

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001788

Date Listed: 1/28/93

Fromberg High School
Property Name

Carbon
County

MT
State

Historic & Architectural Resources of Fromberg
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Patrick Andrus

Signature of the Keeper

1/28/93

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Significant Dates: The significant dates of 1907 and 1911 do not correspond to the existing resource, but reflect earlier aspects of educational development in the community. The nomination has been amended to provide only 1939 as a significant date in order to reflect the construction date of the nominated school.

Area of Significance: The nomination does not justify the historical significance of this resource in the area of education, but focuses instead on its significance as an example of PWA-era construction. A more accurate area of significance is therefore Community Development. The areas of significance are amended to read: Architecture and Community Development.

This information was confirmed by telephone with the MT SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1788

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DEC 14 1992

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name: Fromberg High School

other name/site number:

2. Location

street & number: Kids Court

not for publication: n/a

vicinity: n/a

city/town: Fromberg

state: Montana

code: MT

county: Carbon

code: 009

zip code: 59029

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Maurel Shy SKPO 12-11-92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register
 see continuation sheet
 determined eligible for the
National Register

 see continuation sheet
 determined not eligible for the
National Register

 see continuation sheet
 removed from the National Register
 see continuation sheet

 other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Belich Adams

Date of Action

1/28/93

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public - local	Number of Resources within Property	
	Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property: Buildings	<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u> building(s)
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Properties in Fromberg	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:	Current Functions:
Education: school	Education: school

7. Description

Architectural Classification:	Materials:
Other: Art Deco	foundation: concrete
	walls: brick
	roof: other (?)
	other: concrete

Narrative Description

The Fromberg High School is located in Fromberg, Montana, a small rural in community the southcentral portion of the state. The building is on the northwest edge of town within a large city block, reserved for school purposes by the official 1907 plat of the area. The high school occupies the southern portion of the block and faces east onto Kids Court Street. To the north is a large playground and the town's grade school, comprised of the rear of a 1908 building and a modern front wing.

The Fromberg High School has a somewhat unusual construction history. Fromberg's first high school was built on the site in 1916. In 1926, it received a large rear addition that housed a gymnasium. In 1939, the 1916 high school was razed and the current building added on to the front of the 1926 gymnasium.

The Fromberg High School displays subtle design elements of the Art Deco style, popular for public and commercial buildings in the United States from about 1925 until the early 1940s. The building's Art Deco attributes are manifested by the rounded corners of the concrete surround at the front entry and the vertical emphasis of the facade and south wall created by strips of windows, with spandrels in a few instances.

The 1939 High School is a two-story building constructed of reinforced brick exterior walls. The building is elevated on brick walls encompassing a basement level and rests on a concrete foundation. It is comprised of an L-shaped wing of classrooms and offices on the south, a rectangular-shaped auditorium wing on the north, and a long narrow wing on the west that ties the building with the 1926 gymnasium. The building rests over a concrete-walled basement and has a built-up roof completely hemmed by a tall, flat parapet. The building's brick walls are visually relieved by several continuous belt courses of concrete. A thick belt defines the water table while thinner courses accent the basement and parapet, and create continuous sills for the first story windows.

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An entry tower on the east projects between the classroom/office wing and the auditorium wing. The entry is framed by a massive, concrete surround with curved fluted corners and letters reading "High School" incised on the fascia. The entry is accessed by several concrete steps between low concrete block rails and holds a pair of half-light paneled doors. The upper level of the tower has a slightly recessed eight-over-eight, double-hung window with wood sash and a six-light transom; the windows extend the length of the tower to the parapet. The tower is further embellished by a cast concrete panel centered on the parapet. A side entry is located at the south end of the west wing. This entry is contained within a slightly projecting brick surround and holds a pair of half-light paneled doors.

Windows are mostly original multi-light, double-hung with wood sash. The facade and the primary south wall are all visually divided into vertical bays by tall windows at the first and second stories. Windows on the facade of the auditorium wing have paneled spandrels in the outer bays. Second story windows on the facade of the classroom wing and the south wall have been altered with smaller one-over-one, double-hung metal sash with metal plate infill. Almost all walls have windows at the basement level; a few have been infilled with plywood.

The 1926 gymnasium projects from the west end of the 1939 building. It is a long rectangular brick building, having one full story and a basement. Tall window openings with segmental arches and brick sills span the north and south walls; they all have been altered with smaller metal sash windows and infill. A garage door opening is located on the lower level of the south wall, towards the west. It holds a wood-paneled overhead door and is accessed by a concrete drive.

The Fromberg High School retains historic integrity. The only major modern alterations to the building have been replacement of some windows with metal sash units and infill. These have not impaired the school's ability to convey its important historical and architectural associations because the 1939 building still displays a majority of its original multi-light window units.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Areas of Significance: Architecture
Education

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Period(s) of Significance: 1939

Significant Person(s): n/a

Significant Dates: 1907; 1911; 1936

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Architect/Builder: Cohagen, Chandler C. (architect)
Morrison, W. T. (builder)

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Fromberg High School is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under the "Historic and Architectural Resources of Fromberg" multiple property listing. The building is associated with historic context of "Religious, Educational, Civic and Social Activities in Fromberg, 1906-1925, 1939" and meets registration requirements developed for the associated property type "Religious, Educational, Civic, and Social Buildings." It is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criteria A and C, and retains all aspects of integrity.

The Fromberg High School derives significance under Criterion A for its important association with the Projects Work Administration (P.W.A), a federal program designed to provide economic relief during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The P.W.A. offered federal matching funds to states so that, they in turn, could provide grants for construction projects that would create jobs for the unemployed. The Fromberg High School was one of nearly 200 public buildings and schools built in Montana during the Depression with P.W.A. funds.¹

The Fromberg High School derives significance under Criterion C as a representative example of Art Deco institutional architecture of the 1930s and 1940s. Its straightforward, utilitarian plan with minimal Art Deco detailing is highly characteristic of public buildings of the era.

Background to the Fromberg High School

The public educational needs of Fromberg's children were initially fulfilled by an elementary school in the nearby town of Gebo. After the Gebo school burned in 1904, local school officials decided to rebuild in Fromberg because of increased population there. A new elementary school was built on Fromberg's school lot in 1908. In compliance with a 1913 state law mandating compulsory education for children ages eight to fourteen, school officials added four years of high school to Fromberg's curriculum, and in 1916 constructed a separate high school building. The new, two-story brick building was also located on the school block; it was situated just to the south of the elementary facility. In combination, the two school buildings adequately served the community for the next decade. In 1926 a gymnasium was added to the rear of the high school.²

Amidst the Great Depression, School District No. 30 applied to the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works for a grant to aid in financing a new high school in Fromberg; by this time high school enrollment had reached over 150 students causing overcrowding in existing facilities. In October 1938, voters approved a \$26,000 bond and the federal government granted \$28,350 for project construction. That same month, plans for the new building were completed by Chandler C. Cohagen. A noted Billings architect, Cohagen had recently designed a P.W.A.-funded addition to the high school at nearby Joliet. In November, the Fromberg School Board let a \$63,000 construction contract to W.T. Morrison of Whitehall, Montana.³

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Specifications for project construction called for the 1916 high school to be razed and the new building constructed on front of the 1926 gymnasium. Work progressed rapidly. By late December, the old school had been demolished and construction initiated on the new building.⁴ On October 12, 1939, the Fromberg Herald announced that the building had been sufficiently completed to allow occupancy, although a couple of classrooms still needed work. The newspaper heralded the building "as an achievement of which Fromberg may be proud" and provided a description of its facilities:

It has a home economics room, a science laboratory, the gymnasium, and dressing rooms as well as shower equipped lavatories on the first floor. The next floor boasts the seventh grade room, eighth grade room, English room, typing room, office, the auditorium which also serves as an assembly, and the library, which due to glass walls, may be supervised by the assembly teacher. On the top floor are the balcony of the auditorium, music room and an extra room as yet unassigned. Spacious halls and lockers in which books and wraps may be securely placed contribute their share towards an uncrowded building.

The building stands today as the largest, most substantial building ever constructed in Fromberg and continues to serve as the high school for the town and the immediate agricultural region.

Notes

1. Michael P. Malone and Richard B. Roeder, Montana: A History of Two Centuries (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1976) : 231.
2. Fromberg Herald, 24 October 1907 and 15 July 1915; Republican Picket Holiday Supplement, 1909; and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Fromberg, 1912.
3. Fromberg Herald, 11 August, 29 August, 6 October 1939; Chandler C. Cohagen, Addition to High School, School District No. 30, Carbon County, Fromberg, Montana, 17 October 1938, plans at Special Collections, R.R. Renne Library, Montana State University, Bozeman; Malcolm D. Swan, "The History of Educational Progress in the Fromberg, Montana Public School" (Professional Paper, Montana State University, 1959) : 27; Joan L. Brownell, "Joliet High School," Inventory Form prepared August, 1985.
4. Fromberg Herald, 1 and 8 December 1939.

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- 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 # _____

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acroage of Property: less than one acre

UTM References:

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	12	663480	5028530

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary encompasses the southern portion of Block 6 of the Dudley First Addition to Fromberg (SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 17, T5S R23E). From the point of beginning at the southeast corner of said block, the boundary proceeds north 168 feet along the eastern edge of the block, then heads west 130 feet along the north edge of a sidewalk, then south 45 feet to a point, then west 74 feet to a point; then south 105 feet to a point on the southern edge of Block 6, then southeast 25 feet along the edge of the block; and then 183 feet south along the edge of the block to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary has been drawn to include the 1939 high school building and the adjoining 1926 gymnasium. It intentionally excludes the rest of block because the grade school has lost integrity and the playground is comprised of modern equipment.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Mary McCormick (Erika Kuhlman of the Fromberg Historical Society did the initial research and wrote the first draft in 1989.)

organization: Renewable Technologies, Inc.

date: April 1992

street & number: 511 Metals Bank Building

telephone: 406/444-7715

city or town: Butte

state: MT

zip code: 59701

Property Owner

name/title: Fromberg Public Schools

street & number: School District #30

city or town: Fromberg

state: MT

zip code: 59029

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Brownell, Joan L. "Joliet High School." Inventory form prepared August, 1985.

Cohagen, Chandler C. Addition to High School, School District No. 30, Carbon County, Fromberg, Montana. 17 October 1938. Plans at Special Collections, R.R. Renne Library, Montana State University, Bozeman.

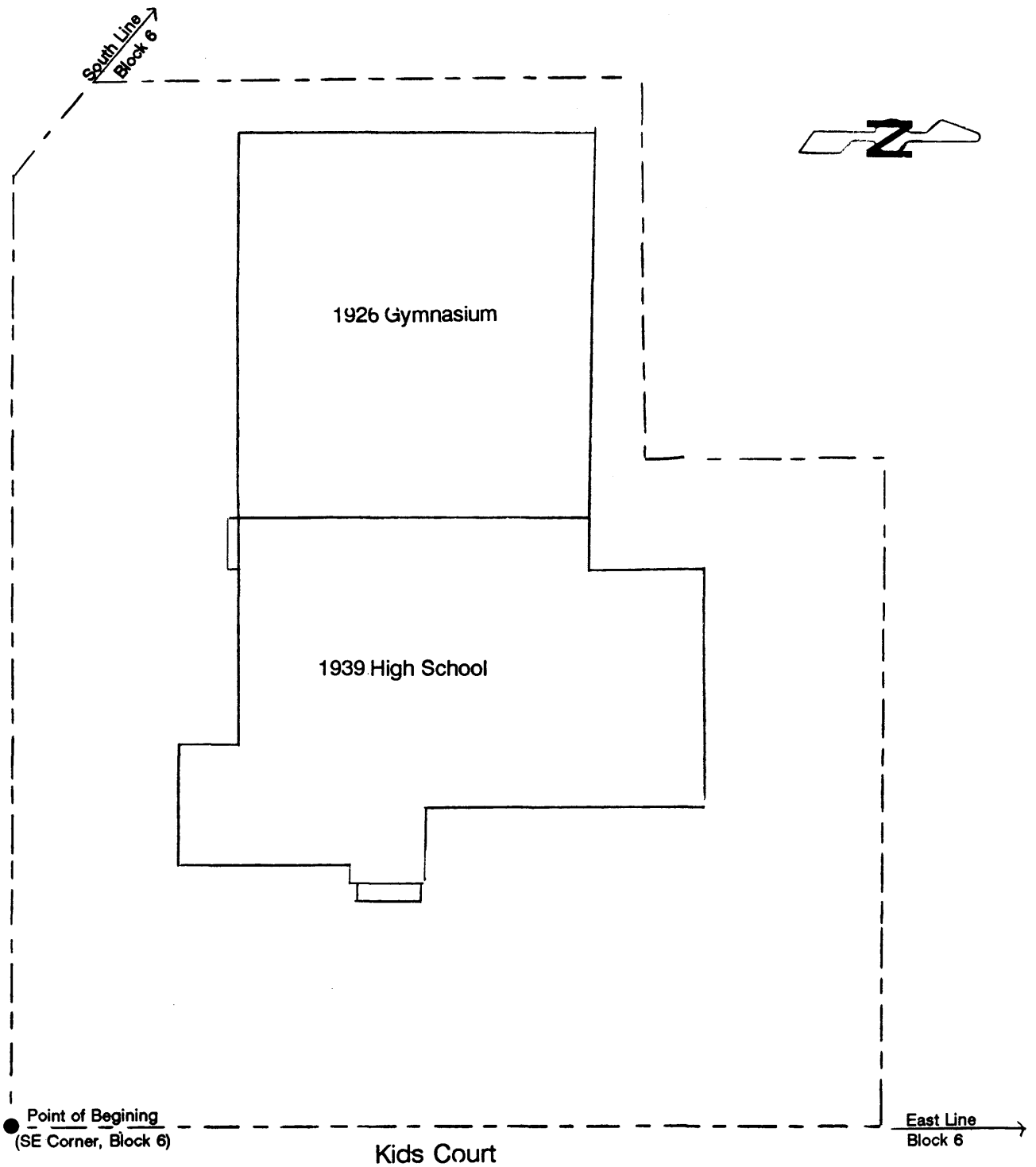
Fromberg Herald. 14 October 1907; 15 July 1912; 11 & 29 August, 6 October, and 1 & 9 December 1939.

Malone, Michael P. and Richard B. Roeder. Montana: A History of Two Centuries. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1976.

Republican Picket Holiday Supplement. 1909.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Fromberg. 1912.

Swan, Malcolm D. "The History of Educational Progress in the Fromberg, Montana Public School." Professional Paper, Montana State University, 1959.



Fromberg High School

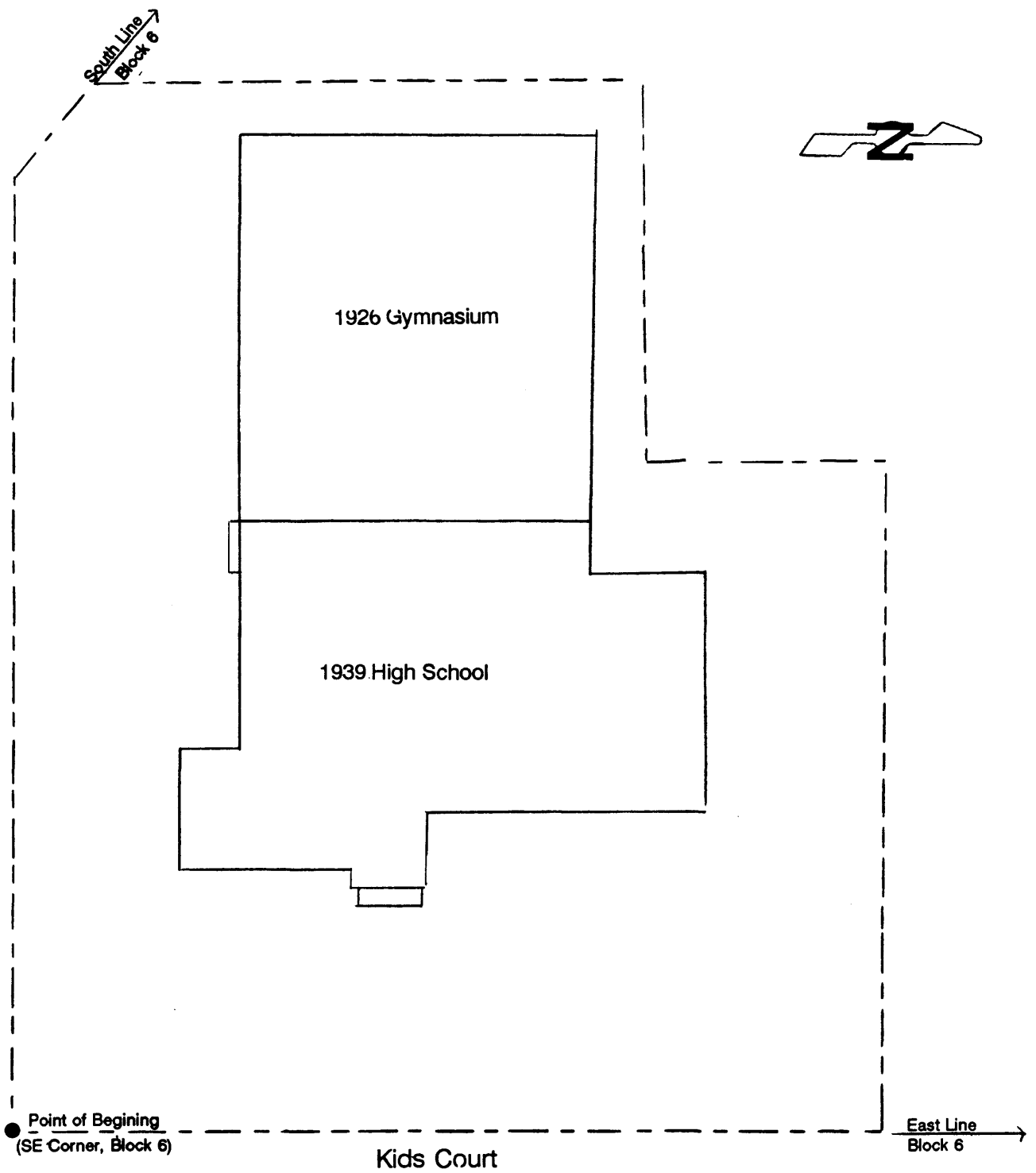
Fromberg, Montana

Block 6, Dudley First Addition

National Register Boundary:



**Scale: 1 inch = 30 feet
August 1992**



Fromberg High School

Fromberg, Montana

Block 6, Dudley First Addition

National Register Boundary:



**Scale: 1 inch = 30 feet
August 1992**