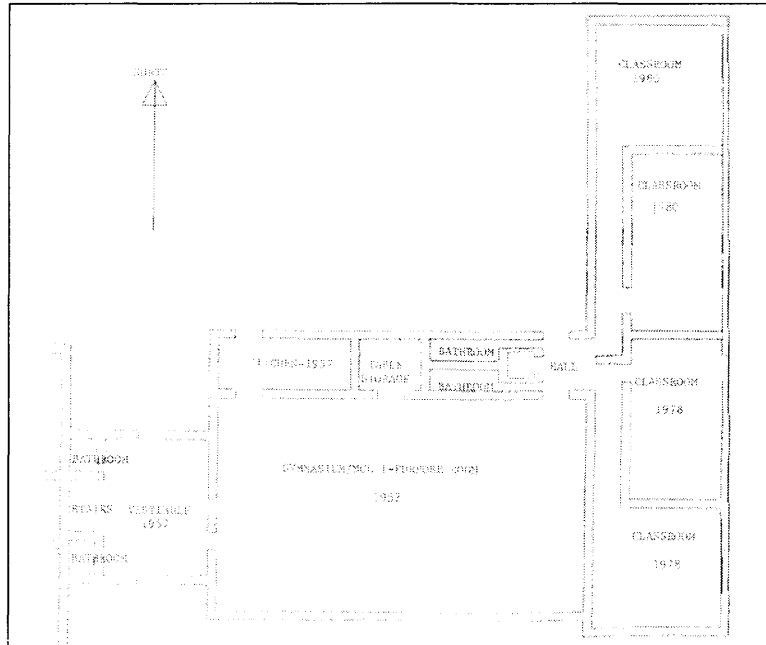


Figure 8: 1957, 1978, 1980 additions
(Oskaloosa Public School District)

The original wood windows in the original building were removed and replaced with metal frames. The original interior wood window trim was retained.

The north entrance was eliminated during the same 1957 remodeling and first floor interior rooms and a second floor classroom were created by removing the interior staircase. The exterior was not changed apart from

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blocking off the entryway physically with a plain brick wall. The building was re-roofed in 1999 and a membrane roofing system was installed.

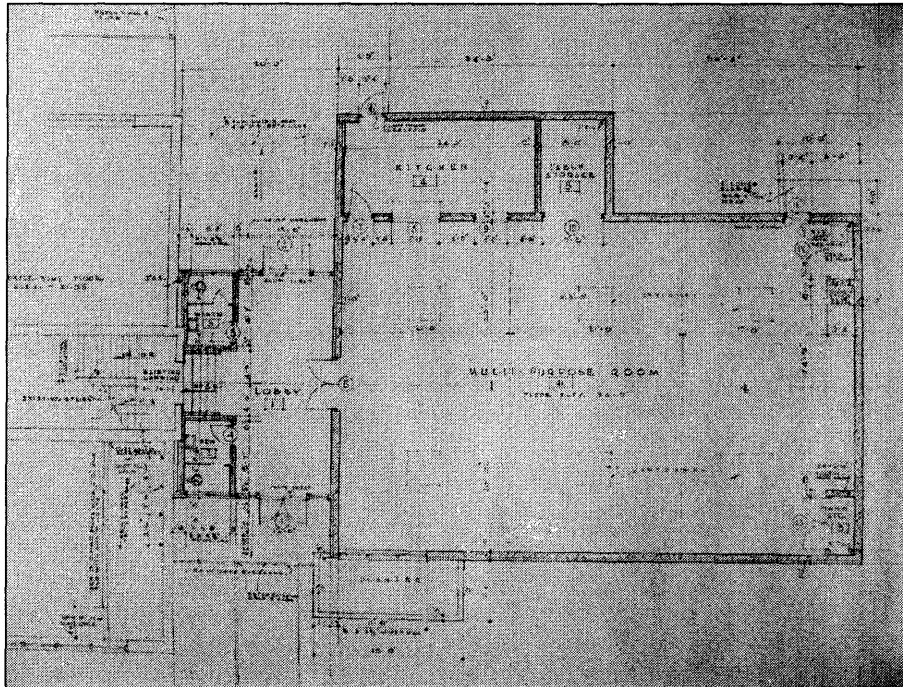


Figure 9: Floor plan, 1957 multi-purpose addition
(Savage, et al, 1956 plans)

Landscaping and Setting:

East-west-oriented residential lots occupy the two ends of the school block. The residential properties are fenced off from the school grounds, with the fence line to the east being more heavily screened by trees and bushes. The east end of the block is infilled with early, impressive and well-designed houses, while the west end was belatedly built up with later-date houses and, on the extreme northwest corner, a single-story church. The school parcel proper measures 304 feet by 432 feet.

The current school grounds consists of two open areas. To the south, there is a paved parking lot that occupies the east end. Two curved walks approach the front entrance from the south. The lawn is open with a scattering of mature trees. From the north, a gravel drive approaches the school along the northwest boundary. A modern playground system is located north of the original school. Older swings are along the west end of the original school. The additions occupy the east central part of the plat, while a grassed playing field is to the northeast. A north/south sidewalk divides this part of the grounds and leads to the north vestibule entry.

The new school was finished before the school grounds were graded and landscaped. Later-date ground plans indicate that mature elm trees flanked the main/south entrance and it would appear that these trees were saved as the school was built. The grounds grading was accomplished in 1914 and substantially altered the southward approach to

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the school. The previous Grant School occupied a site at least level with the new building and the new school was sited slightly west of lot center due to the fact that the earlier school was demolished only after the construction of school was begun. Grading substantially lowered the ground profile to the south and it is possible that the barrow was distributed to the southwest section of the grounds. Countervailing evidence to this fact was the pre-existence of a number of elm and other trees across the south frontage. Heavy grading would have necessitated their removal. Concrete walks, including a broad perimeter walk around the school, two curving front approaches from the southwest and southeast corners of the school property, and a north walk, leading from the northeast corner of the school, likely were laid in 1916. An arched driveway, that ran from the northwest corner of the grounds to the northwest rear of the school, was graveled on its north half, and bricked south of that point to the school. It likely started as a vehicular approach during construction and then evolved into a maintenance and service road.

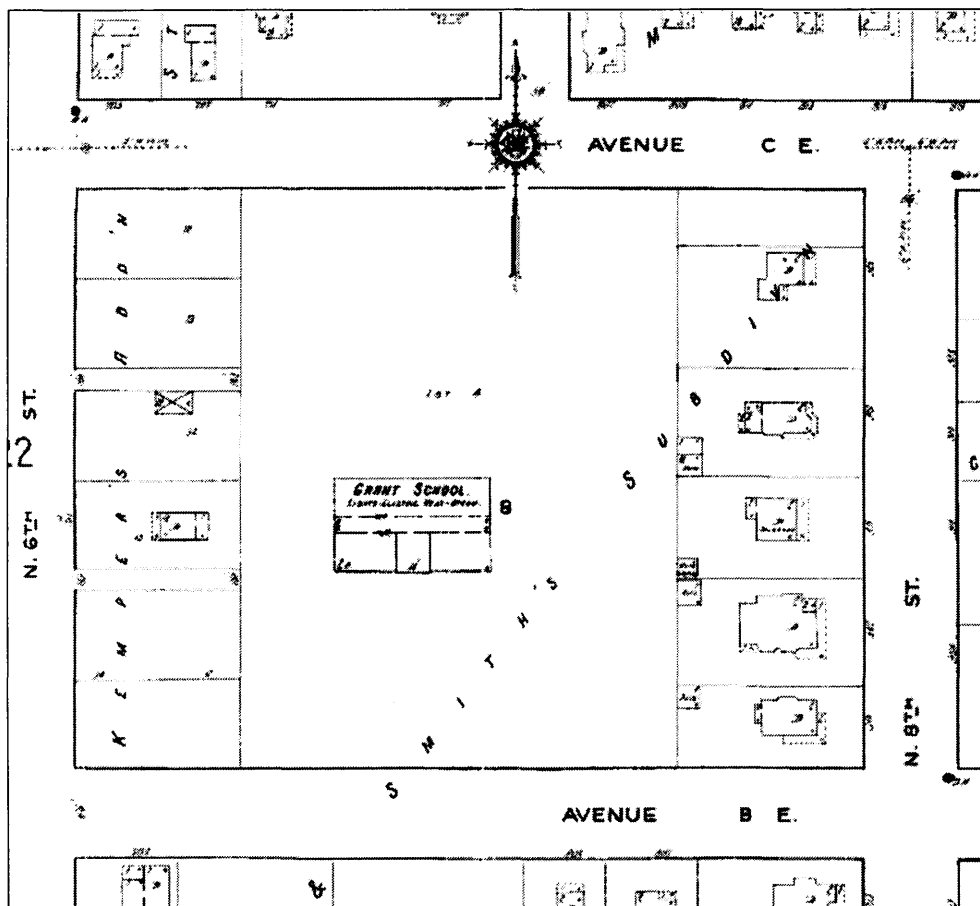


Figure 10: 1917 Sanborn Map detail, Grant School neighborhood
(note alleys and undeveloped lots to the west of the school)

The official school grounds landscaping plan was approved on December 7, 1925, some 11 years after the school was begun. The 1925 plan, prepared by Des Moines landscape architect Ray F. Wyrick, envisioned a row of elm trees along the west and north sides of the school grounds. There is no evidence that these were ever planted, given their absence in particular as of 1956, and of course today. Three clusterings of trees were planned for the south

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approach, all set within the “arms” of the two curving sidewalks. These too failed to appear in later site plans or on the ground. Long lengths of shrubs, planned to flank the school and to run across its frontage in smaller groupings, were proposed and these, were still in place as of 1956. The grounds to either side of the school were divided into “primary play” and “grade play” areas, to the west and east respectively. To the east, there was a basketball court (oriented north south and immediately adjacent to the building, the 1956 plan show it moved north and oriented east and west), a baseball backstop (present as of 1956 and left undisturbed by the first east addition), and unspecified play apparatus. To the west there was a small sandbox (southwest corner of the school) and other apparatus. To the north, the large open field was labeled a boy’s football field with seasonal use for tennis and volleyball (with no hint as to how tennis and football could use the same grassed surface) (Wyrick landscape plan, 1925).

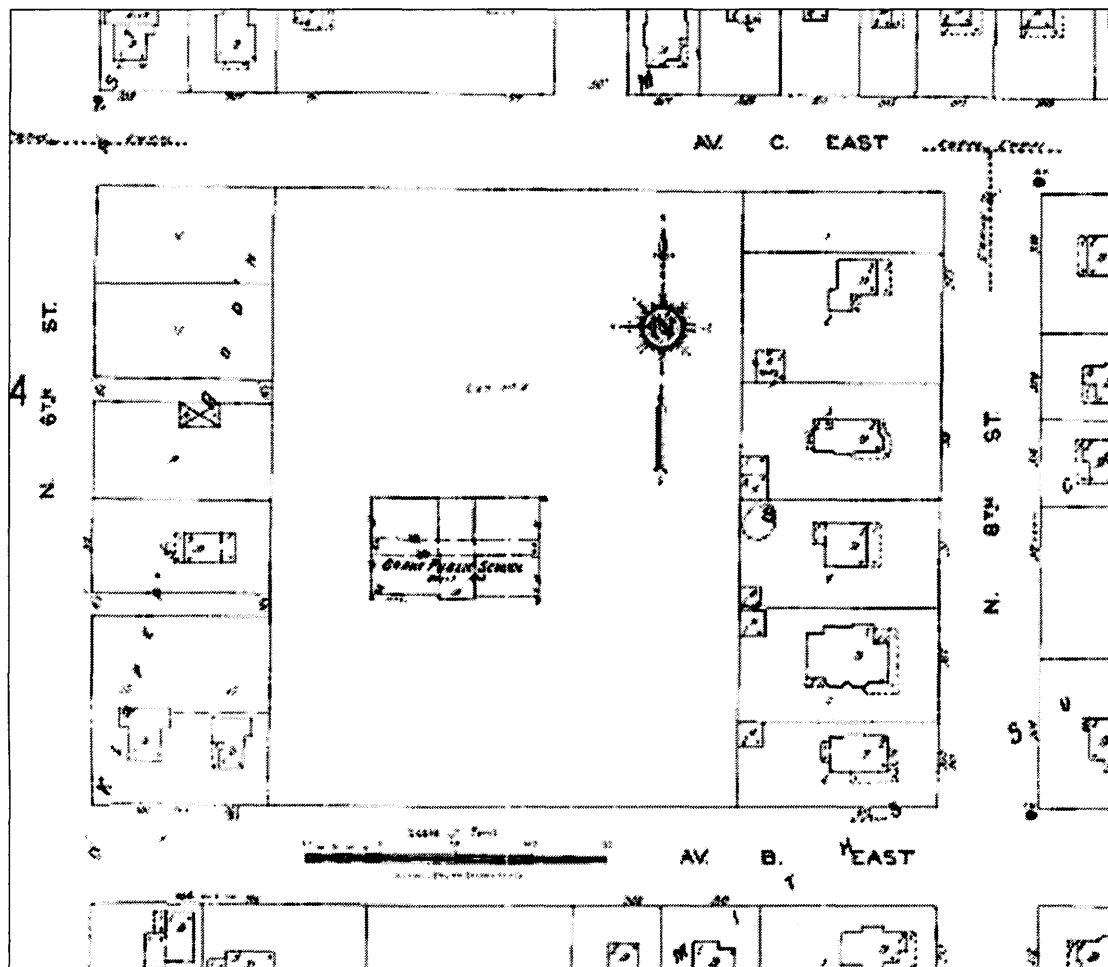


Figure 11: 1948 Sanborn Map detail, Grant School neighborhood
(note alleys and undeveloped lots to the west of the school)

An existing topographic school grounds survey was completed by the Garden Engineering Company in late July 1956, prior to the construction of the east addition. It showed the same front two curving sidewalks, a centered flagpole, the two flanking (15 inch) elms at the entrance, a 32-inch elm to the southeast, an 8-inch elm to the east and

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a 10-inch tree at the southeast corner of the grounds. This exhausted the tree canopy and presumably the Dutch Elm infestation of the early 1960s eliminated all of the elm trees. To the west, a long row of swings still survives today. There were also “teeter boards” and a bike rack (southwest corner). To the east there was a smaller swing, the basketball court and the baseball field. The 1956 construction plans were more specific as to this area. A climbing bar grid and a bicycle stand were to be removed (Russell, et al, 1956 plan).

A new playground equipment set and sand playground, were added to the grounds north of the school in very recent years.

Reuse Plans:

The school is now owned by two redevelopment entities. Community Housing Initiative owns the original building and plans to convert the building into 14 senior apartments. The East and newer portion of the building will be converted for use by the Mahaska County Council on Aging for use as a senior center. The breezeway between the new and old structures will remain and be used by residents of the west building to enter the senior center. The school grounds will continue to be available to the community for recreational purposes (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, September 12, 2007).

Grant Elementary School maintains a high degree of all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The integrity of the immediate setting of the building, while compromised by the several side additions, is retained by the retention of school-era open areas, playgrounds, playing fields and tree canopy and contributes to the building’s ability to maintain integrity of feeling and association. Workmanship, reflected in both the exterior and interior detailing and trim, is also of particular importance. The overall form of the building has remained unchanged once it assumed its intended scale in 1914, and because the additions are low in profile and separated by a connecting vestibule, the original building is readily interpreted in its original form. All the original architectural materials and detailing, including cornice, window openings, and ornament remain as built. While the north entrance has been removed, the physical entry doors were left in place, an unusual act of preservation instinct. The interior is particularly well preserved in terms of plan and surfaces and trim.

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8. Significance Statement:

Architects, Continued:

Pulley, Frank

Russell, George

Savage, Robert E.

Ver Ploeg, Stanley C.

Builders:

Buckler & Robertson

Garden Construction Company

Significance Statement:

Grant Elementary School is historically significant on the local level on the basis of its architectural merit (Criterion C, architecture). The exceptionally well-preserved design, in the Classical Revival style, represents the creative and innovative combination of stylistic elements in combination with a striking use of contrasting brick colors, stone and brick ornamentation, building materials and varied brickwork styles. It is an architectural monument to the rebuilding of the school district's overcrowded and aging school buildings and it was the first installment in that process. The selection of an out-of-town architect foreshadowed a trend of securing ever more prominent designers even as a local preference for contractors was retained. The school is historically significant, on the local level, it being the first early 20th century new school building effort in what was a complete rebuilding or reconditioning of the Oskaloosa school system (Criterion A, education) with a period of significance of 1913-14. It is also historically significant (Criterion A, Social History) for the direct association of its 1957 addition with the Mother's Crusade of 1956, a movement that resulted in the rebuilding and modernization of the Oskaloosa school system after World War II, with a period of significance of 1956-57. In 1956, it shared the distinction of being first, along with Jefferson Elementary School, to receive multi-purpose room additions. These improvements, along with a new elementary school and a new high school, were the fruits of the Mother's Crusade, an early 1956 movement to force the community to finally deal with postwar overcrowding and deteriorating school buildings. The initial building addition is significantly and directly associated with the Mother's Crusade movement, given that it was one of the first capital improvements to be built, following its successful conclusion. It is possible that with further research, an argument for a statewide level of significance, associated with the Mother's Crusade, could be developed given that the local movement was emulated across the state. The significant dates are 1914 (construction of the subject school building), 1956 (the Mother's Crusade) and 1957 (construction of the addition to the subject school building).

Closed as an elementary school in 2004, Grant Elementary is one of two surviving historic local school buildings. It architecturally represented a marked departure from the designs of its late 19th Century predecessors, as well as from Jefferson Elementary, completed just four years earlier. The former were either simple cruciform, cross-gabled plans (this included the original Grant building), or more elaborate late Victorian designs with towers and other flourishes. Jefferson Elementary was a two-story plan with a square tower.

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School District and Community Growth Historical Context:

Oskaloosa utilized a quadrangular grid ward system from its earliest years and over time, each ward was awarded its own centrally located elementary school. The community placed a strong emphasis on developing and maintaining an excellent school system, particularly as it related to technical and practical training. The Oskaloosa *Daily Herald's* 1914 end-of-year report that included this school building also included a six-page treatment of the school system's operations and special training initiatives. Still there was a historical reluctance on the part of its populace to pass the necessary bond issues needed for new and improved school facilities. It was this conflict that defined the historical development of the Oskaloosa Schools, even into recent times. Several historical forces, the growing importance of high school education, community growth, and the redefinition of what constituted a modern school, all successively combined to improve and enlarge the school system (Oskaloosa *Daily Herald*, February 27, 1915).



Figure 12: The early Oskaloosa schools (the first Grant Elementary is top center)
(Oskaloosa, Mahaska County, Illustrated)

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The earliest municipal school occupied a pre-existing academy building and the first new school building was built in 1869 on the Jefferson School location. It combined the high school and elementary classes. The building was finally built after two successive bond issues were rejected and the school board cut the construction costs to the bone. The following school construction record traces the school system's development:

Table I: Oskaloosa School Construction, 1869-present

Year	School	History and Function	Fate
1869	Jefferson Elementary, between avenues B and C, 5 th and 6 th streets	2 nd Ward (southwest quadrant)	Replaced 1909, non-extant
1876	Lincoln Elementary, between avenues B, C, H and I streets	First Ward (northwest quadrant)	Replaced 1920-21, non-extant
1876	Grant Elementary, between avenues B and C, N. 6 th and 8 th streets	Fourth Ward (northeast quadrant) current Grant School site (replaced the Gospel Ridge School)	Replaced 1913-14, non-extant
1882	Webster Elementary, northeast corner South 7 th Street and 7 th Avenue	Third Ward (southeast quadrant)	Extant, altered 1959-71, final portion demolished 1971, non-extant
1892	Whittier/High School, southwest corner 5 th Street and A Avenue	Fifth Ward, housed a temporary high school and two primary classrooms	
1897	High School, B Avenue and N. 2 nd Street	Central location two blocks from the square, becomes the junior high school in 1959 when new high school built	1917, non-extant
1909	Jefferson Elementary, 601 South B. Street		Multipurpose addition 1959
1913-14	Grant Elementary, between avenues B and C, N. 6 th and 8 th streets		Replaces earlier school of same name, multi-purpose addition 1957, other additions 1978, 1980
1914	Garfield Elementary, South M and 2 nd Avenue West	Small 4-room school, South Side, also designed by Architect J. W. Trafzey	Non-extant, replaced by new Garfield School, 1921
1921	Lincoln Elementary, between avenues B, C, H and I streets	The only single-story design	Relatively unchanged-individually listed National Register Dec. 13, 1991 on architectural grounds
1921	Garfield Elementary, South M and 2 nd Avenue West	(west part of city, southwest quadrant)	Multipurpose addition 1960-61
1959	Whittier Elementary, southwest corner 5 th Street and A Avenue		Replaces its earlier namesake
1959	New high school, north edge of city	Placed "on the hill" on donated land in the north part of the city, district adapts "K-6-3-3" plan	Expanded in 1965, 1976 and 1977
2004	New junior high school	Adjacent to the new high school	

As the table indicates the school system experienced several eras of development or redevelopment. The most notable occurred between 1913-21 under the superintendancy of O. P. Flower. During these years every elementary school was replaced or enlarged and the school building distribution was extended to the southwest part of the city. Grant School (second building) was the first of a four new schools that were built at this time.

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The second phase of school building redevelopment took place during the mid-to-late 1950s. Typical of the postwar years the schools were very overcrowded and classes were being shuffled between the buildings to better distribute the ward-based school population. Four reorganization concepts were successively defeated in bond issue votes and in January 1956, the spontaneous "Mothers' Crusade" staged a protest march through the downtown. The citizens approved a bond issue the following May. The funds provided for a new high school, a replacement for Whittier School, a new Whittier elementary school and multi-purpose additions to Webster, Grant and Jefferson schools.

The Oskaloosa Independent School District was organized in 1959 and the nearby communities of University Park, Beacon and Rose Hill consolidated with it between 1953 and 1966. The system's first three school buses began to serve rural students in 1953.

The New Grant Elementary School:

Grant Elementary was determined to be National Register of Historic Places eligible on the basis of its architectural merit (Criterion C) by the Iowa State Historical Society (February 1, 2006). The rather ornate design and its higher-state of preservation were the basis of this determination.

Table II: Oskaloosa Community Grown, 1908-14
(Oskaloosa *Daily Herald*, March 21, 1914; February 27, 1915)

	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912	1913	1914
New Corporations	\$250,000	\$650,000	\$552,000	\$423,000	\$225,000	\$240,000	\$125,000
New Business & Factories	No figure	No figure	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$150,000	\$225,000	\$95,000
Business Improvements	\$260,000	\$275,000	\$350,000	\$200,000	\$400,000	\$350,000	\$150,000
New Residences	\$175,000	\$175,000	\$150,000	\$75,000	\$100,000	\$90,000	\$110,000
Improved Residences	\$150,000	\$185,000	\$225,000	\$100,000	\$250,000	\$75,000	\$120,000
Public Utilities	\$100,000	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$110,000	\$250,000	\$75,000	\$110,000
Public Improvements	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$80,000	\$75,000	\$150,000	\$65,000	\$175,000
Railways	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$25,000	\$150,000	\$80,000	\$50,000
Schools, Colleges, Churches	\$14,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$125,000	\$80,000
	\$999,000	\$1,485,000	\$1,592,000	\$1,078,000	\$1,700,000	\$1,440,000	\$1,325,000

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The city was in a substantial boom phase as of 1913-15, with the requisite improvements being underway in every measure of town-building. The growth does not appear to have been necessarily based on a population increase as much as it reflected growing community resources, needs and expectations. In fact, the county population decreased from 29,860 in 1910, to 26,270 ten years later. Each annual end of year report filled an entire special issue, replete with extensive photographs. The 1914 spring report, for example, included a five-page report on the local school system, its organization and accomplishments. Table II tracks community investment and shows that there was a slowing down of growth after 1912, pre-dating the construction of Grant Elementary School (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, March 21, 1914; February 27, 1915).

The rebuilding of the local school system plant required nine years and the First World War intervened. The onset of the war in Europe impacted domestic commodity and labor prices and produced slowdowns in local construction across the country. Post-war, new construction was made difficult by a fitful peacetime transition and continuing high materials and labor costs. Thus, it is impressive that the school district could accomplish what it did pre-war and immediately post-war as well, given the national and international economic reality.

The county history credits School Superintendent Otis P. Flower (1882-post-1930) with a complete rebuilding of the local school system. As of 1910, Flower was a single teacher who roomed in the city. A decade later, he was married to Linna Flower, who was a school teacher, and he was school superintendent. Frank W. Else was superintendent when the fall 1912 school year opened. Little is known of the actual dynamics that led to the building program.



Figure 13: Otis P. Flower (far left) with friends, 1918
(Chuck Russell Collection, *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, www.oskaloosaherald.com)

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As late as mid-1911, the school board was replacing the boiler system in the old Grant School, a clear indication that a new building was not envisioned. The push for a replacement school came from the residents of the Second Ward in the form of a petition in mid-February 1913 and that action coincided with the one-week closure of old Grant School for a week due to health concerns. Newspaper notices of a \$35,000 bond issue vote were published immediately, the Board surely sensing sufficient public support. The latter hunch is supported by a simultaneous bond issue vote for a new Second Ward school building. For the new Fourth Ward School (Grant), males were supportive 631 to 266 (70.3 percent) while females voted 560 to 69 in favor (89 percent). The plurality was overwhelming, being a total of 1,191 pro-votes, and 335 no-votes. In sharp contrast, the other school bond vote was defeated by just two votes, 713 to 711 (School District Minutes, July 1, 1911; February 19, 21, March 17, 1913; *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, September 12, 1912; 1910 Federal Census, T624, R412, p. 114; 1920 Federal Census, T625, R501, p. 166).

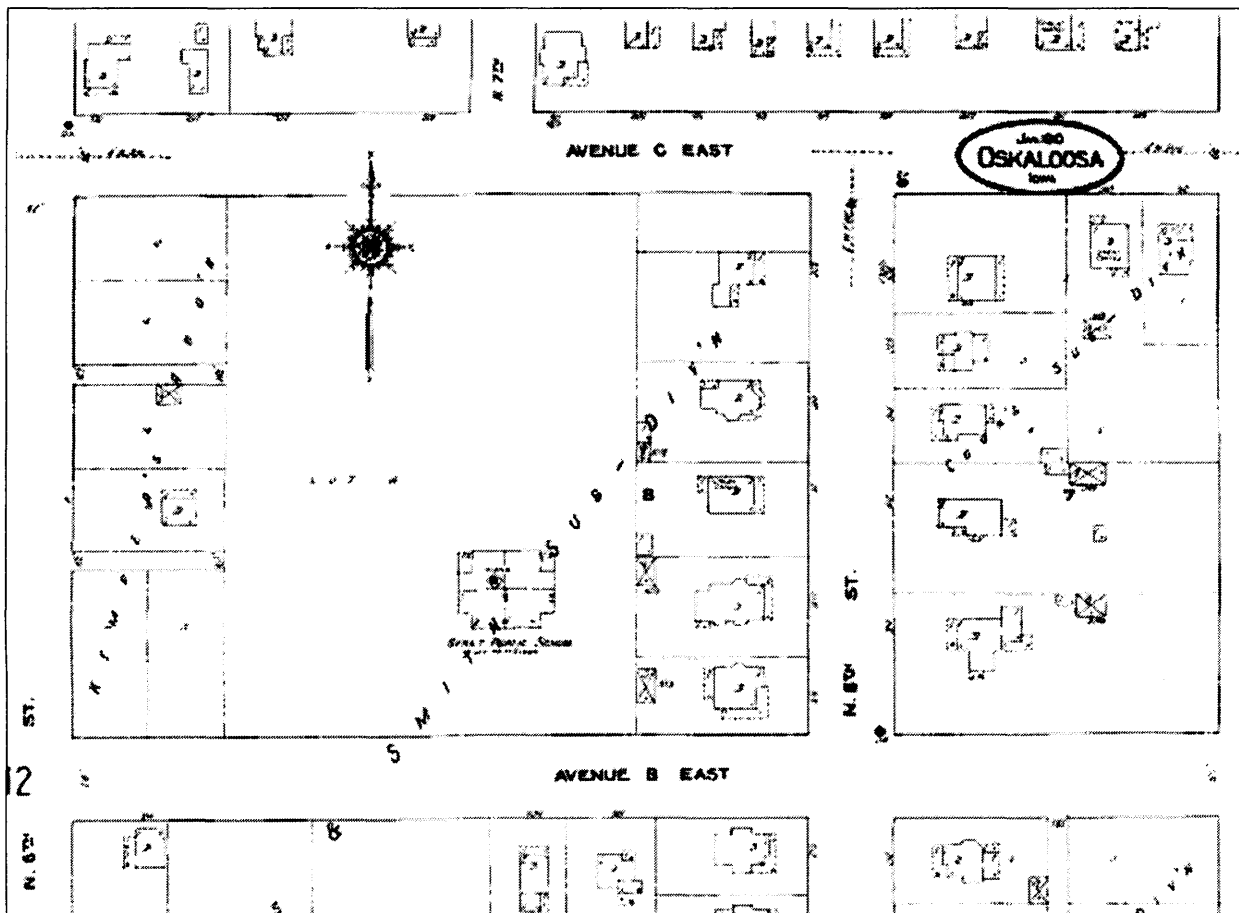


Figure 14: 1910 Sanborn Map detail, Original Grant School and neighborhood
(note the off-center location of the old school)

With the funding authorization the board moved quickly to find an architect. John W. Trafzer was the winner of a competitive design and he was paid \$400 to prepare plans and specifications based upon his "advance sketch."

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The fee included five original sets of plans and the architect was to produce additional sets as needed at \$8.00 each. Trafzer was also named superintendent of construction, for an additional \$400 reimbursement. A call for bids, for the erection of the new school and the demolition and salvaging of useable materials from the old building, was published in early July. The bids were opened and reviewed in two successive board meetings that were held on July 15. Ten bidders sought the general construction contract and these came from all over eastern Iowa, their initial bids ranging from \$34,474 to \$47,195. The architect was instructed to make some revisions and the bidders had very little time to refigure their bids based on Mr. Trafzer's revisions. The key change was eliminating a reinforced concrete structural system (the bids had ranged from \$1,187 to 4,087 for that modern feature). The newspaper implied even more drastic deletions, describing the end result as "with all extras eliminated and the building will not be as complete nor as elaborate as designated in the original plans." Five contractors were able to revise their numbers on the spot and three of these found some minimal savings (\$125 in substituting concrete block, presumably rusticated, for the raised foundation in lieu of paving brick. Two bidders attempted to substitute two-inch pavers. The idea of salvaging materials from the old school was not well received. One contractor refused to consider it, claiming the demolition and removal costs well out-weighed any salvage value. Another offered just \$200. Local bidder John McKey was more generous, offering \$1,500 and the right of the district to continue to use it through the construction period. His ploy didn't get him the job and neither did coming in with the low bid, which Alex Stevens of Chariton, did. The board had reserved the right to reject any bid and they did so, choosing another local favorite, Oskar S. Buckler and Albert C. Robertson (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, May 15, July 15, 23, 1913; School District Minutes, May 12, July 1, 1913).

Buckler and Robertson had a winning bid of just \$30,371, the final figure when the concrete block option was taken. The architect was instructed to find additional savings in the plumbing and heating part of the building cost and the seven bidders for that work had to recalculate their proposals. Ivo Thomas and W. M. Holmes, local implement and auto dealers, who did plumbing and heating on the side, were awarded that work with a bid of \$5,568, again not the low bid, but a local one, in early September (School District Minutes, September 2, 1913).

Then the school board proceeded to make revisions to the final plan and contracts. They informed the American Blower Company that per the architect, no changes were to be made to the ventilation equipment that had been ordered. They added hall doors to five cloakrooms and the architect was instructed to revise his plans accordingly. They added the finishing of some additional rooms, excluded from the original contract, paying the general contractor an additional \$300. They complained to the plumbing and heating contractor in early January 1914 that their slow progress was delaying the work of other contractors. The most notable change, documented by the fact that the building foundation is of full-dimensioned paving brick and not concrete block, was the re-substitution of the latter for the former material (School District Minutes, October 3, November 23, 24, December 22, 1913; January 5, 1914).

A Rock Island, Illinois, roofing company, was sub-contracted by the general contractor to provide the materials for and construct a pitch and gravel roof. The supervising architect examined their materials on the ground in mid-December and condemned them, the contractor failing to use the specified pitch. The contract was vacated and re-awarded. The target completion date for the school building was August 15, 1914. It was envisioned that heat

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would be raised in the building to allow for interior work over-winter by January 1, but it wasn't until February 9, that the school board made arrangements with Thomas and Holmes to rig up temporary heat at the rate of \$2.25 per radiator. The brick mason, Harry Phinney, was finished with his work by mid-December, the windows were all in place, and absent the fired roofers, the building was "practically under cover." (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, December 18, 1913; School District Minutes, February 9, 1914).



Figure 15: Original building, c.1915, view northeast, note the large tree far right, rough ground in foreground (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, March 24, 1914)

The old Grant School building demolition remained unresolved until early April, 1914, when bids were again issued for demolition and salvage proposals. Bids for grading the school grounds were also simultaneously published. The latter work was necessarily delayed by the construction delays on the new building and the removal of the old one and the bid deadlines were successively extended, being finally accepted in early June. The winning bid, V. S. Minkler, who bid \$.34 per cubic yard and \$10.00 for removing each tree, reduced his grading figure to \$.30 and got the contract. In the meantime, one of the district innovations was the organization of school playgrounds at each of the elementary schools. This was impossible at Grant, given that its yards were "so torn up" and its students were invited to use the other school sites for the time being. Curiously the school board held a public vote on the matter of taking down old Grant School. The vote, taken in late May tallied 529 yes votes and 73 no votes (School District Minutes, June 1, 4, 1914; *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, May 7, June 1, 1914).

In mid-May the school board published a call for bids to supply slate chalkboards to the new school. John D. McKey finally got a contract for his bid of \$632.54. The chalkboards were to be in accordance with those used in St. Louis schools (School District Minutes, May 18, June 4, 1914).

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The Opening of the New School:

The district boundaries for the new school were the city limits to the east and north, North Second Street to the west and First Avenue West to the south. The old Grant School had served grades kindergarten through sixth and therefore contained seven classrooms. The new school added seventh grade in 1914 and an eighth grade in 1915, necessitating nine classrooms. Given that the new school plan provided ten classrooms on the upper two levels, it is likely that the basement was not used at all during these years, and there was one surplus classroom as late as the 1915-16 school year. Nearly all of the old Grant School faculty transferred to the new school in the fall of 1914 but just four of those teachers remained a year later. Teachers Ervin (through 1938), Cowan (through 1931) and Clendenon (through 1935), remained at the school into the 1930s (Jane Specht Memoir).

Table III: Grant School Teachers, 1913-14
(bolded text denotes the same teacher over time)

	1913 (old Grant School)	1914 (new Grant School)	1915 (new Grant School)
Principal	Miss Rebecca Ervin	Miss Rebecca Ervin	Miss Rebecca Ervin
Kindergarten	Miss Clara Rakow	Miss Clara Rakow	Miss Sabine Smith
First	Miss Corine Cowan	Miss Corine Cowan	Miss Corine Cowan
Second	Miss Hanna Clendenon	Miss Hanna Clendenon	Miss Hanna Clendenon
Third	Miss Florence Goodner	Miss Miss Florence Goodner	Miss Florence Goodner
Fourth	Miss Laura Gibbons	Miss Laura Gibbons	Miss Stella Taylor
Fifth	Miss Mabel Ware	Miss Mabel Ware	Miss Nanne Bingman
Sixth	Miss Nellie Williams	Miss Mabel Sprague	Miss Mabel Sprague
Seventh	N/A	Miss Bessie A. Moore	Miss Ida Welch
Eighth	N/A	N/A	Miss Rebecca Ervin

(1913 teacher's list, *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, September 4, 1913, 1914 and 1915 lists, School Board Minutes, August 17, 1914, August 3, 1915)

The *Oskaloosa Daily Herald* reported :

The new Fourth Ward school opened along with the others and although all of the equipment is not in place the work will start out Tuesday morning without interruption. The new seats are almost all in place and the rooms ready for the pupils. Forces of workmen were engaged all day Sunday and today putting the seats in place. The new seats are of the most modern type and made adjustable to meet the requirements of each individual, no matter how small or how large.

One belated oversight was that of sun blinds for the south school windows, a clear indication that there were no shade trees to block the direct sunlight. Blinds were ordered from the Steel Manufacturing Company of Spiceland, Indiana, in late August. The school board also sought prices on couches and two chemistry desks for the new school (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, September 3, 1914; School Board Minutes, August 31, 1914).

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The general contractors were finally released and the building accepted in early November. A month later the school board added \$3,000 in fire insurance to the building coverage, perhaps a reflection of the increased fire risk resulting from not utilizing reinforced concrete construction (School Board Minutes, November 2, December 7, 1914).

It wasn't until mid-March 1915 that bids were requested for providing concrete (then termed "cement walks") for the school. Edward Matthews, a local concrete contractor, received the job of laying the walks along with a frontage walk along Avenue B in late June (School Board Minutes, March 16, June 25, 1915).

While just the one additional grade was added for the 1915-16 school season, efforts were underway to substantially increase the new school's classroom supply. It was the fall 1915 school session when the school board ordered two of the basement classrooms to be floored with concrete and prices were sought for providing shower baths in the new school. The next fall an additional room, likely one of the floored basement rooms, was fitted out using old school seats. The work was to be accomplished by the school janitors. The planting of trees along the parking on B Avenue was ordered in mid-April 1916. As of the 1915-16 school year, the student headcount at Grant was 367, which made it the third most crowded elementary school. The predecessor school headcount, as of March 1913, had been 315 students. Average daily attendance was just 293 students (School Board Minutes, September 9, 1915; January 25, April 16, July 3, 1916; *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, March 20, 1913).

Post-World War Changes at Grant School:

Post-war the Oskaloosa schools, like most American schools were too outmoded, too crowded and deteriorating. Beginning in December 1954, four different capital improvements proposals were developed and each was successively defeated in bond issue votes (one of these failed to get even half of the vote total and 60 percent plurality was required). The school district hadn't built a new building since 1921 and the last addition went up in 1939. There was no bonded indebtedness. The Parent-Teacher Association made an effort in early 1956 to galvanize community support but attendance at the ward-based meetings dwindled. In March 1956, falling plaster in a Webster School classroom prompted the "Mothers' Crusade For Better Schools." With an informal organizational start in early March 1956, the "movement" held a famous downtown advocacy march that received coverage in *Ladies' Home Journal* and in newspapers across the state and nation. Most important, they produced a winning initial solution to the need to solve most of the district's immediate problems. Webster School would be replaced, a new high school would be built, the old high school would become the junior high and Grant and Jefferson elementary schools would receive multi-purpose room additions. The Taxpayer's League offered the expected opposition, arguing that over-crowding was at worst a grade school problem and that a new elementary school was a sufficient antidote. The district enrollment was 2,300 and school administrators warned that beginning that fall, the schools would be unable to house an expected increase (not mentioned was that the total 1916 school enrollment was 2,460 pupils). The mothers noted that some classrooms were doubled up with mixed grades in the same room. Their campaign was a through one, comprehensive in its planning and just the coffee committee consisted of over 80 working members. There were 11 committees total. Prior to the vote on May 1, the mothers with 2,000 students, marched through the downtown. They marched by grade school and the high school students built floats, one of which pictured an overcrowded school with students being pressed out of windows. Another bore the sign "Don't put rocket-age students in a rock age school." The Webster School second graders who were being bussed to Jefferson School due to the lack of room each wore a sign that read "I'm at Jefferson but I should be at Webster." At the end of the parade supportive community groups paraded, included the City Council, ministers, the Central Labor Union, Junior Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Y's

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Men, Kiwanis and Beta Sigma Phi. When the \$1,040,000 bond issue was passed with a 73.8 percent pro-vote the supporters again celebrated in spontaneous victory parades and Grant School received its first addition and a new lease on life. School Superintendent Joe Gettys and Board of Education president Mrs. Harold Fuller praised the victory, noting "We have never seen anything so well organized in a school bond election, this has brought about a feeling of unification that has not been seen in Oskaloosa in many years. The January 1957 progress edition of the local newspaper noted that the "Best expression of the new Oskaloosa attitude was the successful Mother's Crusade for Better Schools..." *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, March 9, 13, April 23, 25, May 1, 1956; January 30, 1957; *Council Bluffs Nonpareil*, April 22, May 2, August 26, 1956; *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, September 17, 1956; *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, August 27, 1956; *Oelwein Daily Republican*, May 3, 1956; *Austin [Minnesota] Daily Herald*, May 2, 1956).



Figure 16: The Mothers' Crusade For Better Schools, March 1956
(Oskaloosa Public Library, Education Clipping File)

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Figure 17: The pre-vote march of mothers and students
(*Herald*, May 1, 1956)

The School Board itself wasn't viewed by the bond issue supporters as being a part of the problem and the March 1956 election had two board members run unopposed. In fact just 103 voters made it to the polls for the voting. But once the bond issue passed, the board was under pressure to act and act they did not. At first the new high school was the log jam in the process. The board wanted a nationally-known design team and the firm of Perkins and Will of Chicago were the early-on favorites and they were selected over 30 contending architects. Cost concerns and finally the demand on the part of the architects that they be paid travel and maintenance costs throughout the anticipated three-year project convinced the board to change its mind and the Des Moines architects Savage-Ver Ploeg were chosen to do the designs for the new Webster School and the multi-purpose wings at Grant and Jefferson schools. The new designers were in contention as of early July and George Russell, an architect with the firm and an Oskaloosa High School graduate, was the apparent local link for choosing the Des Moines designers. Carlyle Peterson, of Peterson and Appell, structural engineers, was also on the team as a consultant to find ways to reduce the use of steel in the several projects. The steel supply was problematic at best due to a steel strike and post-Korean steel shortages. Frank Pulley, a heating and lighting engineer provided expertise in those two areas. The design process proceeded fitfully and the *Herald* made special note that when the Board held its 18th meeting since the bond issue had been passed, no ground had been turned. Much was made of the fact that the architects would base their multi-purpose wings on the findings of working closely with teachers. It is curious that sketches for both the multi-purpose room and the new Webster Elementary School had been published prior to the bond issue vote, obviously secured from some other design source, yet very similar to what was actually built (*Herald*, June 6, 8, 14, July 3, 7, 17, August 7, 1956).

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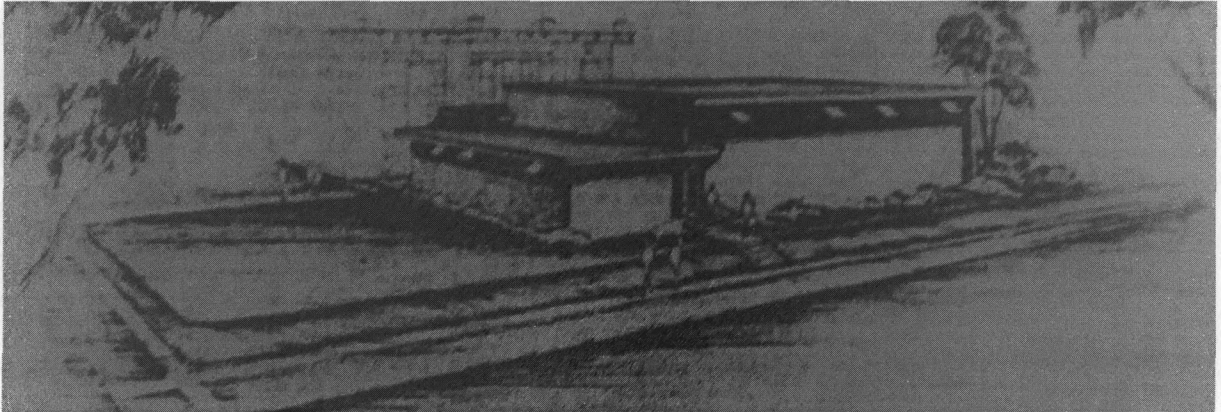


Figure 18: The Jefferson School multi-purpose addition (identical to the Grant School addition)
(*Herald*, April 21, 1956)

The community that had voted the bonds was wishful of seeing some immediate relief but the School Board saw financial advantage in bidding winter work and there would be no new school space until the 1957-58 school year as a result. The multi-purpose addition contracts were awarded on November 28, 1956 and four of five contracts went to Oskaloosa firms. Garden Construction Company received the general contract for \$38,462. R. G. Brown received the plumbing contract, and Marion County Electric, the only out-of-towners, got the electrical work. It wasn't until October 9 that the same architects were announced as the designers of the new high school as well (*Herald*, August 28, September 5, November 28, 1956).

The multi-purpose design charretts began in early September. The central issue was that these portions of the schools were to be used after hours and consequently that they could be separately opened and heated without heating the entire building. The additions utilized the existing building boilers but had separate service links. The small bathrooms located in the breezeway links were meant to serve public needs. At first the gymnasium areas were to have permanent stages but the final design placed a foldable smaller stage between two end wall corner storage areas that housed chairs and a piano (*Herald*, September 13, October 26, 1956).

The new high school, built on the north suburban edge of town "on the hill," freed up the former high school, as noted, for use as a junior high. This was the opportunity to finally adapt the entire school system to the K-6-3-3 system, that is to say, having the grade school consist of kindergarten and six grades, with the junior and high school levels having three grades each. At Grant School this freed up a former classroom for use as a teachers' work room and a projection room. The kitchen area in the 1957 addition had doubled as a projection room with the need to constantly clear the way for mealtime needs within the gym and kitchen areas. A 1960 description noted "This school is almost a double unit school like Webster. That is, it has two complete classes of kindergarten, first grade and fourth grade. There is one room each for second grade, third grade, fifth grade and sixth grade plus a combination room made up of half second graders and half third graders." The hot lunch program had been started in the grade school in

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1959. The closed noon hour changed the age-old tradition of going home for dinner (*Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, January 29, 1960).



Figure 19: Second "Mothers' Crusade" March 19, 1974
(a reprise of the 1956 movement) (Oskaloosa Public Library, Education Clipping File)

The Grant School Architect, John W. Trafzer, 1865-1936:

The Grant School architect was John W. Trafzer of Mason City, Iowa. Notice of his Oskaloosa design award appeared in *American Contractor* in late May 1913. Three other commissions by this architect have been identified in the same source, these being a bank for W. J. Christian in Grafton, Iowa, in June 1913; and three early 1918 buildings. Other Trafzer designs included the Grace Evangelical Church and parsonage (both 1913), a Plymouth, Iowa, building

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for C. A. Molsberry; a store remodel in Mason City for T. R. Glanville and a school in Mason City. He designed what was termed "a new style of architecture" for a rural school when he designed a country school in Lime Creek Township, Cerro Gordo County, that had a full basement and furnace. It also had a large porch that was recessed into the main plan. The latest reference found concerned the potential remodeling of the Mason City National Guard Armory into a Y.M.C.A. facility in late 1927 (*American Contractor*, Volume 34,, May 24, 1913, p. 95; June 7, 1913, p. 113; Volume 39, April 13, 1918, June 8, 1918, p. 56; *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, December 7, 1927; November 23, 1933; *Sioux City Herald*, October 10, 1918).

John W. Trafzer was born in Ohio, and was the son of farmer Frederick Trafzer and his wife Virginia. He married Minnie A. _____ in Ridgeville, Indiana, and resided in that state until after 1894. As of 1910, his family was residing in Rockford, Illinois. He listed his profession as that of an architect and was working in partnership with his father as of 1918. John Trafzer was living in Mason City as early as 1913, when he took on the Oskaloosa work, but was living in Omaha, Nebraska, by 1920. He died in Los Angeles, California, in mid-August 1936. His Mason City obituary stated that he had lived in Los Angeles since 1917, an error, but he must have left the city about that time. His son Ernest A. Trafzer registered for the draft in 1917 as a resident of Mason City (1870 Federal Census, M593, R1200, p.660; 1880 Federal Census, T9, R287, p. 548; 1910 Federal Census, T624, R336, p. 302; 1920 Federal Census, T625, R987, p. 134; *Mason City Globe-Gazette*, May 16, 1936).

Architect Trafzer was paid in \$100 increments for his Grant School design and supervisory work beginning January 5, 1914. He was immediately engaged by the Oskaloosa school district to design a second school in the south part of the city, a much more modest (at first to cost less than \$10,000) four-classroom brick building. The school is identified as a Second Ward School in the school minutes but no name is given. It would appear to have been an early version of the Garfield School in that ward but records clearly indicate that the original Garfield School was built in 1921. At any rate, this much lesser school design was hardly comparable in scale to Grant School. The poor architect was put through the same process of refining the plan when initial construction bids were deemed to be too high. He was finally forced to reduce costs to below \$8,200 and his fee for supervising its construction during 1914-15 was a mere \$225 (School Board Minutes, January 5, May 4, July 2, September 12, October 5, 1914; January 4, February 27, September 5, 1915; *Oskaloosa Daily Herald*, December 18, 1913; World War I Draft Registration Records, Ancestry.com).

Nothing is known as to how the architect was selected, apart from the fact that a design competition was held and his work prevailed. When, in early 1916, the district sought architectural guidance for the aging high school (replacement or alteration being the two options), its leadership turned to the noted St. Louis school architect William B. Ittner. His advice, that being a new building, was ignored and Des Moines architects Proudfoot, Bird and Rawson, were engaged to design the 1917 high school addition. Architect Frank Wetherell designed Lincoln School in 1921 and there is no indication that Mr. Trafzer did any other school designs in the city (School Board Minutes, February 18, 29, November 10, 1916).

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Wyrick, Ray F., Fourth Ward School Ground [Landscape Plan], December 7, 1925

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Additional Information:

Property Owners:

The current owner of record is the City of Oskaloosa, 220 South Market Street, Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577, but the parcel is in the process of being transferred to the following two owners:

Original 1914 School Building:

Community Housing Initiative
500 East Locust Street
Des Moines, IA 50309

East Additions:

Mahaska County Agency on Aging
401 B Avenue
Oskaloosa, IA 52577

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Figure 20: Locational Map
The additions to the east date to 1957, 1978, and 1980 respectively
(<http://ortho.gis.iastate.edu/>)

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10. Geographical Data:

Boundary Description:

Lot 4 Northwest Quarter of the Southwest Quarter, Section 18, Range 15 West, T75 North

Boundary Justification:

The schoolgrounds and building with additions measures 304 feet by 432 feet (north and south) and is the identical parcel that has been historically associated with the two successive Grant Elementary School buildings.

Photographs:

Photographer: James E. Jacobsen

Date of Photographs: May 12, 2008

Location of Negatives: Community Housing Initiatives

Photographs:

Frame: View: Description:

1	northwest	overview from Avenue B East, additions to the right
2	north	façade, original building
3	northeast	main entry detail
4	northeast	façade detailed overview
5	northeast	west end wall and entrance
6	southeast	north façade, overview, addition to the left background
7	southwest	detail of closed off north entry
8	southwest	overview, north façade, additions
9	northwest	east enwall and union with additions
10	east	interior main floor hallway towards west staircase, note floor vent
11	southeast	south entry stairs and vestibule from main floor
12	southwest	typical second story classroom with cloakroom entrances, trim work and wooden floor