NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

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 National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property			
historic name Oak Hill High Sch	ool (preferred)		
other names/site number Histor	ric Oak Hill School		
2. Location			
street & number 140 School Street			not for publication
city or town Oak Hill			vicinity
state West Virginia code	e WV county Fayette code	019	zip code 25901
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	n		
I hereby certify that this _X_ nomin registering properties in the National 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property _X_ means considered significant at the followin statewide statewide Signature of certifying official/Title West Virginia State Historic Preserve State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Gove meets do	X_local Deputy State Historic Preservationation Office ernment ses not meet the National Register criteria.	ral and profe	essional requirements set forth in
Signature of commenting official	Date		
Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Go	overnment	
4. National Park Service Certifica	tion		
I hereby certify that this property is:			
entered in the National Register	determined eligible for the l	National Regist	ter
determined not eligible for the Natio	nal Register removed from the National	l Register	
other (explain:)			
Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action		

OMB No. 1024-0018

Oak Hill High School Name of Property		Fayette County, WV County and State		
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)	Category of Property (Check only one box.)	Number of Resour (Do not include previous		
	<u></u>	Contributing	Noncontributin	<u>g</u>
x private public - Local public - State public - Federal	x building(s) district site structure object	1	1	objects
Name of related multiple prop (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a	perty listing multiple property listing)	Number of contrib in the National Reg		previously listed
N/A		0		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)		Current Functions (Enter categories from in		
EDUCATION		WORK IN PROGR	ESS	
7. Description		Madagala		
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)		Materials (Enter categories from in	structions.)	
LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY	REVIVALS-	foundation: CON	NCRETE	
NEOCLASSICAL		walls: BRICK		
		roof: SYNTHET	IC MEMBRANE	E
		other: STONE		

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Oak Hill High School	Fayette County, WV
Name of Property	County and State
Narrative Description	
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Expl necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the gene setting, size, and significant features.)	
Summary Paragraph	
See continuation sheets.	
Narrative Description	

See continuation sheets.

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Oak Hill High School

Name of Property

Fayette County, WV
County and State

8. State	ement of Significance	
	able National Register Criteria " in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for	Areas of Significance
	Register listing.)	(Enter categories from instructions.)
A A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	ARCHITECTURE EDUCATION
В	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.	Period of Significance 1926-1950
D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	Significant Dates 1926
	a Considerations " in all the boxes that apply.) y is:	Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)
A	Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	N/A
В	removed from its original location.	Cultural Affiliation N/A
C	a birthplace or grave.	IN/A
D	a cemetery.	
E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	Architect/Builder Frampton and Bowers Architects
F	a commemorative property.	Transport and Dowers Attendeds
G	less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.	

N/A

Period of Significance (justification)

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

See continuation sheets.

National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 Oak Hill High School Fayette County, WV Name of Property County and State Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable See continuation sheets. Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.) See continuation sheets.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

United States Department of the Interior

See continuation sheets.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service / National Register of Historic Places Registration Form NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 Oak Hill High School Fayette County, WV Name of Property County and State 9. Major Bibliographical References Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.) See continuation sheets. Previous documentation on file (NPS): Primary location of additional data: x preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been x State Historic Preservation Office requested) Other State agency previously listed in the National Register Federal agency x previously determined eligible by the National Register Local government designated a National Historic Landmark University Other recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # Name of repository: West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): FA-0652 10. Geographical Data **Acreage of Property** 4.12 acres (Do not include previously listed resource acreage.) **UTM References** (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.) Datum NAD 1983 486927E Northing Zone Easting Easting Northing Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See Continuation Sheet.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See Continuation Sheet.

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name/title <u>Isabel Thornto</u>	on/ Historic Consultant & Jeffrey S	S. Smith (WV SHPO)
organization Restoration	Housing	date <u>11/12/2019</u>
street & number 1116 M	ain Street, Suite B	telephone <u>540-797-0819</u>
city or town Roanoke		state VA zip code 2
e-mail <u>Isabel@resto</u>	rationhousing.org	

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See continuation sheets.

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Narrative Description

The former Oak Hill High School¹ sits on a large, hilltop parcel that is bound by Park Drive, Central Avenue, Kelly Avenue, and School Street within the town of Oak Hill, Fayette County, West Virginia. The historic school building has always had a front lawn bisected by a concrete sidewalk. The sidewalk runs parallel to the front façade (east elevation) of the former school building; the sidewalk extends to School Street to the east and an asphalt parking lot to the south. The parking lot is separated from the school yard by an historic stone retaining wall. A second historic stone retaining wall (both considered contributing structures) fronts the eastern half of the block along School Street. The rear (west) elevation of the former school building is situated along the back slope of its hilltop location and is a full story below grade, unlike the front entrance, which is at grade. The site along the rear of the school is almost entirely paved with asphalt and is used as a parking lot. A small annex is located west of the school and is accessed by a covered sidewalk. Along the west-most portion of the building's north elevation is a modern addition to the original structure and is also surrounded by an asphalt parking lot. The area immediately surrounding the school is primarily residential in character and there are recreational sport fields directly behind the parking lots of the school, to the north.

Exterior Description

Oak Hill High School is an early 20th century brick school building consisting of seven-bay symmetrical façade, brick banding, raised brick surrounds on the outermost bays, and a brick belt course between the first and second stories and between the second story and the roof. A brick parapet wall runs the perimeter of the flat roof above a limestone cornice (Photo 1). The three-story building was designed by West Virginia-based architects Frampton & Bowers in the Neoclassical style, evident through its symmetry, monumental massing, and masonry detailing.

Oak Hill High School's fenestration features large rectangular window banks and door openings. The symmetrical front façade is comprised of seven bays with masonry detailing on the two outermost bays; details include brick bands with brick surrounds. These rectangular brick frames contain limestone inserts in the top corners with a larger insert centered at the top. In most cases, window openings have stone lintels and brick soldier headers. A limestone belt course sits between the first and second stories and extends to all sides except the rear elevation. In addition, a limestone water table runs the perimeter of the building at the ground level. Oak Hill School has a flat roof with a brick stepped parapet wall atop the molded limestone cornice. Of architectural note are the two bays on the façade that project from the wall to create large, full-height entrance portals that are equidistant from the center of the building. Each entrance portal features a stone-framed first-story entrance surmounted by a large single-pane glass transom. A Juliet-style iron balconette, fronting a multi-pane replacement window unit, sits atop a bracketed stone cornice.

The four-bay north and south elevations (Photos 2 and 5, respectively) feature the same brick treatments and finishes that were employed in the façade. The same treatment has also been applied to the window openings as well as similar replacement window units in these two side elevations.

¹ The word 'former' is implied and not used explicitly throughout the nomination. However, it should be noted that the building being described in this nomination is the historic Oak Hill High School.

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Though the original pattern of fenestration and stone sills remain intact in the Oak Hill School building, the window units themselves are not original. The original window openings have been partially covered in order to retrofit new smaller windows into the spaces. The replacement windows are modern steel, single pane, fixed windows. Historic documentation reveals that the original windows were steel-framed twentypane with center awning-style openings for ventilation.²

The building sits atop a partial sub-grade basement, which is below grade at the rear of the building as the ground slopes away from the structure. The building's rear (west) elevation has been covered with stucco and is less detailed than the other three sides as it lacks any of the ornamental features of the brick veneer, brick banding, or masonry cornice (Photos 3 and 4). In addition, the pattern of fenestration on the rear departs from the rest of the building as the windows are slightly smaller in width and are square instead of rectangular. Similar to the other window openings throughout the building, the current windows on the rear are also not original and parts have been covered up to retrofit the new windows to the original openings.

Aside from the replacement windows and entrance doors, the exterior of Historic Oak Hill School is in good condition with original brick construction and brick banding intact as well as original limestone detailing throughout. The original entrance doors have been replaced with steel-frame and glass doors.

Interior Description

The interior of Oak Hill High School was designed in the early 20th century to accommodate the new fashions of institutional architecture of the time. This included modern bathroom facilities, recreational rooms such as a gymnasium and auditorium, and centralized egress positioned at the end of the structure's long corridors. The floor plan of the school incorporated a U-shaped series of single-loaded corridors (Photo 6) with a series of classrooms facing the exterior of the structure. The two main forms of egress are stairways that are positioned above the two front entrance portals to the building.

The two stairways on each side of the building that extend from the basement to the third floor are identical (Photo 9). The walls have painted brick wainscoting and a plaster finish is carried up to the ceiling. Iron balusters connect to wooden square newel posts on the railing with wooden handrails on top. Metal security doors each with a transom and sidelights separate the stairs from the entrance of the hallways.

Upon entering the building through either of the two entrances in the east elevation, split stairs lead either up to the second floor or down to the first floor. Both stairways have fire-rated glass partitions dividing the floors. The first floor contains eight classrooms, a gymnasium, bathrooms, and a cafeteria. The cafeteria is not original to the structure as it was part of the addition made in the 1980s along the northern elevation. All of the corridors throughout the building have linoleum tile flooring, fluorescent lighting, and brick and plaster covering the walls. The original, historic flooring material throughout the classrooms and corridors is hardwood, though it has been covered up by either tile or carpet in many cases. The original, historic ceilings

² The Acorn 1950 Yearbook.

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are made of plaster and are extant in some of the classrooms and corridors, though non-historic dropped ceilings with acoustic ceiling tiles are in some of the classrooms, offices, and corridors.

The gymnasium (Photo 8) is located in the center of the structure with corridors surrounding it on three sides. The floor of the gymnasium is recessed below grade at basement level with concrete bleachers along the rear wall that rise from the basement up to the first floor. There are windows located behind the bleachers with painted brick and plaster on the walls. The same linoleum floor tiles cover the court and acoustic tiles and fluorescent lights cover the ceiling. Painted steel I-beams provide structural support and separate the space between the gymnasium floor and the bleachers. In addition, a metal safety railing in front of the bleachers connects to the I-beams to prevent spectators from falling downwards onto the court. Boys' and girls' restrooms sit on the rear wall at the two ends of the U-shaped hallway on either side of the gymnasium.

The second and third stories have the same U-shaped plan and the same material finishes and treatments as found on the first floor. However, instead of a gymnasium, the two-story auditorium (Photo 7) sits in the center of the structure. The stage and primary seating area for the auditorium are on the second floor, while an upper balcony can be reached from the third floor. The auditorium has a large stage with original hardwood floors. Two sets of curtains drape from the ceiling down to the stage floor. One set covers the back wall behind the stage, while the other hangs from each side to frame the stage opening. There are wooden auditorium seats that are original to the school. Carpet covers poured concrete floors that gradually slope downwards toward the stage. The balcony has additional stadium-style wooden seating that also slopes down to the stage and a central entrance ramp with access from the third-floor hallway. Acoustic tiles and fluorescent lights cover the entire ceiling of the auditorium. There are large windows along the exterior wall perpendicular to the stage, facing west, that are modern steel sash replacements.

On all three floors of Oak Hill School, classrooms run along the perimeter of the single-loaded hallways, with the rare exception of several small offices on the second floor. The classrooms also have dropped ceilings with acoustic tiles and fluorescent lighting. Some of the classrooms have original hardwood flooring while some of the them have wall-to-wall carpet. Many classrooms still have original slate chalkboards on the walls as well as the intercom systems that would have been used when the building functioned as a school. The classrooms are almost entirely used now as temporary lodging for students volunteering with the Southern Appalachian Labor School and are therefore either filled with bunkbeds or used for storage. Most of the original interior doors that lead into the classrooms are still intact with original room numbering on the hardwood paneled doors with beveled glass panels.

Although the original windows in each classroom and many of the offices have been mostly boarded up and covered with plaster, the original openings are still visible. There are instances of operable windows (such as in the auditorium) that are not plastered over or boarded up, however they are still modern replacements to the original, historic multi-pane windows. The brick surrounds and sills are intact; some have been painted while others remain unpainted (Photo 10).

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Additions

In the early 1980s, an addition was constructed along the north elevation of the school building (Photo 2) and one small ancillary building in the rear, located southwest of the rear elevation (Photo 12). The one-story addition functioned as the school's kitchen and student cafeteria. Installed to be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the cafeteria addition contained the students' lunchroom as well as an industrial kitchen with updated appliances including commercial dishwasher and food storage. Two skylights in the roof over the lunchroom provide more light to the space which had limited windows incorporated into its original design. The lunchroom connects with the historic building through an existing classroom, which leads to a corridor across from the gymnasium entrance. The addition has a shed roof with a shallow pitch, large overhangs, and a steel frame structure that is clad in brick. The basement of the addition has a poured concrete floor and concrete block foundation.

The small annex (Photo 12) behind the rear (west) elevation of the former Oak Hill High School is not connected directly to the building but is reached by a concrete walk. The sidewalk is covered by a modern metal canopy that is connected to an exterior stair that is part of the main building. It was constructed at the same time as the one-story cafeteria addition in a similar style of brick veneer over steel frame construction. It similarly is one story in height with a shed roof with a low and discrete profile that does not interfere or detract from the historic structure directly in front of it. It was designed to be used for special education purposes at the time of its construction.

These additions, while modern in their pared-down decoration, are complementary to the original structure in their brick construction and low profile. They are each placed off to the side and rear of the primary building so as to not distract from the architectural integrity. These additions are both in good condition.

Statement of Integrity

The historic Oak Hill High School building is in fair condition overall with most of its historic fabric intact and in good condition. The school is the home of the Southern Appalachian Labor School and the facilities are in constant use for visiting students and volunteers. The facility's site has been altered slightly since its original use as a neighborhood school. Much of the land surrounding the school is now used for parking lots, where it might have once been used as a ballfield or school yard. An addition and a new support building were added after the period of significance, though they are largely inconspicuous to any primary vantage points. Aside from the alterations made during the 1980 building campaign, there have been no additional construction efforts to the building since its inception. The original fenestration is intact; however, the original multi-pane windows are no longer extant, and the existing windows were retrofitted into the historic openings using a combination of drywall and plywood. The non-historic windows, like the dropped acoustic ceiling tiles and vinyl flooring, are all materials that can be removed or replaced without a great deal of invasive rehabilitation. The invaluable design and workmanship of the brick building designed by Frampton and Bowers is still very much intact with or without the original windows, though it would be recommended of any future rehabilitation efforts to restore them back to the original steel multi-pane configuration. The

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former Oak Hill High School retains sufficient integrity of setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

At the time of Oak Hill School's construction in 1926, it was considered a state-of-the-art modern schoolhouse with a streel frame, brick-clad exterior and tiled interior walls with large steel sash windows. It exhibited new 20th century innovations in building systems such as heating and cooling systems, easy circulation and access to recreational facilities- all features that were new to the region's historic schools. The architects for the school were Frampton & Bowers of Huntington, WV, a prolific firm specializing in school design and other large institutional commissions throughout the State (see Figure 1). The design of the building was a departure from the previous three iterations of Oak Hill High School, which were all built of wood and were designed in the pre-modern era of schoolhouse building, which were typically limited in their capacity to serve growing student populations and evolving academic needs.

The iconic building, sitting atop "School Hill" (as it is known locally), exhibits the quintessential characteristics of the Neoclassical architectural style, a style popular in civic and public structures at the time of its construction. Typical features include a symmetrical façade, squared-off roof lines, monumental masonry construction, steel-sash windows, and exterior stone and brick detailing. Oak Hill School demonstrates these characteristics while also including modern school amenities, such as open-air classrooms and state-of-the-art mechanical and plumbing systems.

Throughout West Virginia in the 1920s, there was a burgeoning appreciation for public education and the monumental and modern structure of Oak Hill High School served this need for the community of Fayette County as the population grew. Furthermore, it was the first school constructed of masonry in the region. Before that, and as early as 1850, students in Oak Hill attended a log schoolhouse and were only educated up until 8th grade. It was not until 1904 that the first iteration of Oak Hill High School was established, though it burned the following year. A new building was erected by 1907, also built of wood frame, and only lasted until 1911 when the enrollment outgrew the space. There was subsequently one more iteration of Oak Hill High School that followed (before the 1926 structure was built), which was ultimately destroyed by fire in 1949 (several decades after it became obsolete. By the early 1920s, rapidly growing enrollment once again demanded a larger structure and so the circa 1926 building was commissioned by the Fayette County School Board.

For these reasons, Oak Hill High School is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion A* for its role in Oak Hill's educational history as well as under *Criterion C* for its representation of the Neoclassical style in institutional architecture of the early 20^{th} century.

Early History of Oak Hill and Greater Fayette County

Fayette County, (West) Virginia was founded in 1831 from parts of Greenbrier, Nicholas, Kanawha, and Logan Counties. The settlement that would later become Oak Hill was originally created by a group of Baptists who moved to the area in 1843.

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In 1859, the community, then known as "Hill Top", received a post office and called it Oak Hill because of its location on a hill surrounded by white oak trees.³ After the Civil War, the Hill Top post office was later moved to its present-day location of Oak Hill, and the town was named after the post office. Shortly thereafter, merchants began to come to the town in the 1860s to conduct trade. The first store was founded in 1866 and Oak Hill became the principal trading post for the surrounding area by 1875. Oak Hill became a fully incorporated town on February 25, 1903.⁴ Oak Hill is the largest town in Fayette County with the 2010 census reporting 7,730 residents.⁵

History of Education in West Virginia

Reference to early education in West Virginia dates back to 1747 when George Washington surveyed lands for Lord Fairfax. On August 18, 1747, Washington referred to a schoolhouse believed to be in Hardy County. At that time, West Virginia was still a part of the Commonwealth of Virginia, so his statements of West Virginia refer to the western part of Virginia. Known as Common Primary Schools, neighborhoods built schools at their own expense that were open to all children whose parents could pay tuition. On December 26, 1796, the Virginia General Assembly enacted the first school law, which established smaller divisions within each county as well as the creation of a school within each of these divisions. Once the schools were established, children could receive three years of free education. Those who could afford tuition could stay additional years beyond those three years. Schools received funds from the county through public assessments and county levies. The Virginia State Legislature created the Literacy Fund in 1810 to help educate less fortunate children who were unable to attend private schools or afford a private tutor, thus beginning public education in present-day West Virginia. By the end of 1833, the twenty-four counties in western Virginia that now constitute the 55 counties in present-day West Virginia reported 678 total students in their schools.

More provisions in the 1840s provided schools for children of all ages between five to sixteen years. Schools were usually located next to a water source and were small, one-room structures. They were typically built of logs that were chinked with sticks and stones, and then daubed with clay. Clapboard covered the roofs, slab doors hung on wooden hinges, and floors were covered in split logs that were hewn to a flat surface. In addition to a large fireplace, seats were created from logs split in half and desks were created from a slab of wood attached to the wall underneath the window opening. School buildings also served as community gathering places as there one-room open floor plans often were ideal for larger crowds.⁸

³ Hamill, West Virginia Place Names: Their Origin and Meaning, Including the Nomenclature of the Streams and Mountains.

⁴ Hill, Carolyn and J. William, "National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for the Oak Hill Railroad Depot."

⁵ US Census Bureau, "Census of Population and Housing."

⁶ This law also affected West Virginia and was known as the "Aldermanic School Law"

⁷ David Taylor, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form for Marlowe Consolidated School, Berkeley County, West Virginia.

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In June 1863, West Virginia separated from the Commonwealth of Virginia, becoming the 35th state in the Union. State legislators immediately began ratifying their own state constitution. Not long after, the first education law was passed in December of 1863 that established its system of "free public education for everyone" that would be financed through "state appropriations, income from a permanent school fund, and local taxes." Throughout the country, many other states adopted similar laws and by 1870, every state had free elementary schools. As a result of these broad educational reforms, between 1872 and the First World War, there were drastic changes in education. Teachers were forming organizations to improve the quality of their teaching; formal grading systems were implemented, and incentives were created for graduation, such as access to higher educational opportunities.

The Industrial Revolution caused a major population increase, and with a growing population of students to serve, one-room schoolhouses became obsolete, as larger and more diverse buildings were needed. Building styles changed from rustic one-room structures to larger, more permanent, multi-room facilities. ¹⁰ Furthermore, the small schoolhouses in rural areas often had trouble with funding because of fewer economic resources to support public education taxes. These structures often fell into disrepair and students were expected to provide their own books and materials. ¹¹ However, in 1907 this began to change when a new law allowed "voters in a school district to increase the teacher levy sufficiently . . . and the new building levy." ¹²

In addition to the changing landscape of school building and design, the value of receiving an education in West Virginia changed dramatically with the rise of coal mining in the early 20th century. Prior to the coal industry expansion, society in West Virginia was largely agrarian and family life typically centered around farming. Each child had a job that served a vital purpose for sustaining the farm; there was no time or need for them to learn particular skills such as reading and writing. With the emergence of coal mining, families no longer had to rely solely on their own land to survive. Jobs became plentiful at this time and the need for support businesses grew. Towns needed other businesses such as clothing and food stores, banks, and doctors since families no longer had to make their own clothing or grow all their own food. The owners and employees of these new businesses needed to know mathematics for accounting as well as reading and writing. Coal mining and other extraction industries popular at the time caused an increase in West Virginian society's perceived importance of an education; it brought greater value to learning academic skills.¹³

After several decades of change and expansion, the educational system took a hit in West Virginia during the Great Depression. Large numbers of citizens became unemployed and the State had to foreclose on taxable real estate, which, in turn, diminished available taxes to fund the education system. Consequently, some schools closed, in some situations, shorter academic terms were implemented, while in others, entire school systems failed. Tax reform, in the form of a state tax limitation amendment, allowed for state aid to the

⁹ History of Education in West Virginia Schools, 1907.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Thompson, *Uphill Both Ways*.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ History of Education in West Virginia Schools, 1907.

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counties. Legislation was passed on May 22nd, 1933. 14 The 1930s also saw a movement towards consolidation of schools. Hundreds of school districts in West Virginia combined to form fifty-five county systems.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal Program sought to reduce unemployment by administering construction projects, particularly of new schools and other public buildings. Following the Great Depression, additional educational system reform and increased funding allowed for teacher retirement and benefits, free textbooks, and the shift of responsibility away from the boards of education to board superintendents. Another major change in national education standards occurred in 1954 with the federal Supreme Court's decision in *Brown vs. Board of Education* of *Topeka, Kansas* that prohibited segregation in public schools. Most counties in West Virginia accepted the new standard and immediately began integrating their schools. 15 Other programs to promote equal education opportunities for students throughout West Virginia continued throughout the 1960s.

History of Oak Hill High School

The first primary school in Oak Hill was used as early as early as 1850. As this was before public schools were free to students, Fayette County paid one-third of the expense and the parents paid the other two-thirds for their children to attend school. The first frame school building in Oak Hill was built in 1879 of white pine lumber. This school was moved and the first high school in Oak Hill was built in its place. 16

Oak Hill High School sits on the original location of Oak Hill, West Virginia's first high school, which was erected in 1904 but is no longer extant. The original schoolhouse was a two-story wood-frame structure. Prior to 1904, secondary education was unknown to students in the area. Formal education in Oak Hill stopped at the eighth-grade level, after which students could either try to attend an academy or college, or they could decide that their schooling was finished. Since most could not afford to continue their education at college, an eighth-grade education was the highest level of education that many children received. In 1903, the Fayetteville school district voted to establish the first high school in Oak Hill. Construction began in the fall of 1903 and was completed a year later. The building consisted of six classrooms and a principal's office.

Students at that time took courses of a very different fashion than today's educational curriculum. Graduation from high school was contingent on successful completion of four years of English and Latin, three years of mathematics, and two years of science, including physics and botany. Unfortunately, the high school building burned down in the fall of 1905, but Oak Hill citizens and students were determined to continue their coursework. Temporary classrooms were set up in buildings around town. Ultimately, a new frame building was erected in 1907 at another location that was designed to house both the elementary school and the high school students. In June of 1908, the first class of graduates from Oak Hill High School completed their commencement exercises.

¹⁴ Otis K. Rice and Stephen Brown, West Virginia: A History.

¹⁵ Otis K. Rice and Stephen Brown.

¹⁶ The Acorn 1950 Yearbook.

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The need for a larger school building was apparent with growing population numbers in Oak Hill. A boom in the coal mining industry in the early 1900s resulted in higher student enrollment. Furthermore, the variety of courses offered in the curriculum expanded to include commercial arithmetic, bookkeeping, stenography, typing, agriculture, and hygiene. The high school further expanded their role in Oak Hill as athletics were introduced in 1915.

The second structure used for Oak Hill High School was built as a ten room, three-story frame building. It had prominent massing, large windows, and a steeply pitched roof. It did not follow a distinct architectural style, nor did it incorporate larger recreational facilities such as a gymnasium or an auditorium. This structure served as the local high school for the next two decades and then ultimately was destroyed by a fire in 1949.

By the late 1920s, high school enrollment outgrew their school building yet again and the student body was forced to move off-site to another temporary location. As a result, a plan was initiated to build another new school at the Oak Hill school site. Construction of the current Oak Hill High School began in 1926; the first classes were held in 1928. The brick building had 24 classrooms and new recreational spaces, including a gymnasium and auditorium, which had not existed in previous versions of the school. In addition to changes in the school building, the curriculum that was taught to students also underwent change. More subjects were added to the program to include more social and industrial aspects. For example, courses such as mining, physical education, typing, and shorthand were offered.

The new school building, designed by Frampton and Bowers Architects of Huntington, West Virginia would be the most modern, expansive, and state-of-art school in the region. Frampton and Bowers were experts in school architecture and had built many of the best school and public buildings in the state. A fireproof building was one of the primary requirements for the modern plan. A steel structural frame, brick walls, concrete floors, and tiles walls all ensured its fire resistance. The heating system was state-of-the-art with heaters in the basement that supplied warm air to the entire building through ducts. The ductwork system would recirculate the air every fifteen minutes. In addition to the modern heating system, the new school had amenities such as a library, laboratories, lockers, and showers. A large amount of material was shipped into Oak Hill to build the new high school. It took more than 140 train carloads of material, including fifteen cars of steel, ten cars of cement, and seventy-five carloads of brick and tile. In total, the school has one and one-half acres of poured concrete floors underneath hardwood.¹⁷

Oak Hill High School was designed and built during the Open-Air School movement of the early 1900s. Initiated by scientists in Europe to prevent the development of tuberculosis in children, the Open-Air movement sought to create healthier environments for school children. The primary cause of tuberculosis was attributed to poor living conditions with lack of fresh air, ample sunlight, and exercise. Although tuberculosis was more prevalent in large cities with dense populations, it spread to rural areas as well where

¹⁷ "A History of Oak Hill High School."

¹⁸ Baker, A History of School Design and Its Indoor Environmental Standards, 1900 to Today.

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hygiene was poor. In order to decrease the chances of contracting the disease in schools, the Open-Air movement emphasized the importance of fresh air and exercise to keep children healthy. Oak Hill High School was designed and built with the Open-Air movement at the forefront of its design inspiration. All the large windows in the classroom had louvered sections that could be opened at all times of the day and allowed for large amounts of light in the rooms. Moreover, the state-of-the-art ventilation system in the new school recirculated fresh air throughout the entire building and prevented the children from breathing in musty, stagnant air. The addition of the gymnasium and separate bathrooms in the building also allowed the children to get exercise and practice healthier hygiene habits. ¹⁹

The history of Oak Hill High School is unique in the building's course through three different iterations of size and design, each representative of the town's place in time at the moment of their origination. The first school, designed in 1904, was an archetypal schoolhouse characteristic of West Virginia's early public education offerings with only six classrooms. The second iteration of the school was comparably larger but ultimately failed to offer the amenities that were needed for a more modern school structure by the late 1920s. The third and final iteration successfully incorporated design features that are widely considered common place now (though by no means were they common at the time of its construction) such as accessible corridors, classrooms with large functional windows that flooded the classrooms with light and adequate ventilation of fresh air, restroom facilities, an auditorium, a gymnasium, and a cafeteria.

Frampton and Bowers, Architects

Architects William Ray Frampton and Howard Lee Bowers, practicing as Frampton and Bowers Architects, designed and built the Oak Hill High School building in 1926. Howard Bowers, a native of Virginia born September 18, 1885, moved to Huntington in 1922. Registered as both an architect and an engineer, Bowers served at one time as the president of the WV Engineers Association. William Frampton was born on April 7, 1894 in Parnasus, Pennsylvania to Arthur Custiss and Ida Jane Gray Frampton. He served in World War I with the University of Pennsylvania Field Hospital Unit. In 1920, Frampton graduated from Carnegie Institute of Technology at Pittsburgh and subsequently moved to Huntington, West Virginia in 1921. William R. Frampton partnered with Howard L. Bowers in 1923 to form the architectural firm of Frampton & Bowers. Frampton and Bowers remained business partners until about 1960 when William R. Frampton became the sole architect of his business. Frampton specialized in designing public buildings, especially schools. In 1964, William Ray Frampton died at age 70 in Huntington, WV. Howard L. Bowers passed away in 1972 at the age of 86.

Frampton and Bowers were prolific in their work and were responsible for building more than 25 schools in Cabell County, West Virginia including Huntington East High School, Salt Rock Junior High School, Peyton, Washington, Meadows and Cox's Landing Elementary Schools. Furthermore, Frampton and Bowers designed schools in Williamson, Logan, Charleston, and Fayette Counties. They designed additional public buildings such as the Huntington federal office building, the Cammack Children's Center, the Mingo County Courthouse, the jail addition to the Cabell County Courthouse, Huntington Orthopedic Hospital, and

¹⁹ Baker.

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Gullickson Hall at Marshall University. Many of their commissions are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places including Douglass Junior and Senior High School in Huntington, WV, Grand View School in Harper's Ferry, WV, Lincoln Junior High School in Huntington, WV, and the Morris Memorial Hospital in Milton, WV.

Frampton and Bowers specialized in institutional design that incorporated both Classical design elements (such as symmetry and classically inspired orders and details) and monumental massing. They designed Oak Hill High School with many of the same features that were prevalent in their other works, including several other schools that exhibited similar patterns of design and forms of construction as Oak Hill High School. Of their many school commissions, a similar building in construction and design principles is seen in Douglas Junior and Senior High School located in Huntington, WV and built in 1924. Douglas Junior and Senior is a segregation-era high school built for African American students. It exhibits many of the same features as Oak Hill High School, such as brick masonry with stone detailing, a parapet roof, a large entrance portal with a balconette and fanlight above. Also similar to Oak Hill, its design is classically inspired yet very restrained insofar as its details and ornamentation.

Clendenin Elementary School in Clendenin, Kanawha County, West Virginia is another, similarly designed commission of the Frampton and Bowers firm. It was built in 1931 as a product of the Public Works Administration effort of President Roosevelt's New Deal Program. Similar to Oak Hill High School, Clendenin School originally had a rectangular form with stair towers on either end as well as a central main entrance. Also similar to Oak Hill High School, the Clendenin School was built with brick and a modern heating and ventilation system. The original structure of Clendenin School resembles the symmetry and balance that is seen at Oak Hill High School; however, it features more distinguished Art Deco style elements instead of the Neoclassical style such as geometric patterns, pilasters with stepped brick details rising to the geometric parapet coping and projecting central bay. These Art Deco details exist only on the primary elevation; the other sides of the structure have very limited detailing. The austerity of the rear façade is similarly bare in Oak Hill High School's design with the majority of brick masonry and masonry detailing reserved for the front and side facades for maximum exposure and efficiency of costs.

Neoclassical Architectural Style

Neoclassical architecture first emerged in the late 18th and 19th centuries in Europe. It was characterized by monumentality in massing, usage of the Classical orders, and a constrained use of ornamentation. The Neoclassical architectural style gained its popularity in America at the 1893 Columbian Exposition of the Chicago World's Fair. The exposition featured grand classical style buildings that sparked interest for reviving classical architecture. The monumental scale of the buildings at the exposition inspired many public institutional and commercial structures in the following decades. This coincided with a boom in business growth and urban growth as a result of the Industrial Revolution that was ultimately the impetus for construction of new institutional buildings. Neoclassical architecture in domestic structures soon followed with smaller versions of the grandiose style. Typical features of Neoclassical domestic architecture include side gable roofs and full-height front porches with pediments above and columns. Usually the cornice of the roof has dentils or modillions beneath moderate overhanging eaves. Neoclassical windows typically include

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an arch or a transom while door surrounds are highly elaborately finished often with pilaster details on either side of the door. Residential structures in the Neoclassical Revival style feature many of the ornate details, but institutional buildings are often toned-down versions of the style.²⁰

Greek architecture inspired the Neoclassical design movement by its simple, logical, and dignified manner. It represented the roots of the oldest democracy and an ambition to bring that strength to America by way of architecture. The rationality of Neoclassical architecture is dependent upon its pure geometric character, symmetry, and repetition of patterns. As Neoclassical architecture developed throughout American institutional architecture, the more topical aspects of style would emerge and distinguish various subcategories of the movement. This included ornamental flourish, material use, structural design, and technological advances in engineering.

Institutional buildings designed in the Neoclassical style take on modern structural engineering methods and materials where the domestic versions do not. Examples of modern amenities that are necessary for large Neoclassical institutional buildings include larger steel frame construction, steel frame windows, modern forms of heating and cooling, modern forms of egress, and plumbing and electrical systems.

Oak Hill High School is a fine example of institutional Neoclassical architecture. Its pared down style contains Neoclassical design elements but with less ornamentation than other, more elaborate counterparts of its time period. The front facade of the building is entirely symmetrical and balanced. The two stone entryway surrounds mimic plain pilasters. The large windows atop each entry have brick arches with limestone keystones and springers, which are common Neoclassical details. In addition, each window on the building has flat arches made of vertical brick stretchers. Overall, Oak Hill High School represents Neoclassical architecture with its purely rational and symmetrical design. Not only is the exterior reflective of these theoretical ideals, the interior design is also logical and uniform.

Each classroom features two large window openings that are evenly separated and entrance doors with glass openings directly across from the windows (in some instances there are two entrance doors and in other instances there is only one door across from one of the two windows) in order to maximize the flow of light through the school. This feature is not only designed intentionally to allow for maximum air flow and light within the classrooms, but it also reinforces the symmetry and spatial design of the rooms.

As a school built during the Open-Air School Movement, Oak Hill High School was designed chiefly to adhere to design principles that were practical in nature. It was built to be structurally sound with ease of movement through the halls and stairs as well as to promote health and well-being among its student body. Therefore, rooms were designed to accommodate light and air flow and a gymnasium was designed to promote the salubrious effects of exercise. The surrounding site was similarly used for exercise and leisure activities. The practical elements preceded the ornamental flourishes that are often more characteristic of large, institutional architecture in the Neoclassical architectural style. The building exhibits the symmetry

²⁰ McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (Revised).

²¹ Robert M. Craig, Architecture: Art Deco to Modern Classic, 1929-1959.

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and massing of many institutional Neoclassical buildings of its time, yet these features are largely an effect of its practical design. The architect's sparing use of ornamental detail further reinforces its use as a practical, educational institution meant to serve the surrounding community.

For these reasons, Oak Hill High School is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under *Criterion A* for its role in Oak Hill's educational history as well as under *Criterion C* for its representation of the Neoclassical style in institutional architecture of the early 20^{th} century.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of a 4.12-acre parcel historically associated with the former Oak Hill School and described in the Fayette County Assessor's Office as Parcel ID 10-09-0032-0005-0000 on Assessor's Map number 003, Parcel No. 0005 in the city of Oak Hill, West Virginia. The school property is shown as lot number 32-5 and delineated by a thin yellow line on the accompanying map titled "Oak Hill School - NR Boundary Map."

Beginning at the north corner of the intersection of Kelly Avenue (formerly Maple Avenue) and School Street (formerly Fayette Street as well as Cary Street), the National Register boundary extends approximately 490' northeast along School Street. At a 5/8" capped re-bar stake, the boundary turns at a right angle to the left and proceeds northwest for approximately 30' before turning another right angle and proceeding northeast for a distance of approximately 11'. At this point, at the base of a fence post, the boundary line extends approximately 92' in a northerly direction and terminates at the base of another fence post. The boundary extends another 18' (approximate) to another 5/8" capped re-bar stake, for a total of 110' along this north-south oriented boundary. The boundary makes a turn to the northeast and extends for approximately 60' to intersect with another 5/8" capped re-bar stake set along Central Avenue. The boundary makes a right – angle turn to the left, northwest, and proceeds 190' to a 5/8" capped re-bar stake on the property line of the field owned by the Lewis Community Foundation (DB 616, PG 337). The boundary then makes another right angle turn to the left and extends southwest for 640' to a railroad spike found in the pavement on Kelly Avenue. This leg of the boundary follows along the property line that runs behind and generally parallel to the school building and school annex. Finally, the boundary makes a right angle turn to the left in a southeast direction travelling along Kelly Avenue for 300' terminating at the north corner of the intersection of Kelly Avenue and School Street. The boundary is delineated by a "Boundary Line" as defined in the legend on the accompanying map titled Oak Hill School, Plat Map, 2019."

Boundary Justification

Although a .29-acre section (lot 32-5.3) of the original parcel (lot 32.5) associated with the former Oak Hill School was sold in 2018, the selected boundary encompasses the remaining property historically associated with the Oak Hill School during the Period of Significance (a large piece to the north was sold earlier), including a non-historic addition and a detached non-contributing annex building. The selected boundary retains adequate historic integrity and contributes to the significance of the historic Oak Hill High School.

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PHOTO LOG

Name of Property: Oak Hill High School

City or Vicinity: Oak Hill County: Fayette

State: West Virginia

Photographer: Isabel Thornton & John David (property owner), where noted

Date Photographed: 03/15/2017 & 4/2019 (where noted)

Location of original media: WVSHPO

Photo 1: View of southeast elevation/front entrance; facing northwest.

Photo 2: View of north elevation; facing south.

Photo 3: View of west elevation (partial, north end of elevation); facing northeast.

Photo 4: View of west elevation (partial, middle bays and south end of elevation); rear of school; facing east.

Photo 5: View of southeast elevation (partial facade, right side of photo); facing northwest.

Photo 6: Interior view of second-floor corridor; facing west.

Photo 7: Interior view of second-floor auditorium: facing northeast.

Photo 8: Interior view of gymnasium, first floor; facing south.

Photo 9: Interior view from second floor landing showing the entrance interior; facing southwest.

Photo 10: Interior view of a first-floor interior classroom (former); facing southwest.

Photo 11: Interior view of first floor corridor; facing southwest.

Photo 12: View of Rear Annex; facing southwest. (Photo by J. David, 4/2019)

Photo 13: Stone retaining wall, south of school building; facing west. (Photo by J. David)

Photo 14: Stone retaining wall along School St., east of school building; facing north. (Photo by J. David)

Photo 15: Stone retaining wall along School St., east & NE of school; facing SW. (Photo by J. David)

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Photo 1: Southeast elevation/front entrance; facing northeast.



Photo 2: North elevation; facing south.

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Photo 3: West elevation (partial, north end of elevation); facing northeast.



Photo 4: West elevation (partial, middle bays & south end of elevation); rear of school; facing east.

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Photo 5: Southeast elevation (partial facade, right side of photo); facing northwest.

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Photo 6: Interior view of second-floor corridor; facing west.

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Photo 7: Interior - Second-floor auditorium; facing northeast.

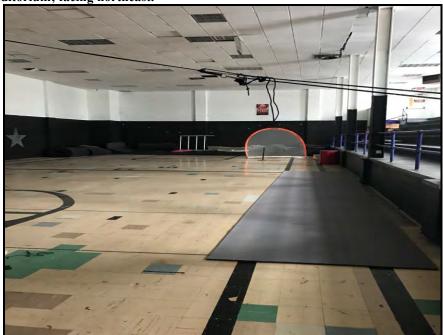


Photo 8: Interior – Gymnasium, first floor; facing south.

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Photo 9: Interior view from second floor landing showing entrance interior; facing southwest.



Photo 10: Interior view of first-floor classroom (former); facing southwest.

OMB No. 1024-0018 NPS Form 10-900-a (Rev. 8/2002)

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Photo 11: Interior view of first floor corridor; facing southeast.



Photo 12: Rear Annex; facing southwest.

OMB No. 1024-0018 NPS Form 10-900-a (Rev. 8/2002)

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Photo 13: Stone retaining wall, south of school building; facing west.



Photo 14: Stone retaining wall along School St., east of school; facing north.

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Photo 15: Stone retaining wall along School St., east/northeast of school, facing southwest.

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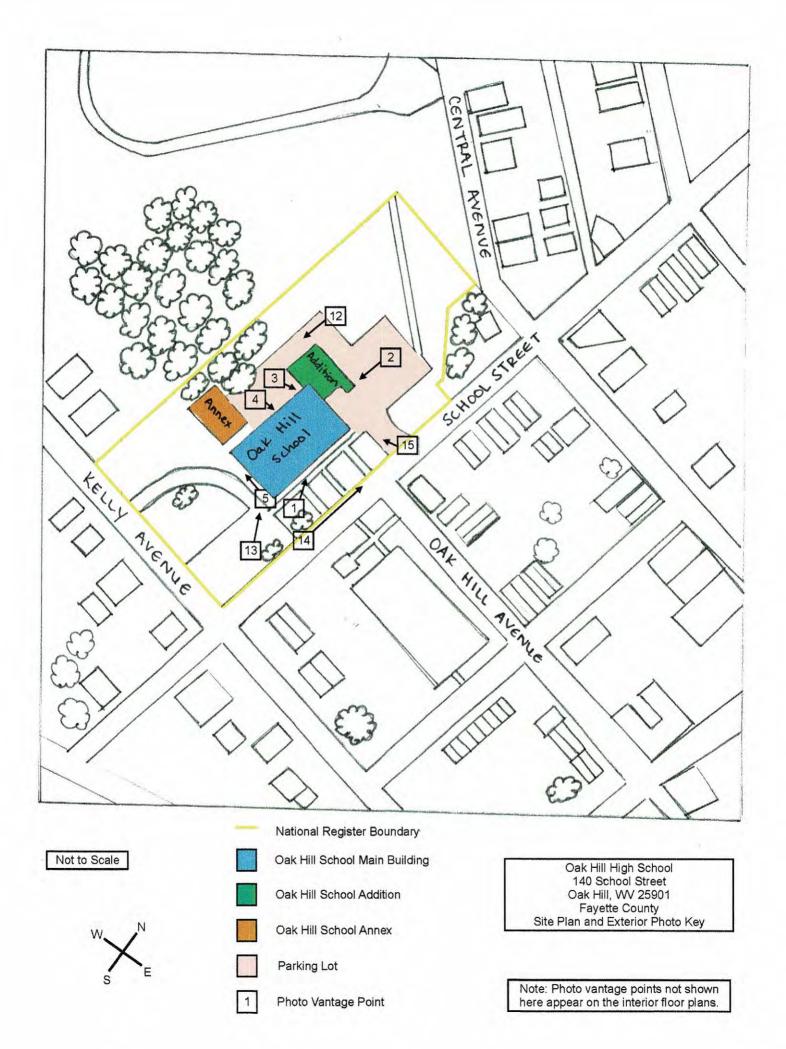
National Park Service

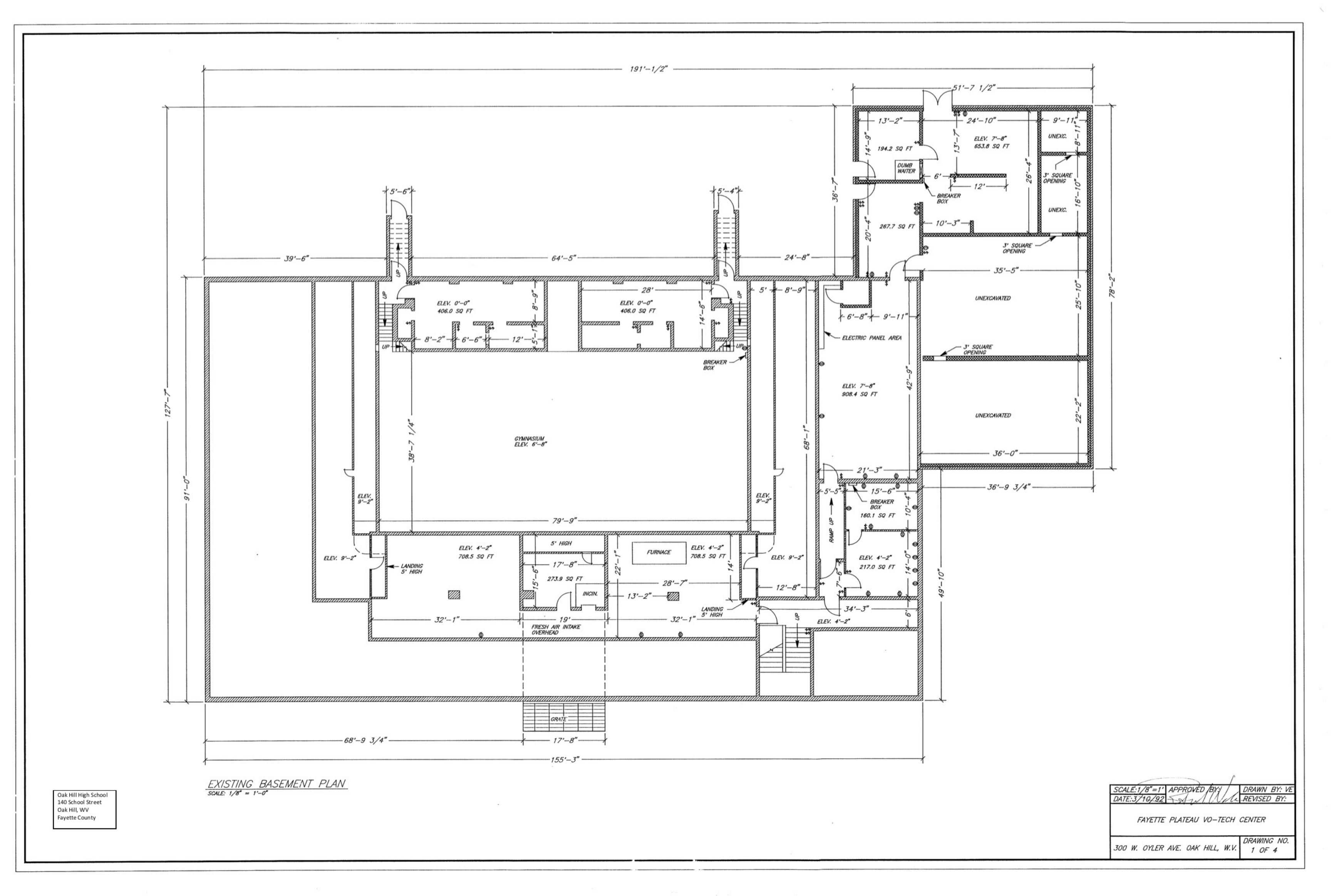
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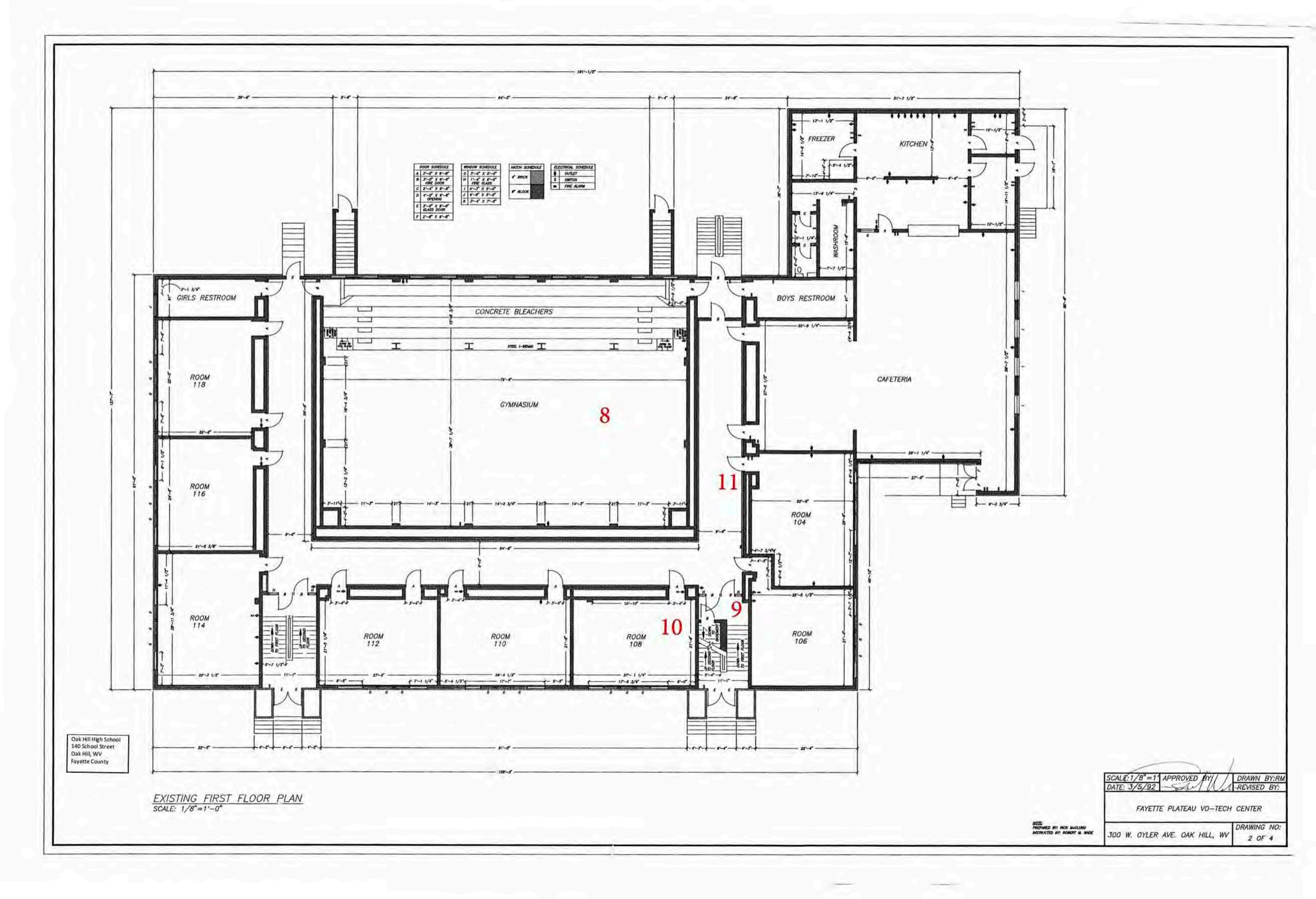
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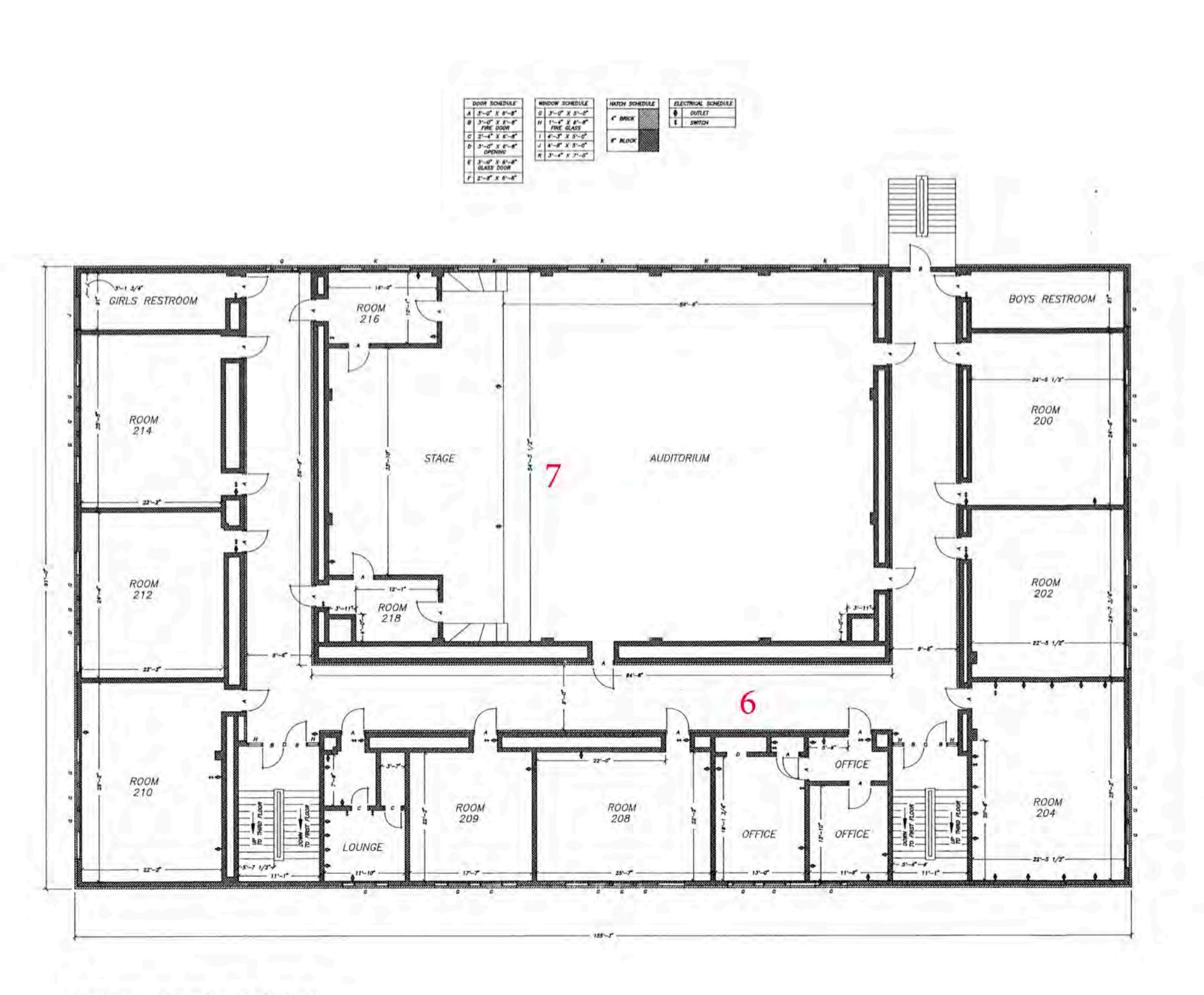


Figure 1: Oak Hill High School, Frampton & Bowers rendering, ca. 1924









EXISTING SECOND FLOOR PLAN

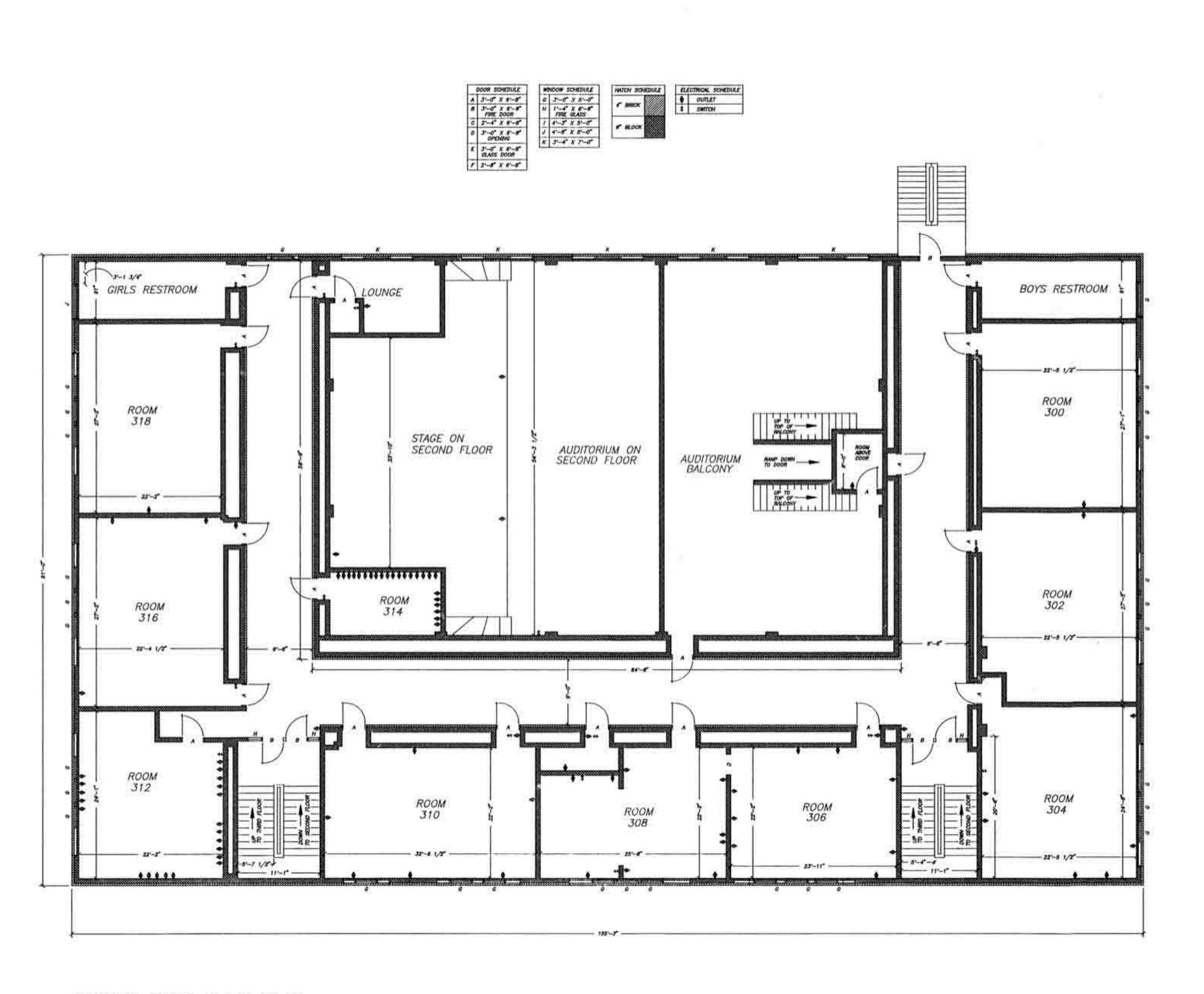
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"

Oak Hill High School 140 School Street Oak Hill, WV Fayette County

NOTE: PREPARED BY: RICK MCCLUNG INSTRUCTED BY: ROBERT M. WADE

FAYETTE PLATEAU VO-TECH CENTER

DRAWING NO: 300 W. OYLER AVE. OAK HILL, WV 3 OF 4



EXISTING THIRD FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: 1/8"=1'-0"

Oak Hill High School 140 School Street Oak Hill, WV Fayette County

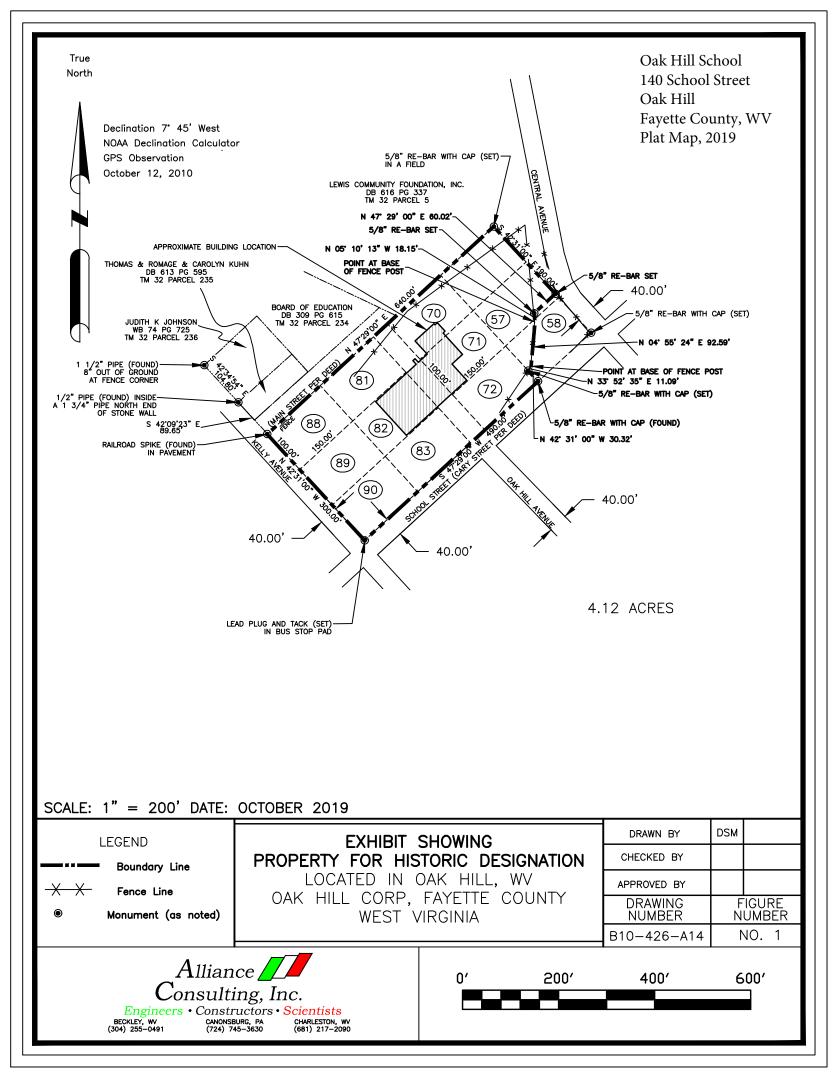
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INSTRUCTED BY: ROBERT M. WADE 300 W. OYLER

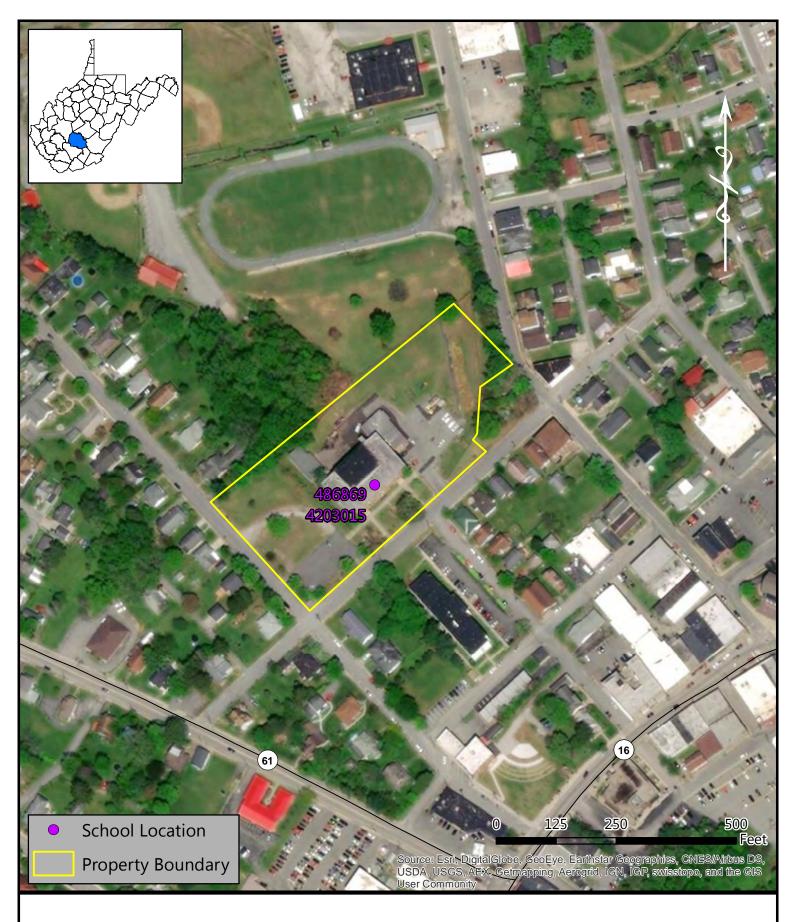
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DATE: 3/12/92 July REVISED BY:

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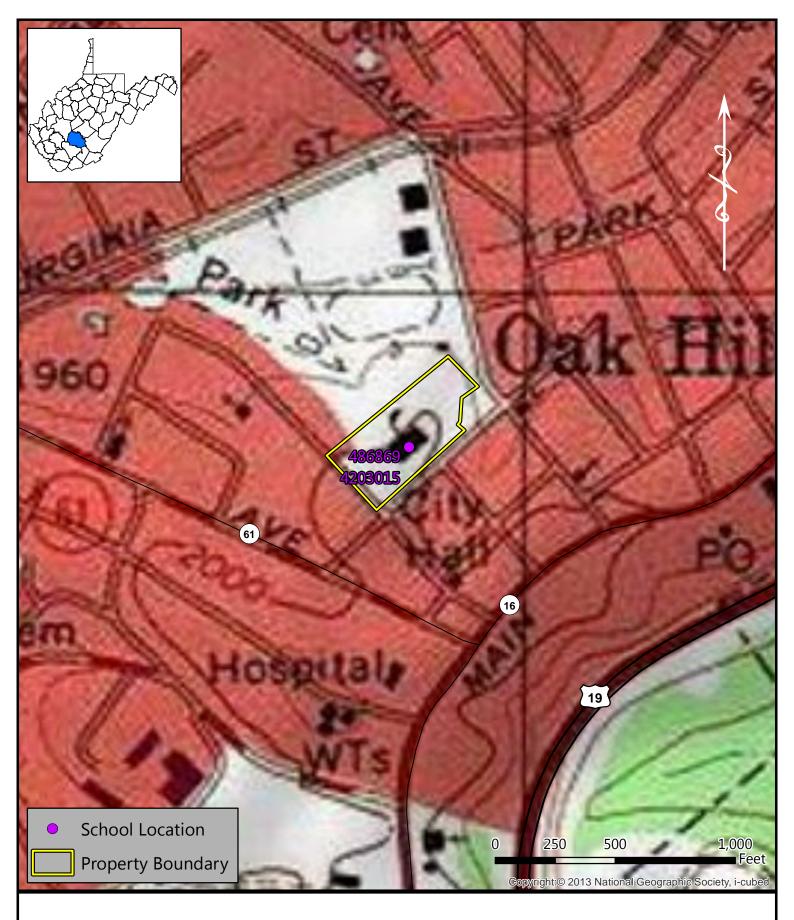
300 W. OYLER AVE. OAK HILL, WV 4 OF 4





Quad: Oak Hill Date: 8/20/2019 Oak Hill High School Fayette County - West Virginia





Quad: Oak Hill Date: 8/20/2019 Oak Hill High School Fayette County - West Virginia

