NPS Form 10-900
Oct. 1990

OMB No. 10024-0018

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Agra Consolidated School

Other name/site number Phillips County Consolidated School-District No. 132; Now Eastern Heights High School/Junior High

2. Location

Street & number 941 Kansas Avenue ☐ not for publication

City or town Agra ☐ vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Phillips Code 147 Zip code 67621

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.)

Christy Davis 10/6/05

Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I herby certify that the property is — Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

☐ 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:)

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	
2	3	buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
2	4	total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
Historic Public Schools of Kansas

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)

EDUCATION: School

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Concrete
Walls: Brick
Roof: Asphalt
Other: Stone Detailing

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

☒ **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 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 it original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1947 - 1955

Significant Dates

1947

1948

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Glover & Newcomb, Architects; O.D. Milligan, Contractor

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):
- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ Previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:
- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Approximately 10

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	490193	4401295
2			
3			
4			

☐ 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: Brenda R. Spencer

Organization: Preservation Planning and Design Date: 8 June, 2005

Street & number: 10150 Onaga Road Telephone: 785-456-9857

City or town: Wamego State: Kansas Zip code: 66547

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

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

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name: USD 324 Eastern Heights

street & number: 941 Kansas Avenue, Box 209 telephone: 785-638-2255

city or town: Agra state: KS zip code: 67621

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

Narrative Description

Agra Consolidated School was constructed in 1947-48 after a fire destroyed the former school in 1945. The fire coincided with a new state mandate requiring a minimum enrollment of ten students in rural school districts (in order to receive state aid). The Agra School Board and community had the foresight to take advantage to this opportunity to expand the Agra district to include surrounding rural districts, increasing the district's valuation and making possible the construction of a larger, modern school. The post-WWII building reflects the period in which it was built. It is a modern, one- and two-story asymmetrical building with a flat roof and bands of windows. A square squat tower with a pyramidal roof and chevron stone detailing marks the main building entrance; the only ornament other than the tower is a band of contrasting stone and brick squares that form a cornice band around the building. The building form with the entry tower and geometric detailing are characteristic of the Art Deco style. The school is classified architecturally as a Modern Movement structure with Art Deco stylistic references.

The building design and plan form reflected modern educational trends. The plan form is a modified U-shape with classrooms around a central gymnasium on the rear. However, the building form is asymmetrical with a separate auditorium on the west and the cafeteria, home economics classrooms, and offices on the east. Designed to serve all grades, classes were separated with the grades on the lower level and the high school, generally on the upper level. The original plans incorporated specially designed spaces for a commercial department, foods and clothing laboratory, science room, and a combined study hall and library. A separate, one-story tile building was built on the site at the same time as the new school. The structure was designed to be the Vocational Agriculture shop and bus depot, but was used initially as the Grade School while the new school was still under construction.

Agra Consolidated School was designed by prominent Topeka architects Glover and Newcomb. Glover and Newcomb were completing design of a new school in Wakefield, Kansas when they interviewed for the Agra job. The former Wakefield school had also been destroyed by fire. The architects presented drawings within two weeks of receiving the Agra job; obviously reusing the design of the Wakefield school (the school in Agra is nearly identical to Wakefield's).

Site

Agra Consolidated School is located at 941 Kansas Avenue, three blocks northeast of Agra's central business district, on the east side of town. Kansas Avenue is the north border of the site. A concrete sidewalk along Kansas Avenue is setback to provide perpendicular parking along the road in front of the school. This site was the location of the former Agra School, constructed in 1917 and destroyed by fire in 1945. The site is now comprised of a number of buildings and structures: the 1948 school, 1947 Vo Ag Shop/bus depot, a covered picnic shelter and three storage sheds. A football stadium is located at the rear of the school.

The school faces north, fronting Kansas Avenue. It is setback from the road creating a grass lawn between the school and the road. A concrete sidewalk extends from the perimeter walk along Kansas Avenue, toward the center of the school and splits to provide access to the main building entrance and the auditorium entrance. Walks also extend from the road and from the auditorium entrance, to the Ag Building west of the school. The Vocational Agriculture Building is freestanding, located west of the school and setback from the front of the school. Gravel parking lots are located north of the Ag Building, off Kansas Avenue, and on the east side of the school. A basketball court is in place at the northeast corner of the school site. A picnic shelter sets between the school and the Ag building on the front lawn; it is a post frame structure with a hip shingle roof on a concrete slab. A brick school sign is located on the front lawn, framed by small shrubs. Deciduous trees line the north border of the site. There are two storage buildings south of the Ag Building, and a metal storage shed on the west side of the rear gym. The football field/stadium is located south of the school.

Exterior

Agra Consolidated School is a one- and two-story, tan brick structure with a concrete foundation and a flat roof. The school is comprised of three primary sections: the main building housing classrooms and offices, the rear gymnasium, and the auditorium on the west. The building form is asymmetrical, the roof line is stepped which is accented by the cornice band comprised of alternating squares of stone and brick. Vertical stretcher courses at the base of the building and beneath the cornice band, as well as the window lintels, provide subtle detailing in the otherwise simple brick building.

The main building is asymmetrical, with a square entrance tower offset to the east side. The entry tower projects slightly from the front facade of the school and rises approximately two feet above the roof line of the main building. The tower is capped by a standing seam metal, pyramidal roof. A cornice band of alternating stone and brick squares is located at the roof line, like on the rest of the building. The tower is a vertical feature contrasting the long horizontal building. The original doors were a set of three doors with five horizontal lights and a single pane transom over each door. The doors were replaced in 1966 following consolidation. The existing doors are contemporary aluminum framed, glass doors. The entrance is comprised of a pair of doors with glass sidelights and transom. A concrete overhang projects over the tower entrance. Three narrow windows are located over the entrance with vertical stone panels extending from the top of each window to the cornice band. The stone detailing features a recessed square panel immediately above the window, and a chevron pattern extending to the cornice. The design and detailing of the tower is characteristic of the Art Deco style.

The front (north) facade of the main building is comprised of five bays. From the east, bay number two is the entry tower. Bays three and four are distinguished by horizontal bands of windows on each floor. The original windows were 9/9 double-hung wood windows, with sets of six windows in each masonry opening. The openings have vertical stretcher course brick lintels and brick sills. On the east end, bay number one is comprised of the same band of windows on the ground floor but with no windows on the upper floor. The fifth bay, on the west end, is the entrance to the auditorium. This entrance is recessed slightly from the facade of the main building. Comprised of a set of three doors with transoms and a concrete overhang, the entrance is identical to the entrance at the base of the tower. These doors were also replaced in 1966. A set of three windows, like those on the rest of the main building, is located over the auditorium entrance. The upper windows align with the ground level entrance, both offset from the center of the bay. A vertical slot window with glass block is located in the stairway immediately west of the auditorium entrance.

The auditorium is located on the west end of the main school. The front facade of the auditorium is flush with the recessed entry bay on the west end of the front facade of the main building. One and a half stories in height, the roofline of the auditorium steps down from the two-story main building. The north facade of the auditorium is comprised of five windows; the center three windows are pairs flanked by single windows on the ends. The original windows were 9/9 double hung wood windows with 2/2 transoms. Small square stone panels are located over the center three windows. The west facade of the auditorium is a plain brick wall with a single window on each end. The rear (south) facade is similar to the front with three pairs of windows in the center of the facade. A solid door is located on each end where single windows are located on the front facade.

The south (rear) facade of the school is comprised primarily of the rear gymnasium. Oriented north/south, the gymnasium has a shallow gable roof. A classroom wing runs along the west side of the gymnasium, between the gym and the auditorium. This wing extends south of the auditorium, approximately half the length of the rear gym. A large square chimney is located at the intersection of the west classroom wing and the gymnasium. The school underwent its first major expansion in 1986 with the addition of bleachers on the south end of the gymnasium with new locker rooms beneath, and the addition of a new concessions area on the west side of the gym, south of the west classroom wing. The gym expansion matched the color and style of the original brick and the original roof line. Two small windows on the rear (south) facade are the only openings in the gym expansion. Two former window openings on the west side of the original gym with infilled at the time of the expansion. The classroom/concessions addition is a one-story simple brick addition. This space is accessed by a set of double doors on the south facade, as well as from the southwest corner of the gym.

On the east side of the main school, a wing extends along the east side of the gym like on the west. The plan is not symmetrical as the east wing extends further south than the west wing. The east wing is also stepped back from the east facade of the school, unlike the west side. Windows on the east side of the gym and east wing were replaced with the glass block panels in 1966. The upper windows on the gym and classroom wing are horizontal bands of two, three, and four windows, similar to those on the front facade. The lower windows on the classroom wing are the same glass block panels with one and two hopper windows. The east wing housed the original rest rooms and locker room on the ground floor and the library/study hall on the upper floor. A one-story metal shed addition was constructed on the east side of the gym in 1990. The addition included a new science classroom at the southeast corner and new rest rooms. A one-story bay is located off the east end of the main building. This space was the original home economics classrooms, connected

to the kitchen and lunchroom at the southwest corner. The east facade of the main building, and the one-story end bay also have sets of two, three, and four windows, also replaced with glass block in the 1960s.

There have been at least three window replacement projects since the building was constructed in 1948. The original wood windows were replaced on the main building following consolidation in 1966. At that time, bands of glass block were installed in the original window openings on the main school building, gymnasium, and cafeteria. The glass block panels have small, individual hopper panels, corresponding to the number of original windows. The installation of the bands of glass block emphasized the horizontal character of the building. The auditorium windows have been replaced in the past twenty years. The existing replacement windows are 1/1 double-hung aluminum windows with opaque panels at the original transom openings. Similar windows have also been installed at the classroom wing on the west side of the gymnasium. The glass block panels are currently scheduled for replacement. The front windows were replaced in 2005 and those on the east side will be replaced at a future date. The new replacement windows are a system of opaque and glass panels that do maintain the original masonry opening. However, the vertical and horizontal divisions do not correspond to the original windows, nor obviously, match the style or profile of the original windows.

The exterior of the school retains a high degree of integrity. The two rear additions are not visible from the front of the building. The only major exterior alteration is the replacement of the doors and windows. The original windows were replaced within twenty years of the building's construction and are in the process of being replaced again. Window replacement is one of the most common exterior alterations in historic schools that continue to operate as public schools. The varying styles of existing replacement windows do not match the style of the original windows however; the original masonry openings have been maintained around the building. Although the replacement windows do impact the historic character of the school, aside from the windows and doors, the exterior of the building is in near original condition. Because the original masonry openings have been maintained, the window replacement is within the parameters of the acceptable modifications outlined in the registration requirements of the multiple property nomination *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*. Therefore, the replacement window and doors do not render the property ineligible for listing.

Vocational Agriculture Building
The original design of the new school, presented to Agra school officials by architects Glover and Newcomb in March of 1946, included two separate structures: the school and a Vocational Agriculture Building. The construction of the school was repeatedly delayed due primarily to the difficulty of obtaining materials following the end of World War II. Construction proceeded on the Ag Building and this structure was completed and utilized for grade school classes in 1947. The auxiliary building was originally designed to serve two functions, that of a Vo Ag shop and a bus barn or depot. When construction of the school was delayed, some interior alterations were made to allow the building to function as a grade school while the new school was being built. No documentation has been found regarding the precise changes but whatever the alterations, they were apparently reversed upon completion of the school so that the shop could be put to its intended use. The building has undergone some alteration over the past sixty years but retains a significant degree of historic integrity.

The Vocational Agriculture Building is a one-story building with an intersecting truncated hip roof. The plan is L-shaped; the shorter leg runs east/west, fronting Kansas Avenue, like the school. The longer leg extends south with the void of the ell on the southeast corner. Constructed of masonry clay tile, the building had 6/1 double-hung wood windows, many of which are extant. The primary entrance is a single door on the east side of the east/west leg, facing the school. A number of former window and door openings have been infilled with concrete block but the original openings are evident. Many of original wood windows are extant; a few odd replacement sashes are in place and aluminum storms have been installed on all of the north windows. The interior of the space is very utilitarian with concrete floors and tile walls. A one-story block shed addition has been constructed at the intersection of the "L" in the southeast corner. The addition houses restrooms for outdoor activities at the stadium.

Interior

With the exception of installation of suspended ceilings and florescent lights in 2000, and the two rear additions in the 1980s-90s, the interior of the school is in near original condition. Interior finishes and features were characteristic of the early modern schools, very simple and utilitarian with little ornament or special detailing. The floors are vinyl tile, the walls and ceilings are plaster with a simple wood baseboard, chair rail, door surrounds, and window sills. The original doors, three-light over two panel wood doors, are extant in most locations. Chalk-boards are extant in most classrooms and the original metal lockers are in place in the corridors.

The basic configuration is intact; the original plan was a modified U-shape around the rear gymnasium. Unlike the traditional Progressive Era plans that were U-shaped around a rear gym, the Agra school is asymmetrical with the auditorium on the west and the home economics classrooms, kitchen, lunchroom and school office on the east end. Classrooms were located on the west side of the gym while rest rooms and the original locker room were located on the east. Despite the U-shaped room configuration, the corridor is essentially a double-loaded corridor running east/west from the auditorium on the west to the home economics classrooms on the east end. The corridor does extend to the rest rooms on the east side of the gym but does not extend through the classrooms on the west side of the gym. These classrooms were originally the Commercial Department with a typing laboratory and attached classroom on the upper floor, and the first and second grade classrooms on the ground floor. On both floors, you have to walk through one classroom to get to the room in the southwest corner.

There are small foyers at the main building entrance and the auditorium entrance. Two stairways provide access to the upper floor, located off each of the front entrances. The stairways are concrete with vinyl treads and risers and have aluminum railings with a wood cap. Two small offices on the second floor extend over the stairway at the main entrance. The stairways have been enclosed from the corridor with a concrete block wall on the second floor, presumably to meet life safety codes.

With the exception of the window replacement, the auditorium is in near original condition. It was designed with a sloping concrete floor, plaster walls and applied acoustic tile ceilings. The original wood theater seats with metal frames and upholstered seats are extant. On the west end, the original wood stage is in place with a simple plaster proscenium arch.

The gym too, is in near original condition. Designed with a shallow gable roof, the ceiling has exposed steel trusses. It was originally quite small with only four rows of wood bleachers on the east and west sides of the court. The original window opening on the south end of the east side is in place, two west openings were infilled. The two building additions impacted primarily, the gymnasium. In 1986, the gym was expanded with bleachers on the south end. These bleachers were raised, with new locker/shower rooms below. A new concession stand was constructed off the west side of the gym, accessed from the southwest corner of the original gym or from the exterior, not from the main school building. The second addition occurred around 1990 when new restrooms were built on the east side of the gym. This addition also provided a new science classroom, accessed only through the gymnasium. A new rear entrance was located between the restrooms and classrooms, providing direct access from the east parking lot into the gymnasium without coming through the main school building.

The interior of the school retains a high degree of integrity, clearly reflecting the simplicity in fixtures and finishes common in modern era schools.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Agra Consolidated School is nominated to the National Register under the multiple property documentation form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas.* The school is significant on a state and local level under Criterion A as the second public school in Agra, built in 1947-48 after a fire destroyed the former school. The fire in July of 1945 followed the state rural consolidation law (passed in the 1944-45 legislative session) that required a district to maintain a minimum of ten students in order to receive state aid. Agra pursued consolidation with surrounding rural districts prior to construction of a new school. The newly consolidated district made possible the construction of a large, modern school without too great a burden on local tax payers. Agra Consolidated School is also significant under Criterion C as a representative of a Modern Movement school with Art Deco stylistic influences and the work of well-known Topeka architects Glover and Newcomb.

The Town of Agra

Agra is a small, rural community located on the east side of Phillips County, just off Highway 36. Phillips County is in the northern tier of Kansas counties along the Nebraska border in north central Kansas. Phillips County was established in 1872 and Phillipsburg named the county seat the same year, due primarily to its central location in the county. By 1880, the county had a population of over 12,000; Phillipsburg had a population of just over 300 and Kirwin had a population of over 800. Kirwin was the site of the first settlement in the county in 1869, the first post office in the county in 1871, and the first school house in 1873. Located less than ten miles south of Agra, Kirwin also secured the first rail station in the county, the central branch of the Union Pacific Railroad in 1879; the UP also passed through Logan on the western side of Phillips County. Phillipsburg and Kirwin, as well as Logan on the western side of the county, were well established communities before the town Agra was founded in 1887.[1]

Located ten miles west of Phillipsburg, Agra was platted by the Kansas Town and Land Company in 1887, fifteen years after Phillips County had been established. The town was named to honor Mr. Lowe, President of the Rock Island Railroad whose daughter was named Agra. Agra was established the year that the Rock Island Railroad reached Phillips County, in 1887. The new town experienced slow, steady growth in its early years, built primarily around the railroad. It was incorporated in 1904.[2] By 1906 Agra had a population of 339; it was a prosperous farming community and boasted all lines of business.[3] Local businesses included a lumber yard, hardware, grocery, drug and stores, a meat market, millinery, blacksmith, garage, Tipton's Creamery, two grain elevators, two hotels, two local banks, a post office, local newspaper and telephone exchange.[4] Today, the community maintains a population of approximately 300. Local residents travel to Phillipsburg or Kensington for most business but the school remains an important centerpiece of the community.

Agra Schools

The first school district, District No. 1, was established in Phillips County in the fall of 1872. The first school house in the county was built in Kirwin the following year. By 1880, the number of school districts in the county had increased to 103. Although Agra was founded in 1887, six years past before the first school was built in the new town. In 1893, James O'Brien was contracted to build Agra's first school. It was a two-room frame building that was soon overcrowded. The school was expanded twice, bringing the structure to six rooms. In 1904 when the town was incorporated, the County Superintendent of Public Instruction recommended that the Agra School District No. 58 be consolidated with the rural District No. 49 southeast of town. The new district was named District No. 132. Time had taken its toll on Agra's frame school building; combined with the pressures of increased enrollment, local residents approved funding for construction of a new brick school in 1915. In 1921, Rural High No. 1 was organized and shared District No. 132's school, paying rent for space in the building. The Kansas legislature passed a school district consolidation law in 1945, requiring that rural districts maintain a student population of at least ten students in order to receive state aid. Due to declining populations, many outlying districts faced the challenge of maintaining a school on their own. In the midst of the consolidation debate, tragedy struck the town of Agra. On the morning of July 4, 1945, lightning apparently struck the school during a fierce electric storm. The school was consumed by fire; the building and all of its contents were lost. Although devastating at the time, the fact that the fire occurred shortly after the state had passed the new legislation affecting rural districts, proved to be just the incentive needed for locals to take a hard look at the future of their school. The town and school

district rallied to find temporary quarters so that school could begin on schedule in the fall. The Agra school board led public meetings and discussions with surrounding districts in an attempt to pursue consolidation of a large district. These efforts ultimately resulted in construction of the new Agra Consolidated School for the largest district in Phillips County.[5]

Agra Consolidated School, District No. 132 in Phillips County –
The fire that consumed the Agra School on July 4, 1945 provided an unprecedented opportunity for local residents to establish a solid future for their school and community. The school and all equipment was lost to the fire; only the exterior walls were left standing and those were in danger of toppling.[6] The school was a total loss. The community took immediate action to find new quarters for the school. High School was held in the Farmer's Building on Main Street and grade school classes were moved to the Legion Building and the Christian Church.[7] A public meeting, called by the board of the Rural High School District and the Agra School District, was held six weeks after the fire. Seventeen area districts were invited to the meeting and all but two attended. Local school officials felt that with the new law forcing consolidation, the largest consolidation possible would mean the cheapest levy and the best school.[8] School began on schedule that fall with classes housed in three temporary locations around town. The next few months were filled with public meetings examining the pros and cons of consolidation. The response from outlying districts was generally positive, favoring consolidation with the Agra district. By December of 1945, a new Agra School District was proposed. The District included 112 sections of land; all of ten and part of six former districts. The new district boundaries spanned sixteen miles north/south and seven miles east/west. The proposed district would have an assessed valuation of over $2 million, providing sufficient valuation to build and maintain "one of the finest schools in this section of the state."[9] The new year began with the election of a new school board who faced the immediate task of building a school. In March of 1946, the architectural firm of Glover-Newcomb of Topeka was hired to develop plans for the new school. The firm was already working on plans for a new school in Wakefield after their school had also burned in the past year.[10] By late March, plans for the new school were presented to local residents. A description was published in the local paper:

> The proposed design incorporates the latest plan for efficient handling of students and keeps in mind civic and community uses. Classes are divided so that the high school and grade school are separated – the grades housed on the lower floor and the high school on the upper level. All sanitary facilities are on the ground floor. Two stairways give access to the upper floor. The building is designed so that the auditorium and gym are separated. The permanent seating capacity of the gym is set at 200 with provisions for putting in at least that many more seats on the floor without interfering with a regulation basketball court....A drawing of the building is on display at the bank.[11]

The speed in which the plans were developed and presented reinforce the presumption that Glover & Newcomb utilized the plans for the Wakefield School for the new school in Agra. The Wakefield school is extant but drastically modified with an addition on the front of the school. With the exception of a different entry tower, the schools are nearly identical. They shared the same basic configuration with the side auditorium and rear gymnasium and identical detailing including the same windows and brick and stone cornice.

A bond issue for $150,000 was passed in the spring of 1946. The design of the school included two buildings: the main school and a separate Vocational Agriculture Building/bus depot. Both were located on the site of the former school. Construction of the school was delayed due to difficulty in securing materials in the post-war economy. Construction began on the Ag building with the intention of using the building initially to house the Grade School.[12] By May of 1947, it had become clear that additional funds were necessary to complete the school; the shortfall was blamed on the shortage and resulting increase in materials cost in the wake of WWII. A second bond issue for an additional $50,000 was put before voters and approved. Two years following the fire that destroyed the former school, the construction contract was awarded to build the new school. Milligan Construction Company of Manhattan was the successful bidder.[13] The high school continued in its temporary quarters a third year. The Grade School occupied the Vocational Agriculture building in the 1947-48 school year. The 1948 school year began with the same arrangements but by late fall, the new school was completed. School was closed on the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving and students and teachers moved into the new building over the Thanksgiving holiday.[14] The official dedication of the new school was held on December 16, 1948. The architects and contractor officially presented the building to the school board; Dr. Hugh Burnett of Fort Hays State College gave the dedicatory address and the new school was opened for tours.[15]

Superintendent W.H. Seaman described the new school:

> The building consists of three units, the gymnasium on the south, the auditorium to the west and the school rooms in the center and on either side of the gymnasium. The study hall is to the extreme east side upstairs. The four grade rooms are on the first floor in the center part of the building with the first and second grade room to the extreme east side of the building. There are two independent classrooms for high school on the second floor. We have a special science and a special commercial room. The Foods and Clothing rooms are on the first floor, adjoining each other and partitions with glass windows between them. The typing and classroom of the Commercial department are likewise separated. A large library room is at the south end of the study hall. The gymnasium is one of the largest in this section having a 45' x 87' playing floor. It is equipped with projecting beam boards for basketball with ample "run-under" space. The auditorium is equipped with comfortable theater seats and with necessary stage curtains. The halls have 126 lockers for the use of students. The building is faced with tan brick and has generous window space. It is heated with gas and the rooms equipped with modern radiators.[16]

The freshman class of 1945 entered high school in the temporary quarters at the Farmers Building in downtown Agra. This class was the first to graduate as seniors from the new school in 1949. The town and students were proud of the new school. Agra Consolidated School has continued to serve the community well. Following state-mandated consolidation in 1966, the Agra and Kirwin schools were merged into a new district – Eastern Heights Unified School District #324. The grade school is located in Kirwin and the school in Agra serves grades 6-12 in a combined junior high/high school.[17] The school was "modernized" with the installation of new glass block window panels following consolidation.

The school underwent its first expansion in 1986 when the gymnasium was expanded to the south and a concessions area added on the west side of the gym. In the 1990s a metal shed addition was built on the east side of the gym to house new rest rooms and a classroom. The class of 2006 will be the 100th graduating class in Agra.[18]

Summary

Agra Consolidated School was completed and occupied in the fall of 1948. The school was built after a fire, on July 4, 1945, destroyed the former school. The fire coincided with state legislation establishing a minimum of ten students in rural districts in order to maintain state aid. The fire presented Agra with the opportunity to secure a solid future for their town and school by consolidating with surrounding rural districts. The new large consolidated district enabled Agra to build a substantial, modern facility that continues to serve the community today.

The school is a one- and two-story tan brick structure with a concrete foundation. The building is asymmetrical in form with a rear gymnasium in the main section of the school, the auditorium on the west end and the cafeteria, classrooms and offices on the east. A vertical tower with a pyramidal roof defines the main building entrance. The tower features stone detailing with recessed square panels and carved chevron patterns. A cornice band of alternating squares of brick and stone comprise the primary ornament on the building outside of the entry tower. Bands of windows give the building a horizontal character, contrasting the vertical entry tower. The tan brick, asymmetrical building form and bands of windows are characteristic of the Modern Movement in school design. The squat entry tower and square and chevron detailing reflect subtle Art Deco stylistic references. The plan of the school also reflected modern educational trends that had emerged from the Progressive Era including separate gymnasium, auditorium, and cafeteria, and specially designed classrooms for home economics, commercial department, and science. Constructed in 1947 and completed prior to the school, the Vocational Agriculture Building was initially used as the Grade School while the main school was under construction. The one-story tile building has a hip roof and retains some of its original 6/1 double-hung wood windows. Designed to serve as a Vocational Agriculture shop and a bus depot, the building remains intact and is included as a contributing structure in the nomination.

Agra Consolidated School is a good example of the work of Topeka architects Glover and Newcomb. Walter Earl Glover opened his architectural practice in Topeka in 1919. Glover had an established reputation for his design of buildings in and around Topeka. Prominent commissions included Stormont Hospital, the Security Benefit Building, and the

Menninger Foundation West Campus, in addition to Westboro suburban shopping center and numerous residences in the capital city. Glover also designed the Wabaunsee and Johnson County Courthouses and public schools in Westmoreland, Tecumseh, Weir, Centralia, Hillsboro, Wabaunsee, Vermillion, Seneca, and Courtland. E.E. Newcomb partnered with Glover in 1946. The firm continued to design public schools; their work included schools in Axtell, Wakefield, Agra, Perry, Clifton, and Rochester and Berryton schools in Topeka.[19]

Agra Consolidated School maintains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and association. The school retains the general characteristics of the property type including: its original site and setting, the original building form, the original roof form, the exterior brick and pattern of window and door openings, original ornamentation in the brick and stone detailing, and the interior corridor configuration.

The school retains a high degree of integrity on both the interior and exterior. New replacement windows were recently installed, representing the second window replacement in sixty years. Neither the former glass block nor the current window panel system match the style of the original windows, however, the replacements do maintain the original large masonry openings that are an important characteristic of this Modern Movement school. The two additions to the building are off secondary facades and not visible from the front of the school. The interior has undergone some modification but the basic corridor configuration and circulation patterns are intact. Significant interior features and finishes include plaster walls, vinyl tile flooring, and original interior doors and wood trim. The school retains its original gymnasium, auditorium, and cafeteria. Modifications to the school are within the parameters defined in the multiple property submission and do not sufficiently impact the integrity of the building as to make it ineligible for listing.

Agra Consolidated School is a traditional example of the Town Graded School property type as the second public school built to serve all grades in the newly consolidated school district; it continues to serve as the junior high/high school today. The school is also significant as a representative of a Modern Movement educational structure and the work of prominent Topeka architects Glover and Newcomb. Agra Consolidated School and Vocational Agriculture building are nominated for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under the multiple property documentation form, *Historic Public Schools of Kansas* as representatives of the Town Graded School and Education-Related Structures property types.

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[1] Wm. C. Cutler's History of the State of Kansas-Phillips County, (first published by A.T. Andreas, Chicago, 1883).
[2] Cecil Kingery, Phillipsburg-Phillips County Centennial 1872 – 1972, (Selden, Kansas: Koerperich Bookbinder, 1972) C24.
[3] "Agra," The Phillips County Post Souvenir Edition, 1906.
[4] Eunice Losey and Martha Rose, Centennial High lights and History of Agra, Kansas – Celebrating 100 Years 1887 – 1987 (1987) 24.
[5] "Forty-Four Years with Agra Schools," The Agra Star. December 16, 1948.
[6] "Fire Totally Destroys Agra School House," The Agra Sentinel. July 5, 1945.
[7] "Working on School Rooms," The Agra Sentential. August 2, 1945
[8] "School Meeting Monday Night Well Attended," The Agra Sentential. August 23, 1945.
[9] "New Agra District Formed to Include 16 Districts," The Agra Sentinel. December 6, 1945
[10] "Architect Hired to Supervise New School Building," The Agra Sentinel. March 7, 1946
[11] "Plans for New School Building on Display," The Agra Sentinel. March 21, 1946.
[12] "Construction of Building on School Property Started," The Agra Sentinel. August 1, 1946.
[13] "Contract Awarded for Construction of School Building," The Agra Sentinel. July 31, 1947.
[14] "To Move Into New Building," The Agra Star. November 18, 1948.
[15] Agra Consolidated School Dedication Program, December 16, 1948.
[16] "Agra Consolidated School Building," The Agra Star Special School Dedication Issue. December 16, 1948.
[17] "Commemorative Program Remembering the 55th Anniversary of the New School Dedication," December 13, 2003.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Brenda Spencer. "Historic Public School of Kansas" Multiple Property Nomination. 27-28 and Appendix C – Architects of Kansas Schools. September, 2004.

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The Phillips County Post Souvenir Edition, 1906.

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Note: Most of the information on the history of the school was obtained from a notebook featuring press clippings and school commemorative items provided by Carla Dettmer, Agra resident.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description – East ½ Block 11 and All Block 12 and Vacated 5th and 6th Streets and South Avenue. Agra Original. The site is bordered on the north by Kansas Avenue.

Boundary Justification –The site is defined by geographic features; it encompasses the school, the stadium, out buildings, and parking lot.

Additional Documentation

Maps
USGS map attached
Figure 1 – Site Plan Sketch (Spencer, 2005)

Historic Views
Figure 2 – Architect's renderings
Figure 3 – Early View of Agra Consolidated School, c.1960

Photographs

Agra Consolidated School
Phillips County, Kansas

Photos were taken by Brenda Spencer May 17, and July 17, 2005. KSHS holds the original negatives.

#	Description of View [direction of camera]
1	Front (north) facade [southwest]
2	Detail of entrance tower [south]
3	West facade [northeast]
4	South (rear) facade [northeast]
5	East facade [northwest]
6	Front (north) facade [southeast]
7	Picnic shelter in foreground; north and east facades of Vocational Agriculture Building in rear [southwest]
8	Vocational Agriculture Building south and east facades [northwest]
9	Inside front (main) entry [southeast]
10	Auditorium entry and stairway [northeast]
11	Auditorium [west]
12	Stage at west end of auditorium [north]
13	Detail of auditorium seat [southeast]
14	Original gymnasium with bleacher expansion on south end [south]
15	Typical corridor [east]
16	Enclosed stairwell in second floor corridor [east]
17	East stairway (inside main entrance) and office over stairway [north]
18	Typical classroom [southwest]

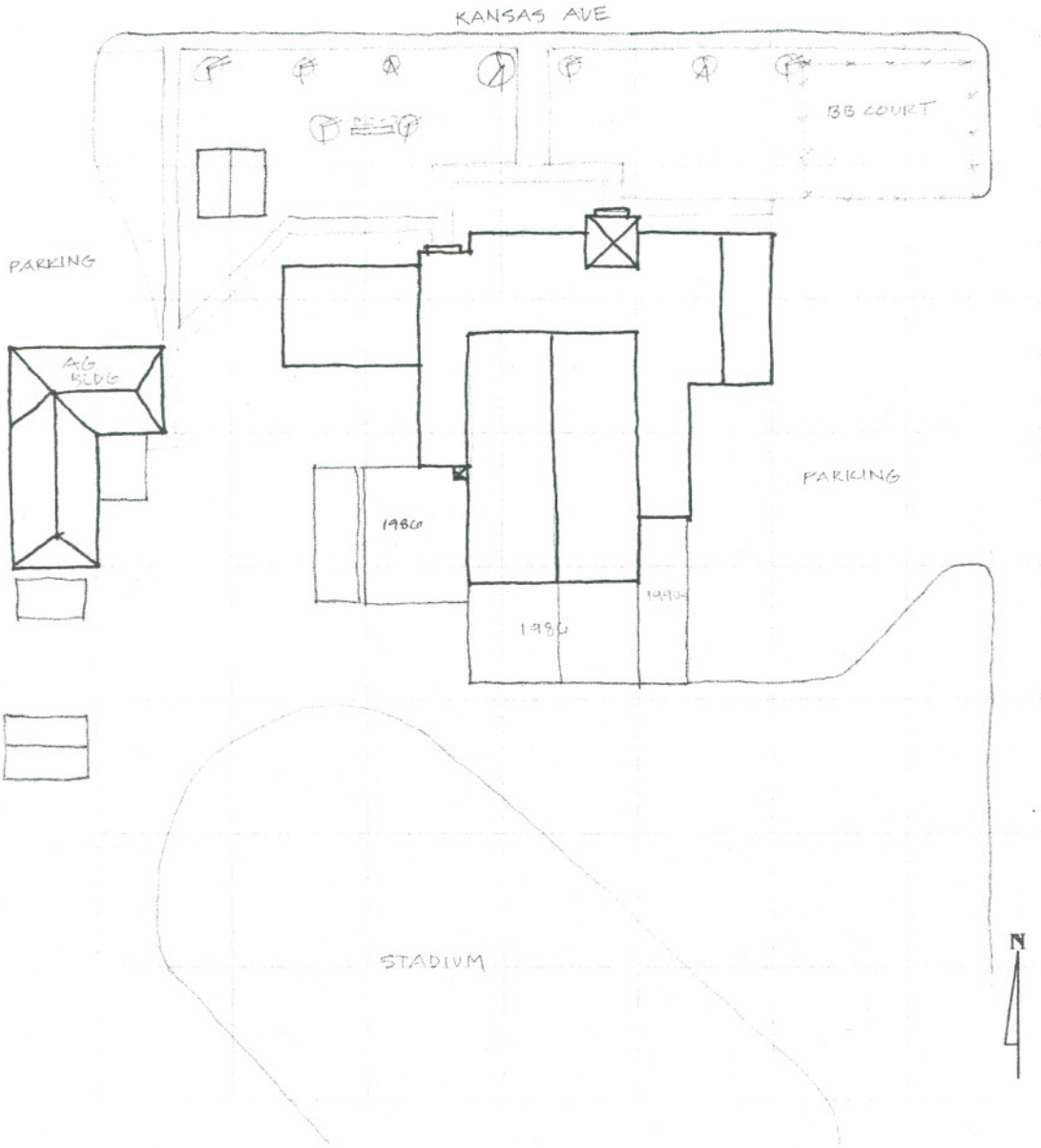
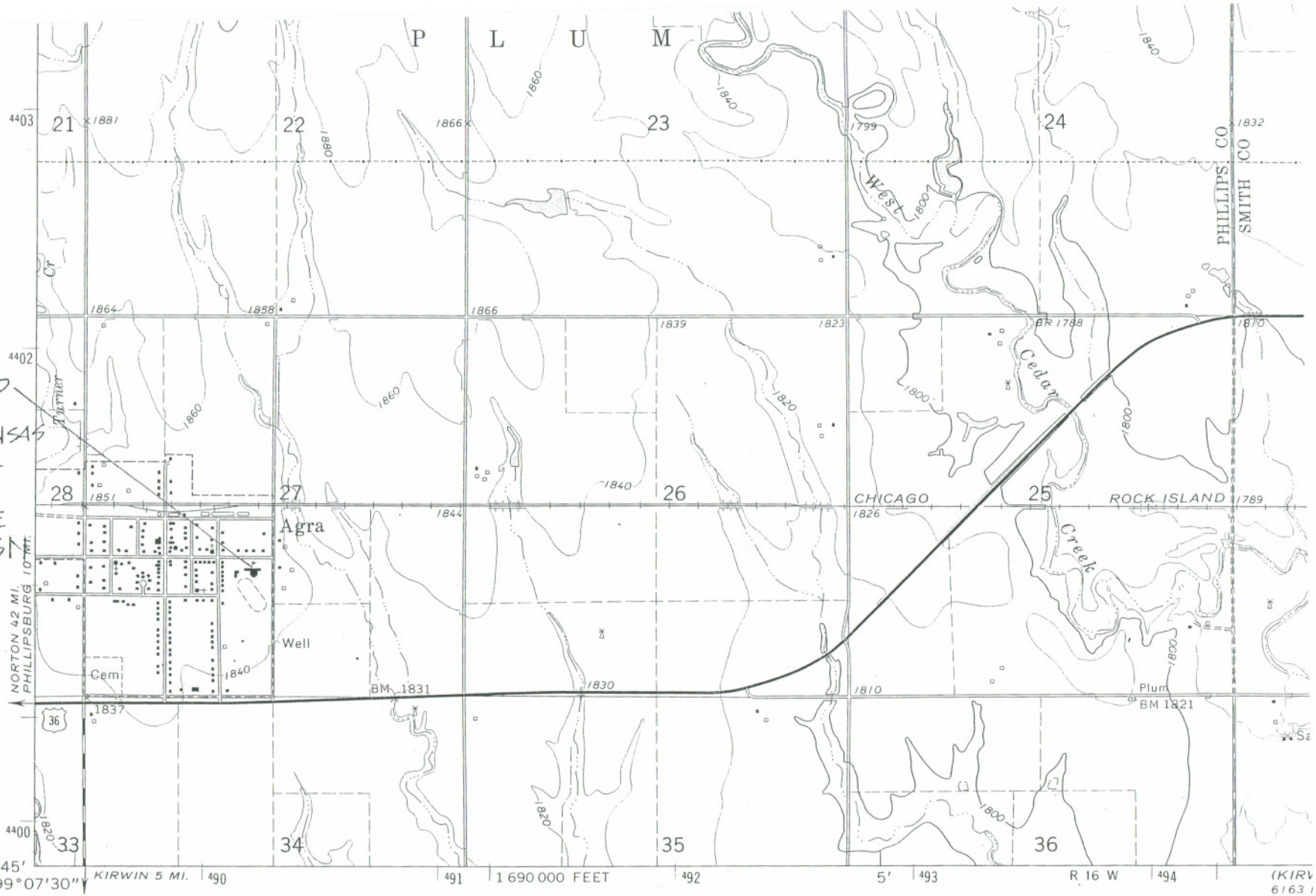


Figure 1 – Site Sketch Plan (Spencer, 2005)

AGRA CONSOLIDATED
SCHOOL
PHILLIPS COUNTY, KANSAS
UTM REFERENCE
ZONE 14
490193E
4401295N



(KIRWIN RESERVOIR)
6163 II NW

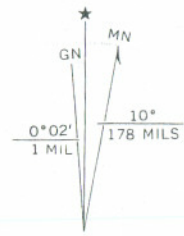
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1973. Field checked 1973

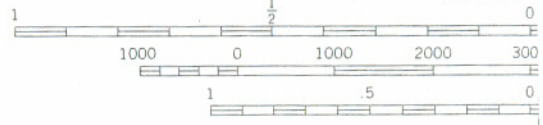
Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Kansas coordinate system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1000-metre Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 14, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

SCALE 1



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FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER,
AND BY THE STATE GEOLOGICAL SU
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