NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

NATIONAL REGISTER
LISTED

JUN 27 2007

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Mahaska Rural High School #3

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number South School Street ☐ not for publication N/A

city or town Mahaska ☐ vicinity N/A

state Kansas code KS county Washington code 201 zip code 66955

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 for 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.)

Patrick Zollner DSHPO 5/14/07

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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:)

Mahaska Rural High School #3
Name of Property

Washington Co., Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

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

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

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

Historic Public Schools of Kansas

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Collegiate Gothic Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls BRICK
roof ASPHALT
other STONE/limestone decorative elements

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

See continuation sheets

Mahaska Rural High School #3
Name of Property

Washington Co., Kansas
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

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

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

Criteria Considerations N/A
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance
1926-27

Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person
(complete if Criterion B is marked)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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): N/A

- ☐ 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:
Kansas State Historical Society

Mahaska Rural High School #3
Name of Property

Washington Co., Kansas
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.4 acres

UTM References Mahaska, Kansas Quadrangle
(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	14	640758	4427199	3			
2				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 John Linn Hopkins
organization Hopkins Oates & Associates date November 2006
street & number 974 Philadelphia Street telephone (901) 278-5186
city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38104

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 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 Mahaska Housing Partnership LP, c/o Steve Foutch
street & number 8109 NW Hillside Drive telephone (816) 820-9183
city or town Weatherby Lake state MO zip code 64152

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 listing. 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 20303.

Description

The Mahaska Rural High School is a two-story, brick veneered, reinforced concrete frame school building with "Collegiate" Gothic Revival influence, designed by an unknown architect and built 1926-27 in the rural farming community of Mahaska, Washington County, Kansas. The school is sited on a large open lot on the extreme southeastern edge of the city facing South School Street, which is also marked as "Arrowhead Road" on some local maps. The school faces east to open farm fields located across South School Street, and it is surrounded on the north, west and south by relatively small houses located on comparatively large, shaded lots, with lot frontages ranging from 100 to 200 feet, and lot depths of 150 to 300 feet. The municipal water standpipe is located just to the north and west of the rear of the school lot. The school lot has 300 feet of frontage on South School Street and it runs 355 feet deep along Henry and William Streets, which delineate its northern and southern edges, respectively. The schoolyard contains open lawn to the front (east), but areas shaded with mature locust trees are located in the north and south side yards. To the west of the school building on the rear half of its lot is a wide open grassy lawn space; aerial photographs of the site still show the outline of the school's oval running track in this area, which also contained its 80 yard long and 40 yard wide six-man football field.

The school is laid out in a "J"-shaped plan with a five-bay wide and three-bay deep cross arm oriented parallel to the street, containing the administrative, class rooms, bathrooms and circulation corridors; the four-bay deep and one -bay wide stem of the "J" was developed to contain a "gymnatorium", with the school's physical plant located to one side. The school was built with a flat roof behind a crenulated parapet topped with a molded limestone coping, covered with a built-up bituminous asphalt roofing system. The front façade features a center entrance bay that projects slightly forward, and is articulated with limestone quoins and a stepped parapet containing a plaque inscribed "1926". Above the entrance is a group of three, wood-frame, 12-light casement sashes, each with a six-light fixed sash transom. The entrance is set within a vestibule behind an equilateral limestone arch with a drip cap and ears; above the arch is a rectangular panel noting the building's construction as the "Mahaska Rural High School District No. 3". The entrance is composed of a wood-frame multi-light double door flanked by 3/4 length multi-light sidelights and topped by an eight-light transom fitted within a brick equilateral arch. The other windows of the front façade are wood-frame, 6/1 double-hung sashes, set in pairs or groups of four. Two of these windows, on either side of the entrance bay, were extended as fire exit doors ca. 1970.

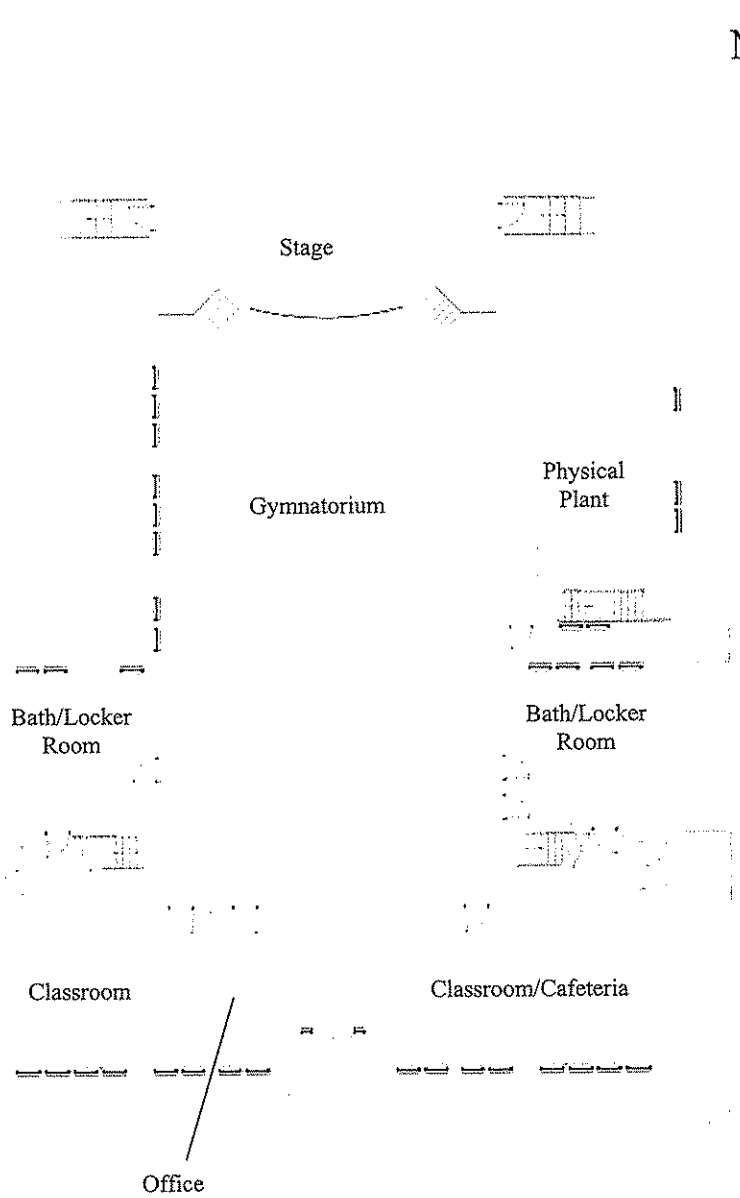
The side (south) elevation of the cross arm of the school has a crenulated parapet and is decorated with large blind panels each delineated by a soldier course of black bricks that flank a side entrance bay. The entrance is composed of a molded, segmental-arched stone entrance portal that contains a recessed multi-light double door; above it is a group of three, twelve-light wood-frame casement sashes, each topped with a six-light transom. The south façade of the "gymnatorium" stem has 6/6 wood-frame, double-hung sashes, some in pairs or groups of three, on both the first and second floor levels, the rear (west) façade of the cross arm has one exposed bay on either side of the gymnatorium that contains four wood-frame, 6/1 double-hung sashes on both floors. The rear (west) façade of the gymnatorium is blank, it being the wall immediately behind the stage area. The side (north) façade of the building is largely a mirror of the south, with the exception that the

one-story, two-bay wide and one-bay deep physical plant is attached to the side of the gymnatorum. The north wall of the physical plant is joined to the cross arm of the structure and has a semicircular arched opening to a hyphen-like open-air corridor providing access to the physical plant and the gymnatorium.

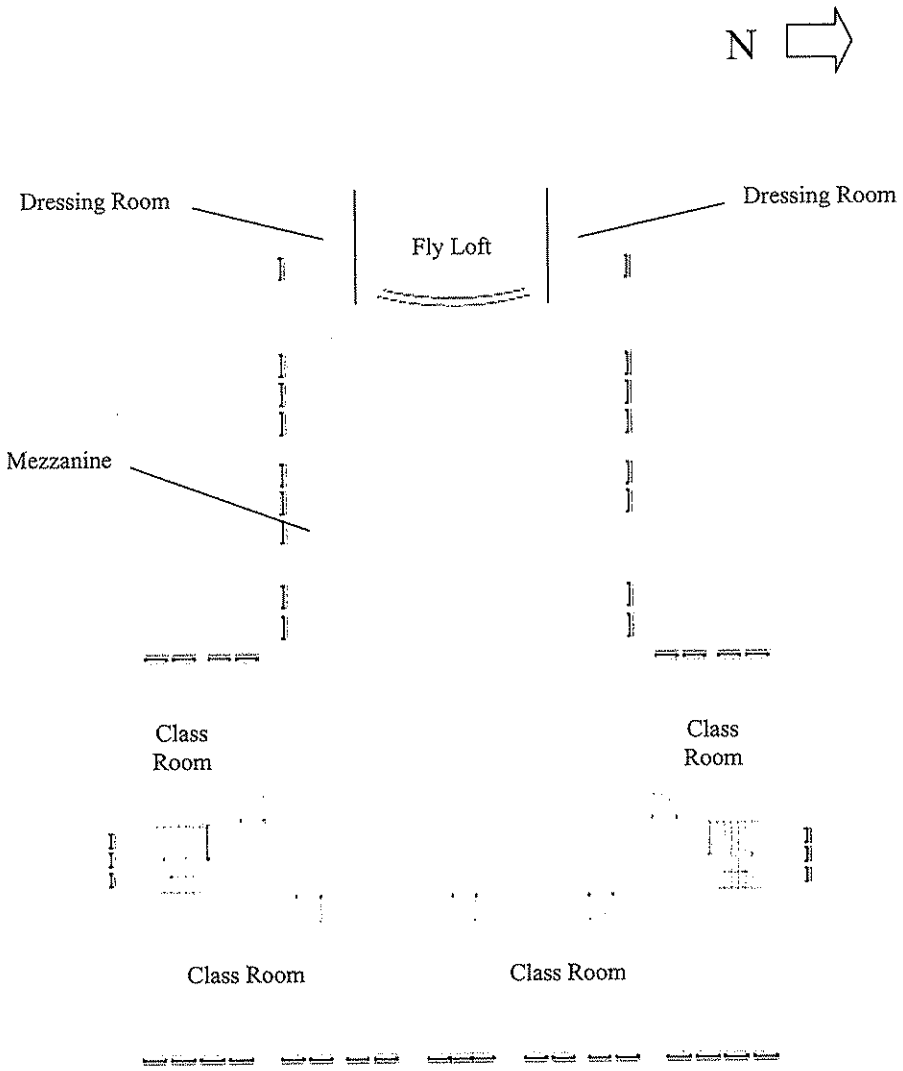
The interior of the school is laid out along a double-loaded corridor that forms the longitudinal axis of the cross arm. The first floor contained three classrooms and the school office on the east side of the corridor, with the girls' and boys' bathroom/locker rooms and the gymnatorium loaded off the opposite side. At each end of the hall is a simple steel two-run stair with a block spindle balustrade and paneled, pyramidal-capped newels. The upper floor contained four classrooms arranged on either side of the hall, as well as the entrance to the mezzanine level of the gymnatorium. All of the walls in the building were formed using terra cotta fire block covered with plaster; the ceilings are plaster surfaces spread on metal lath tied to a grid of rebar suspended a foot or more below the line of the concrete coated roof and floor trusses. Window and door trim throughout the building used a simple back-banded architrave, and the doors were 1/1 solid panel doors. The corridor walls feature a simple bull-nose and cove chair rail throughout, and the baseboards have a molded upper profile. Some original trim surrounds for the bulletin boards and black boards of the schoolrooms survive. All of these original trim features are being carefully removed and stored for reuse in the building. The floors were a narrow strip maple tongue and groove flooring installed on screeds over poured in place concrete floors. All of the flooring in the building was ruined by moisture infiltration through broken windows and roof leaks, and has been removed. The gymnatorium retains its original sense of volume and finishes, although the paneled suspended mezzanine has collapsed in one location due to moisture deterioration, and the remaining portions of the mezzanine are damaged as well. The gymnatorium floor has been ruined by rain and snow filtering through the windows and leaks in the roof.

The Mahaska Rural High School #3 is being brought back to life as apartments through a certified rehabilitation. The owner has been very careful to salvage all of the usable trim elements for reinstallation in the new building; however, as clean up of debris in the building proceeded, it became clear that some original doors, windows and other elements were simply too deteriorated to be salvaged. Where possible, the missing pieces will be replicated to the extent feasible.

However, one important element of the building-- the mezzanine level of the gymnatorium-- was so badly deteriorated that it partially collapsed as clean up work was underway. Because of the danger to workmen posed by further collapse of this structure, the remainder of the mezzanine was subsequently demolished. It will not be reconstructed as part of the building rehabilitation project. Photographs of the "before" and "after" appearance of the mezzanine and other rooms of the school are included in this nomination package.



Mahaska Rural High School #3: First Floor Plan



Mahaska Rural High School #3: Second Floor Plan

Significance

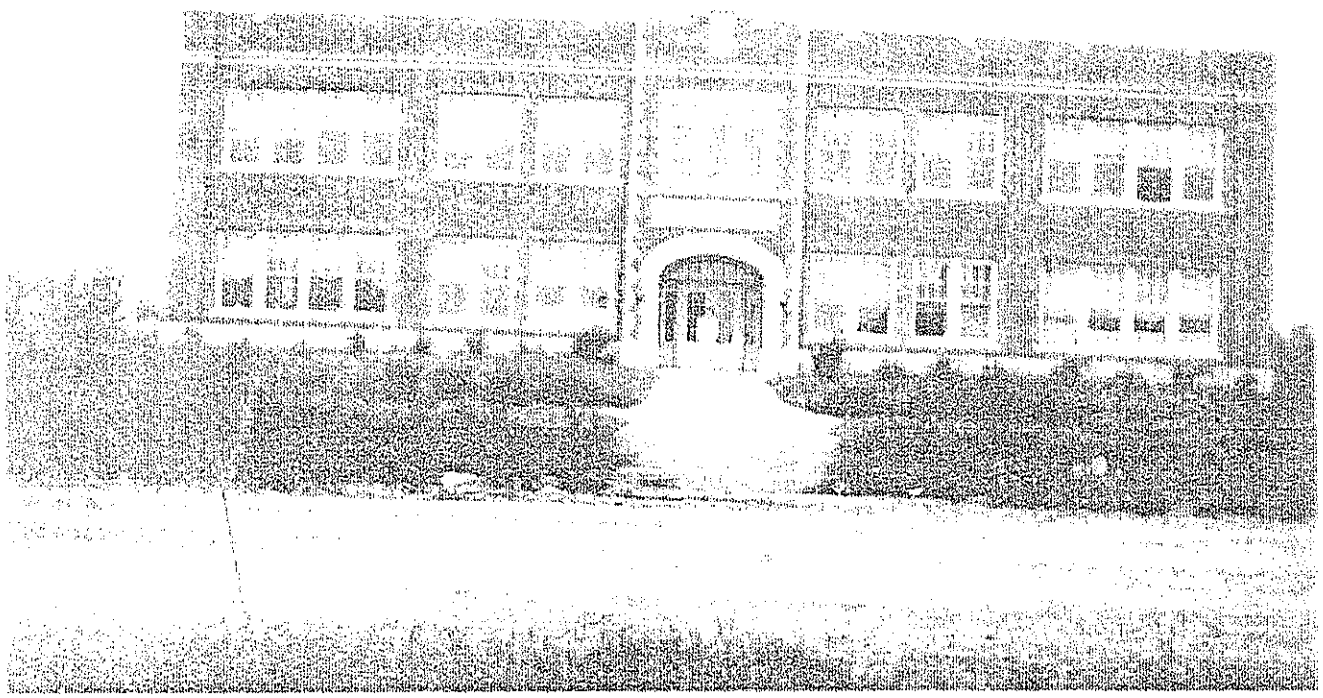
The Mahaska Rural High School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as well-preserved and increasingly rare example of a graded rural high school property type designed to reflect the planning principles of the Progressive Era of Kansas' public schools, as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Submission "Historic Public Schools of Kansas", and its Associated Historic Context, "The Public School Buildings of Kansas (1854-1955)". As such, the Mahaska Rural High School is eligible for listing under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a locally significant example of the Town High School subtype designed in the Collegiate Gothic Revival style, with a period of significance defined by the period of its construction opening between 1926 and 1927. In spite of being neglected for many years, the building retains integrity of massing, roof form, original building materials, patterns of window and door openings, ornamentation and detailing, and basic interior corridor configuration, all of which comprise the minimum requirements for assessing integrity for properties nominated under the Multiple Property Submission.

The Mahaska Rural High School is a member of a quickly dwindling population of small town high school buildings constructed during the Progressive Movement that reformed both urban and rural school programs in the state between the 1910s and 1930s. The school was developed in the town of Mahaska, a small local agricultural trade center on the former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad located in the extreme northwestern corner of Washington County only a few miles from the border with the State of Nebraska. Established in 1887 but incorporated as a city in 1909 (Hanover *News* 1994), Mahaska has always been a modest sized community and apparently reached the zenith of its growth ca. 1920 with a population of around 300 (Bicentennial 1976:16).

The commitment to public education in this rural community actually predated the incorporation of Mahaska with the establishment of the Hopewell School District in 1875 (Bicentennial 1976:25); this was supplanted with the establishment of the South East Mahaska School District #73 in 1879. The first one-room school opened its doors in October of 1880, located just east of town near the site of the Mahaska Cemetery. Twenty students were taught in that small school in the first year that it opened, and by 1889, attendance had swelled to 50 (Bicentennial 1976:25).

Once Mahaska was formally platted in 1887, the school building was moved to town and converted for use as a warehouse, and a new two-room school was built. The addition of high school curriculum for the freshman grade levels caused this school to be more than doubled in size for the 1908 academic year with two additional classrooms and a library. The sophomore grade level was added in 1909, while junior and senior grade levels were not added to the school curriculum until 1916 and 1917, respectively (Bicentennial 1976:25-26).

There is little in the way of documentary materials from this period that can flesh out the events leading up to the development of the Mahaska Rural High School #3, and research into contemporary local newspaper accounts provides only scant information. There are also no surviving local school board records to review that concern the construction of the Mahaska School or its administration over time. Though the general population of the community and Washington county as a whole had reached its highest point in the Census of 1910 (U.S. Census Bureau), the citizens of Mahaska must have felt that there was still enough strength and prosperity in their community to justify the expense of the new school. The community overwhelmingly committed to the investment in a public bond issue to fund the development of a high school building that could stand alone from its one other city school property. The bond issue was authorized by public referendum on April 1, 1926, and the new building completed and placed in service in January of 1927 (Bicentennial 1976:26). The architect for the project is not known, though the building is clearly architect-designed, even if as a stock plan developed for use by communities of this size. It is clear that the contracting management, skilled tradesmen, and materials for the building all had to be brought into the community from elsewhere by way of its railroad connections.



This snapshot of the Mahaska Rural High School #3 is dated 1928 and shows the school soon after its completion in the previous year. The photograph reveals that the intent of the original landscaping was far more formal in design than it is today. It is not known if the person pictured is the school's principal or one of the teachers. Courtesy of the Washington County Historical Society.

Local historians claim that Mahaska was the first school in Kansas to play "six-man" football, which is variation on the traditional 11-member offensive and defensive teams more commonly played in the United States (Katz 2005). The six-man approach to the game was developed to allow schools with smaller enrollments to field a football team, but still keep the game competitive on par with the traditional sport. Six-man football was developed in 1934 by Stephen Epler of Chester, Nebraska (Underwood 2005:9), and given that Mahaska is only sixteen miles or so by road from Chester, it is entirely possible that the Mahaska Rural High School #3 was among the schools that made up the first six-man football league in America. More research is needed to determine whether or not this is true.

The Mahaska School remained viable as an independent four-year high school until ca. 1955, when the dwindling population closed some of the local rural elementary schools and caused their students to be bused to Mahaska. Some elementary classes were blended into the school in the 1955-1956 academic year. The last high school class graduated in 1966, as the building was changed over to a middle school through the creation of Unified School District 221 with nearby Haddam and Morrowville students (Bicentennial 1976:26). This change lasted only a year, when elementary classes including a Kindergarten class were added. The middle school classes were discontinued in 1972, and the remaining grade school classes continued to use the building until 1974. The building was converted for use as a library and community center in 1975, but was finally closed in 1989. The building has been vacant ever since.

Major Bibliographic Sources

Bicentennial Book Committee
1976 Mahaska History: Bicentennial Edition. Privately published, Mahaska, Kansas.

Katz, Julie M.
2005 Personal communication.

U. S. Census Department
1995 Population of Counties by Decennial Census 1900-1990. (www.census.gov/population/cencounts/ks190090.txt)

Underwood, C. H.
2005 Six-Man Football. Reprint of 1974 imprint. Texas A & M Press, College Station, TX.

Verbal Boundary Description

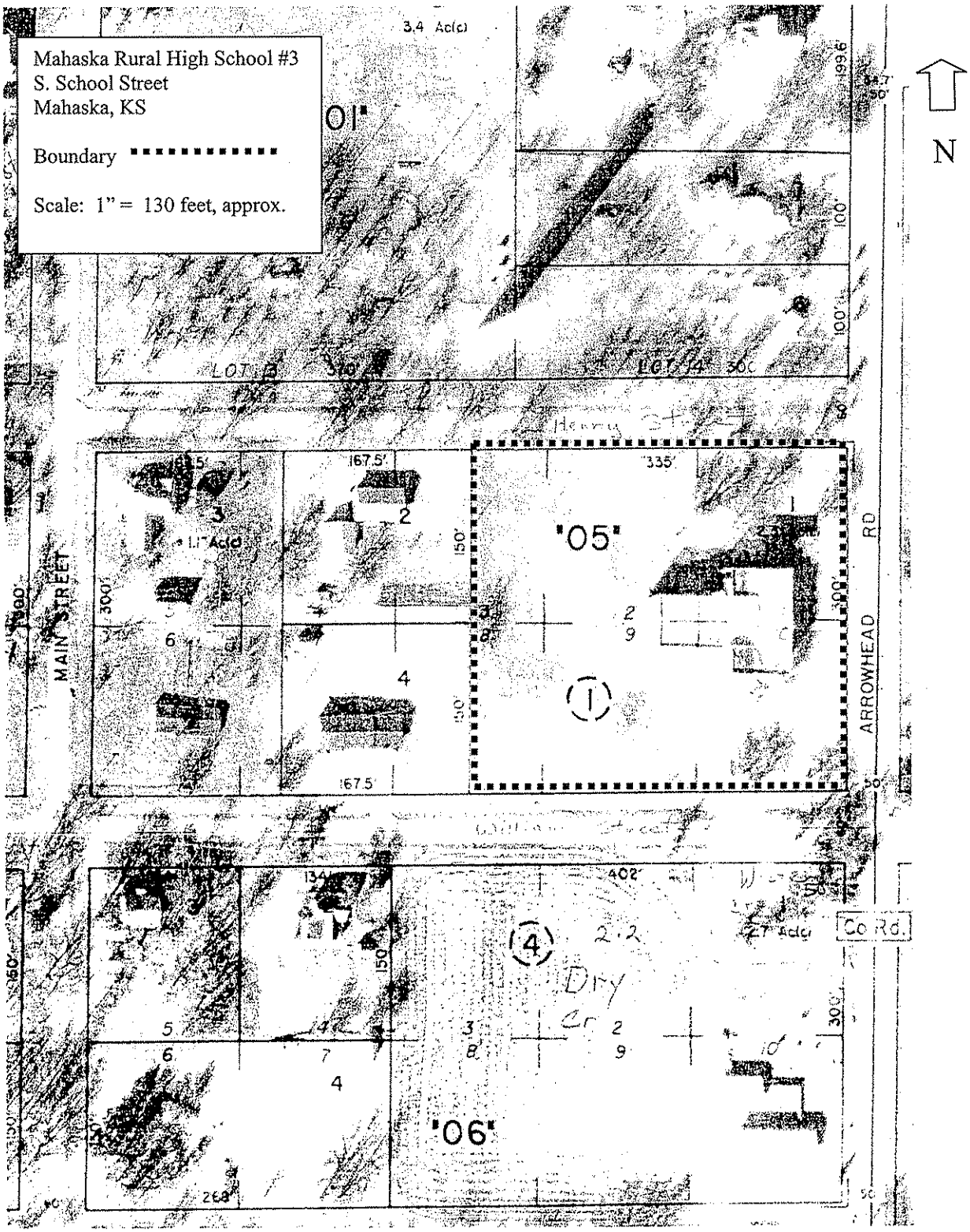
The property in nomination is described as Lot #1 of Block #05 in the City of Mahaska, Washington County, Kansas, fronting 300 feet on South School Street (also known as "Arrowhead Road", and running back to the west 335 feet along Henry and William Streets, as delineated with a heavy black line on the attached copy of Washington County Tax Map 053-07-10.

Boundary Justification

The property in nomination comprises all of the land historically associated with the Mahaska Rural High School #3 since its construction beginning in 1926-27.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet



Photographs

Mahaska Rural High School District #3
South School Street
Mahaska, Kansas
Photos by: John Hopkins and Steve Foutch
Date: February 2005, April 2006 and June 2006
Images on file: Kansas State Historical Society

Photo 1
View of the front (east) façade of the Mahaska Rural High School District #3 looking generally northwest in April of 2006.

Photo 2
View of the casement windows of the second floor and projecting parapet above the entrance in June 2006.

Photo 3
Close up view of the front entrance to the school, showing its doors and transoms in June 2006.

Photo 4
View of the front (east) and side (north) façade looking generally southwest in June 2006.

Photo 5
View of the north façade, looking generally southwest in June 2006. The one-story physical plant annex is visible at right.

Photo 6
View of the north side entrance to the school in June 2006.

Photo 7
View of the north façade of the building and the ell for the gymnatorium at the rear, looking southeast in June 2006.

Photo 8
View of the arched entrance to the physical plant wing in June 2006.

Photo 9
View of the rear (west) façade of the school, looking generally east in June 2006.

Photo 10
View of the side (south) façade of the school, looking generally northeast in June 2006.

Photographs, continued
Mahaska Rural High School #3

Photo 11
View of the front entrance and entrance foyer in June 2006.

Photo 12
View in June 2006 along the transverse corridor of the first floor, looking toward the north stair and north side entrance at center. The entrance foyer is the large opening at right; the doors to the gymnatorium are at left.

Photo 13
View of the southeast classroom on the first floor in February 2005.

Photo 14
View of the northeast classroom on the first floor in February 2005.

Photo 15
This view in February 2005 of the upper run of the north stair gives a clear indication of the character and quality of the original building's trim details.

Photo 16
View of the north side of the gymnatorium taken from the second story mezzanine in February 2005.

Photo 17
View of the south side of the gymnatorium taken from the second story mezzanine in February 2005.

Photo 18
View from the stage looking across the north side of the gymnatorium in February 2005.

Photo 19
View from the stage looking across parts of the north and east sides of the gymnatorium in February 2005.

Photo 20
Continuation of the view in #19, above, showing parts of the east and south sides of the gymnatorium in February 2005.

Photographs, continued
Mahaska Rural High School #3

Photo 21
View looking across the floor of the gymnatorium to the stage in June 2006, following the collapse of a portion of the mezzanine and the removal of its remaining parts.

Photo 22
View looking towards the rear of the gymnatorium in June of 2006, with demolition of the remaining parts of the mezzanine still underway.

Photo 23
View of a portion of the southeastern classroom on the second floor in February 2005.

Photo 24
Opposite view of the same classroom following clean up operations in June 2006.

Photo 25
View of the northeastern classroom on the second floor in June 2006.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Photo Key: Ground Floor

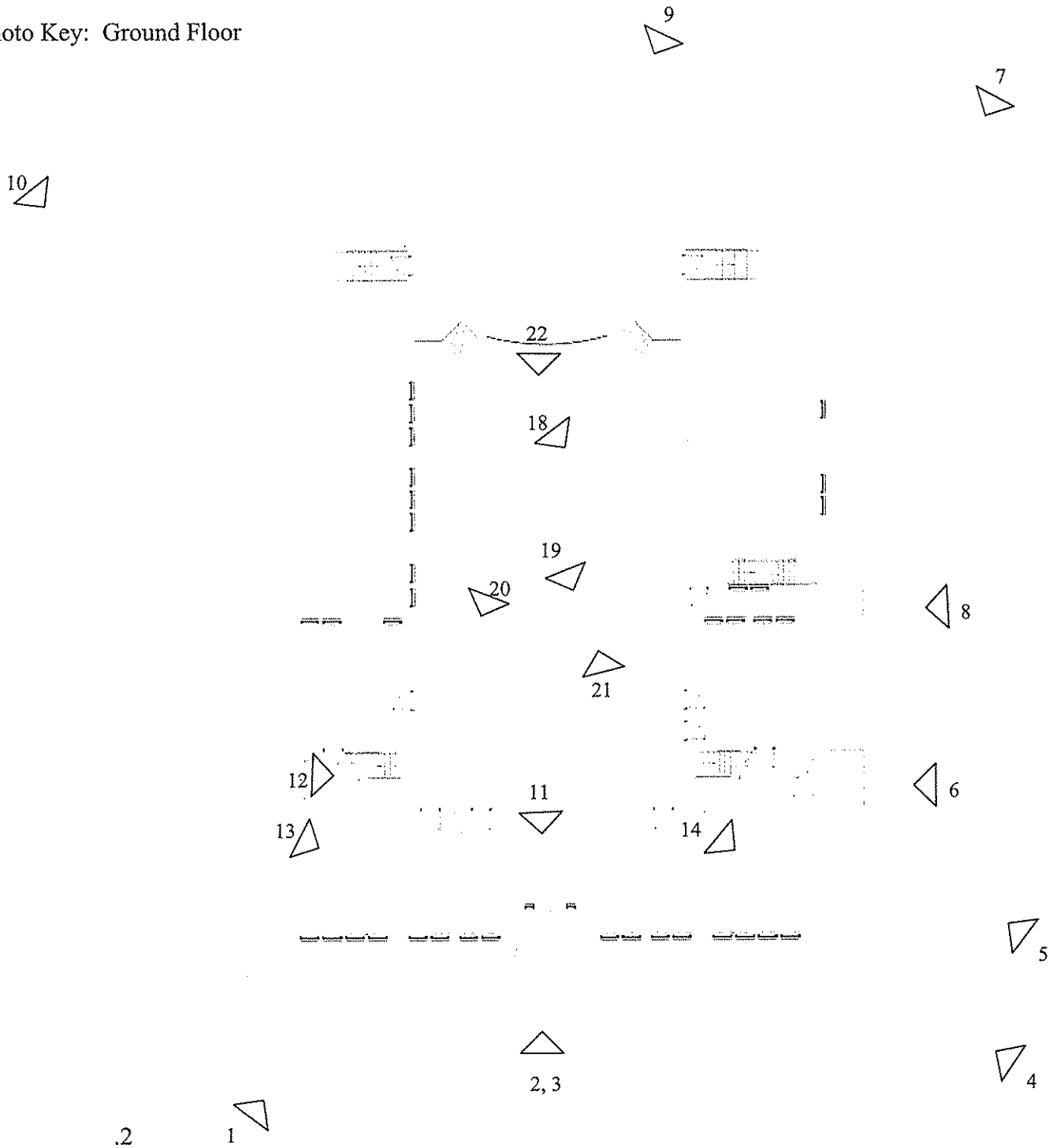
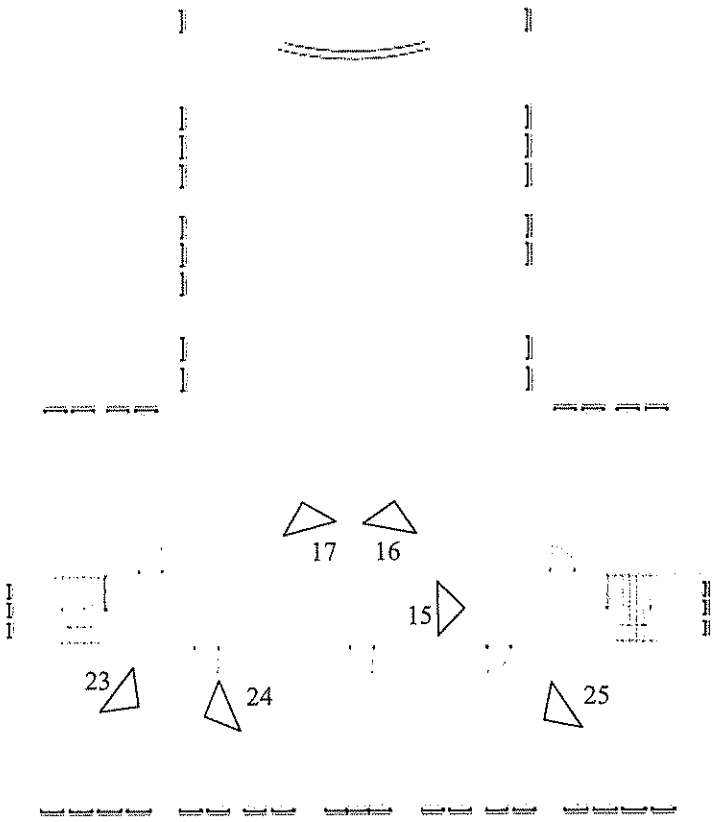
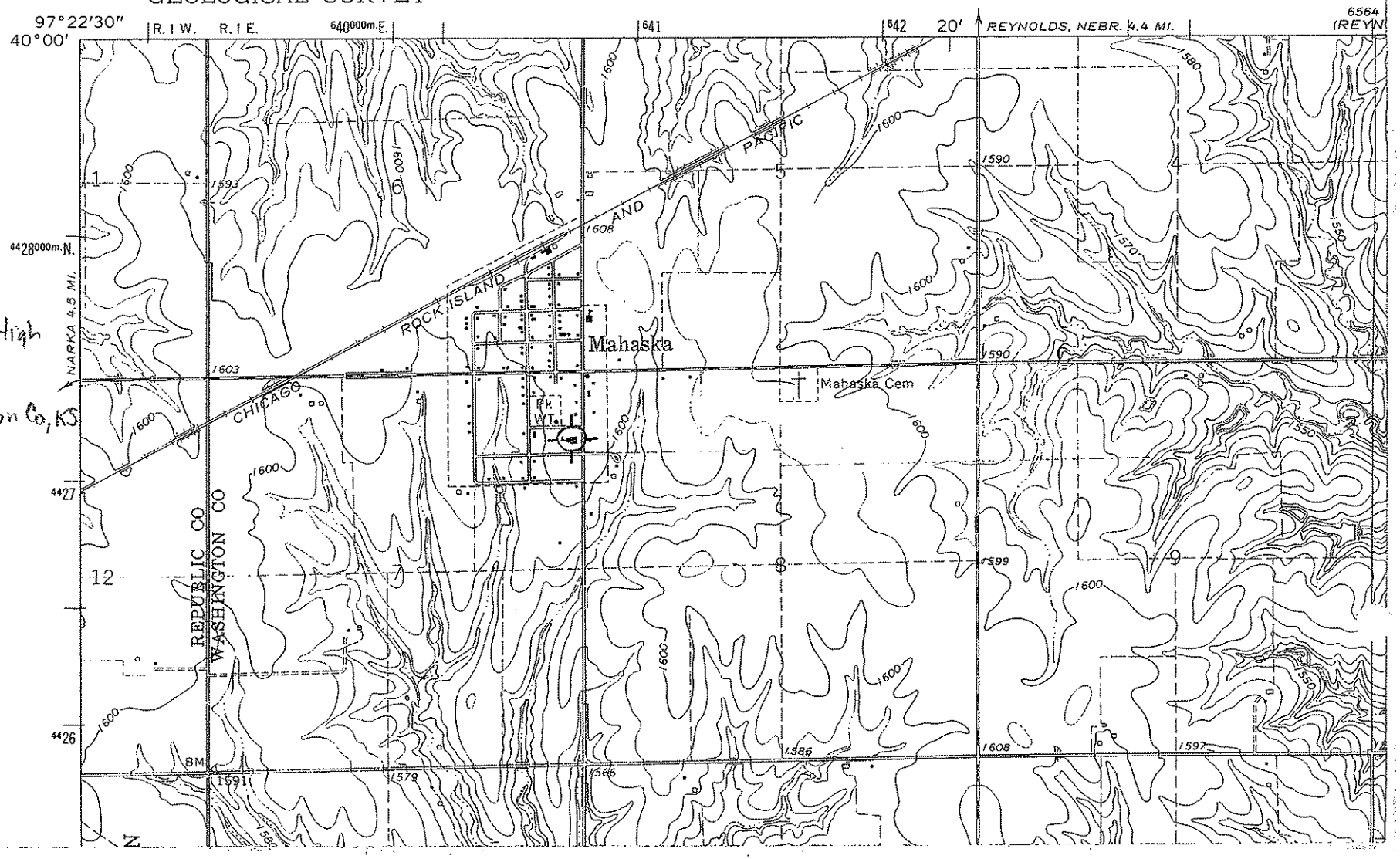


Photo Key: Second Floor



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

STATE



Mahaska Rural High School #3

Mahaska, Washington Co, KS

UTM:

E: 640758 E

4427199 N