



Nebraska State HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Here open to all is the history of this people.

March 26, 2025

Joy Beasley
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
National Register Program
1849 C Street, NW (7228)
Washington, DC 20240

RE: Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places for Property in Nebraska

Dear Ms. Beasley,

This submittal contains a true and correct copy of the nomination for the Grafton High School located in Grafton, NE, to the National Register of Historic Places.

Notification

The property owner(s) was (were) notified of the proposed nomination on December 11, 2024.

- No objections to the nomination were submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office during the public comment period.
- An objection to the nomination was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office during the public comment period.
- A letter of support for the nomination was submitted to the State Preservation Office during the public comment period.

Certified Local Government

- The nominated property is not located in a CLG community.
- The nominated property is located in a CLG community and a copy of the local commission's review is attached.

Historic Tax Credits

- The federal historic tax credit is being used in the rehabilitation of this property.

NPS Grant-Funded Submissions

- Not funded with an NPS grant
- African American Civil Rights Grant
- Historically Black Colleges & Universities Grant
- History of Equal Rights Grant

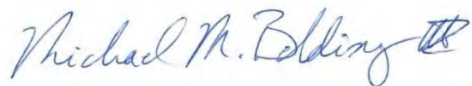
- Paul Bruhn Historic Revitalization Subgrant Program
- Save America's Treasures Grant
- Semiquincentennial Grant
- Tribal Heritage Grant
- Underrepresented Communities Grant

State Review Board

The Nebraska State Historic Preservation Board reviewed the draft nomination materials at its meeting on January 31, 2025. The Board voted that the property meets the National Register Criteria for Evaluation under Criteria A and C. The State Historic Preservation Officer has approved the nomination.

If you have any questions concerning this nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me at michael.belding@nebraska.gov or (402) 613-1591.

Sincerely,



Michael M. Belding III
National Register and Historic Markers Coordinator
Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office
michael.belding@nebraska.gov
Phone: 402-613-1591

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Grafton High School

Other names/site number: FM06-001

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska

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

2. Location

Street & number: 102 West 2nd Street

City or town: Grafton State: NE County: Fillmore

Not For Publication:

Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification


As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A B X C D

 Signature of certifying official/Title	<u>3/31/2025</u> Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	Date

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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In my opinion, the property __ meets __ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title: State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	Buildings
		Sites
		Structures
		Objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/school

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/Late Gothic Revival

Materials

(enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: CONCRETE

Walls: BRICK

Roof: METAL/Steel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Grafton High School was constructed in 1914 in Grafton, Nebraska, a small town in the southeastern-to-south-central part of the state, to replace its existing building as the site of all primary and secondary education. It is a two-story-over-basement building whose form, like many schools of its period of construction, is proportioned in a Neoclassical Revival form. It is constructed on a frame of hollow tile and steel I-beams and -columns. Although Grafton High School possesses and was designed with few features that could be termed *ornamental*, it gains a Late Gothic Revival or Tudor Revival style from parapets' shape, lintel-court drops, and light-colored concrete accents that contrast with the building's overall brick veneer. Windows and doors have been subject to mid-to-late-twentieth-century replacements of different types, which called for the removal of sill courses and infill with brick, but the original openings remain evident.

Narrative Description

Grafton High School is located in a small town of the same name in northwestern Fillmore County. The county's position is geographically transitional. It straddles—or lies between—the southeastern and south-central parts of the state. To the south, one county stands between Fillmore County and Kansas; to the east, four separate it from the Missouri River. The village lies sixty-four miles west of the state capital, Lincoln, and 120 miles southwest of Omaha. Grafton High School occupies a large flat site on the north side of the Village of Grafton that faces southward, looking down the village's bisecting north-south street, Washington Avenue (a railroad line bisects the village from east to west).

The nominated school is a two-story-over-basement building. It is rectangular in shape and, with a main mass eighty feet wide and nearly seventy feet deep, almost a square. Viewed

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from any of its four sides it is three bays wide. The front (south) façade and rear (north) façade differ greatly in appearance but share the quality of being symmetrical around the façades' center points. The east and west façades mirror one another, their voids identical and aligned. Grafton High School exists within many architectural categories. Horizontally, the symmetry and consistency of the school's design incline it towards a Neoclassical Revival form. Internally, its construction consists of hollow tile and steel beams and columns. Concrete accents that interrupt and cap the school's brick veneer give the building a simplified but noticeable overall Late Gothic Revival or Tudor Revival aesthetic.

Exterior

The basement level rises above the ground from a concrete sill course around the building's perimeter. Above, the two stories ascend from another concrete sill course located at the bottom of the first-story window openings to a concrete lintel course located in line with the top of second-story window openings. The building's entablature is composed of the lintel course (architrave), brick above (frieze), and projecting shallow eave of concrete (cornice). Above this entablature, a parapet topped with concrete coping follows the perimeter of the building. The parapet is flat across the rear (north) façade of the building and takes a repeating pattern as it follows the edge of the roof on the east, south (primary), and west façades. The repetitions are aligned with each of the three façades' three bays. The pattern is flat at the ends, notched downward as though crenelated, and in the middle follows a gentle slope upward to a point.

All exterior windows are non-original. At all but two windows the removal of the building's original window assemblies involved the removal of their concrete sills or the corresponding portion of their sill course and substitution of a lighter-colored brick for matching brick between the window units. The exceptions to this treatment are the first-story windows of the east and west façades (detailed below).

The primary façade of the school faces south. Features common across the south (primary) façade are the basement windows, first- and second-story windows, sill courses, cornice, and parapet shape. The basement windows of all three bays are single-hung. The first- and second-story windows of all three bays are filled with stacks of six horizontal steel windows. All are fixed except for the bottom and third-from-the-bottom lights, which are operable as inward-opening hopper windows.

Centered on the south (primary) façade, a bay twenty feet wide that projects a few inches from the planes of the much wider bays to left and right houses the school's main entrance. The entrance accommodates a pair of doors, also centered, within a surround consisting of brick pilasters, concrete entablature and decorative drops, and shaped parapet topped with concrete coping that compose a scaled-down version of the whole front façade's design. Windows flank the entrance. The first and second stories are each opened by a twin window above the entrance and flanking windows aligned with those on either side of it. Originally, the windows at all levels of the south (primary) façade's center bay were twelve-over-one single-hung windows. Set into the brickwork between the first and second story, an engraved concrete panel declares the building's construction date, *1914*. Set into the brickwork of the parapet, another, larger concrete panel declares the building's purpose, *HIGH SCHOOL*.

The left (west) and right (east) bays of the south (primary) façade mirror one another. They share a few elements in addition to those already mentioned. A cement-veneered vent

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cover accents the brickwork between each story near either end of the window opening (for a total of four per bay). A blind brick bull's eye window punctuated every ninety degrees by a trapezoidal cement block textures each side bay's parapet from a position under its apex. Finally, at each bay's outer edge an ornamental, geometric-shaped drop made of concrete descends from the lintel course. Originally, the windows at all levels of the south façade's left (west) and right (bays) were filled with bands of six sixteen-over-one single-hung windows.

Each side façade (east and west) features concrete drops identical to those on the south (primary) façade at the outer edges of their side bays. Otherwise, the side facades were designed to mirror one another, and continue to do so almost exactly. Neither façade's southern bay features any door or window openings. The southern bays' decoration consists only of the aforementioned drop and, centered between the first-story sill course and the lintel course, a brick quadrangle that protrudes slightly from the wall, texturing it. The brick quadrangle is laid in soldier course rather than the running bond used elsewhere on the building's exterior. Its corners consist of square concrete blocks. Inside the quadrangle a short, squat, brick T also protrudes slightly from the wall, giving it texture.

The center bay of each side façade houses a staircase. The current filling of all three openings on each side façade differs greatly from their original design and historical appearance. At the first story, a round-arched window opening located at one of the staircase's landings interrupts the concrete sill course under the building's first-story windows. Matching other openings, the window sits above a concrete sill. The arch is indicated with bricks laid in soldier course, matching the manner of setting off the side façades' south-bay quadrangle and the blind bull's eye windows in the side parapets of the south (primary) façade. Each side façade's round-arched window similarly uses concrete blocks for important elements of the void: the two springers and the keystone. Today, the quadrangular and semicircular parts of the opening are conjoined. The quadrangular portion of the window has been filled with a stack of steel horizontal windows four lights high, in appearance like those used to fill the windows of the building's classrooms and the windows of the south (primary) façade's center bay. The remainder of the opening—the half-circle at the top and a mullion space between the stack of steel horizontal windows—has been infilled with brick. Originally, this first-story window consisted of fifty-six square panes in the quadrangular segment separated by a horizontal wood mullion from panes filling the half-circle above that, except for lights necessarily cut to fit the curve of the arch, matched those below.

At the second story of each side façade's center bay, a stack of six horizontal steel windows fills each window, with a non-original brick sill and mullion. This matches the current treatment of the building's classroom windows and the windows of the south (primary) façade's center bay. Originally, this second-story window was filled by sixteen-over-one windows. The second-story window of the side façades' center bays accommodated two such windows. A non-historic metal lean-to attached to the east façade of the building, which reaches across approximately two-thirds of the east façade's width, obscures that much of the east façade's basement level. It is open at the south end and, on its east side, opened by a door at the far left (south) and two two-light windows. On the east façade of the building, a squarish opening at the ground level, trimmed with concrete as the building's other openings originally were, is filled with a temporary wood door. Originally, it and the corresponding opening on the east façade were filled with a half-light door flanked by half-light sidelights.

At each side façade's north bay, the basement windows are filled with non-historic five square twenty-light glass-block windows and, below and around them, non-historic brick. In

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three of the four cases the treatment of the first- and second-story windows on the side façades' north bays is identical to that of the first- and second-story windows at the south (primary) façade's left and right bays. The only exception is the second-story window of the west façade, which is filled with only four such windows—two at left and two at right, and the center infilled with brick.

The rear (north) façade is simplest, having only a flat parapet and no ornamentation. At the basement, three large window openings have been infilled except for one small rectangular window. The rear (north) façade's first- and second-story windows have been given the same treatment as most of the others on the school: a brick sill replacing concrete and stacks of six horizontal windows replacing the twelve-over-one, single-hung window units. At the second story, the number of windows has been reduced. Originally three bands of four, the middle two windows of each band have been infilled with brick. From the east end of the rear (north) façade a chimney protrudes and rises above the parapet. Other chimneys pierce the roof out of sight of the ground. A basement-level boiler and fuel room extends northwards from the building's north-east corner, its roof a few feet above the ground. At the west end of the rear (north) façade, a non-historical fire escape turret drops from the second story to the ground.

A small frame shed, roofed with composition shingles and covered with asbestos siding, is located on the school grounds, not far from the school building's northwest corner. It is in poor condition, unused, and of indeterminate age. As it is insubstantial in size and scale and neither contributes to nor detracts from the historic property, it is not included in the resource count.

Interior

The building's furnishings and fixtures have been removed, with the occasional exception of a doorway's or transom's wood trim and some flooring. The division of its interior spaces remains almost exactly as planned and constructed. The front entrance opens onto a staircase that leads up to the first story. Walkways surround the staircase. Left (west) and right (east) of these walkways and the staircase are classrooms, one on each side. Behind the staircase, or north of it, is an east-west corridor that runs the length of the building. Staircases at the ends, on the exterior, provide access to the basement, side entrances, and second floor. Opposite the top of this staircase that leads upward from the front entrance, across the corridor and on the other side of a brick wall, are the first-floor restrooms. To their left (west) and right (east) are, as in the south half of the first story, classrooms.

The layout of the second story is similar the same as that of the first. Above the south façade staircase and surrounding walkways, however, is an office. As below, it is flanked by instructional spaces: to the left (west), a "recitation room" and, to the right (east) a laboratory. The office and recitation room correspond in size to the spaces below them, but the laboratory is smaller than the classroom below due to a closet accessible from the office and a supply room accessible from both the office and laboratory. Most of the space to the north side of the east-west corridor is a large assembly room, which was built with a platform at its east end. Behind the platform, on the other side of a wood wall, was a cloakroom. The room to the left (west) of the assembly room served as another classroom, about half the size of those on the first floor.

The basement housed a "manual training" classroom at the southwest corner and a "domestic science" classroom at the southeast corner. Each had its own supply closet. Across the corridor, down a short staircase, and visible through three wide round arches was the

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gymnasium. Locker rooms to the left (west) and right (east) of the gymnasium were accessible from the side façades' staircase vestibules and a small hallway with stairs at the northwest and northeast corners of the gymnasium. The boiler and fuel room that extends northward from the building's northwest corner is accessible via a staircase along the exterior of the building's north wall.

Integrity

Grafton High School is in poor condition as a building. It suffers broken windows, decaying stairs and floors, and a roof pierced at multiple points, among other consequences of neglect and disinvestment. Many obvious modifications from its historic design have been made. However, it has retained sufficient historic integrity to remain eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

The location of the Grafton High School building has not changed since its construction. The original design remains evident, including all decorative elements but the partially removed sill course. The unsympathetic replacement of windows and doors left their voids intact and evident. The added lean-to is also unsympathetic to the historic design but is removable and greatly subordinate to the building. The setting of the building continues to be the north end of town, across its northernmost east-west street from all but a few properties in the town. Little real estate development has occurred adjacent to the former school property.

The physical materials assembled in 1914 are largely intact at the exterior, except for windows, doors, and infill related to their replacement. The building was constructed of highly durable hollow tile, steel beams and columns, brick, and concrete finishes that persist to the present day structurally and on the exterior. Although the building has lost almost all its interior furnishings and those remaining are in poor condition, surviving historic wood stairs, flooring, door jambs, and doors exist and can be conserved. Although the building occupies a liminal space between vernacular and high-style architecture, its execution almost entirely according to plan and the general survival of that execution make clear the quality and historicity of its architect's and builders' workmanship.

The building's form and materials instill a definitive feeling that it is old, substantially consists of the form and materials that originally gave it shape and character, and was intended to be and was used to house educational activities. As will be explained in Section 8, the building has a clear historically significant association with education in the Grafton community.

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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.)

X	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.
X	C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
	D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

	A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
	B. Removed from its original location
	C. A birthplace or grave
	D. A cemetery
	E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
	F. A commemorative property
	G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1914-1975

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

—

Cultural Affiliation

—

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Architect/Builder

Claude W. Way (architect)

H. V. Bendler (builder)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

(Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Grafton High School in the village of Grafton, Nebraska is locally significant in the areas of Education and Architecture with respect to the period 1914–1975. The Multiple Property Documentation Form *Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska* contextualizes and explains the registration requirements for Grafton High School. In the area of Education, Grafton High School is significant as a persistent embodiment of Grafton’s interest in improving its educational facilities to meet student and community needs. In the area of Architecture, it is significant both as the work of the Nebraska architect Claude W. Way, whose experience included many building types, several examples of which are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and as the embodiment of a type of school building, tied to contemporary ideas about buildings as part of school’s educational equipment and sharing an aesthetic of many schools built in the early 1910s.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Multiple Property Documentation Form: Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska

This nomination of the Grafton High School is guided by the findings of the multiple property documentation form (MPDF), *Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska*. As one of innumerable “building, sites, structures, and objects related to urban and rural public school education in Nebraska from 1854-1959,” Grafton High School is an associated property type of the MPDF.¹ The building is locally significant in two of the major ways the MPDF expects an associated property type would be significant: for “its historical association with education in Nebraska” and “for its architectural significance, including representation of method of construction, work of a master, or representative of a property type,” or Criteria A and C, respectively.

Grafton’s Local History

The Village of Grafton is situated in the northwestern part of Fillmore County which is in the southeastern part of Nebraska. The village is sixty-four miles west of Lincoln and 120 miles

¹ Christina Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2000), F-1.

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southwest of Omaha. As one local historian writes, “Grafton township was settled by immigrants from Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, New York, Delaware, West Virginia, and New England who were looking for new homes after the Civil War. . . . In the late 1880’s a band of German Russians moved into the northwest corner of Grafton township, and their descendants are still there.”² Some took homesteads, while others purchased land from a railroad, such as the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad, or other sellers. From 1874 onward the town of Grafton was built around the Burlington & Missouri River in the 1870s; it was “incorporated as a village on March 30, 1882.”³ Within a few years, a promotional book stated, the town’s population stood at about 500 people and “Grafton was a lively little town. . . . It had three dry goods stores, two restaurants, a newspaper (the *Grafton Leader*), two livery barns, a resident doctor, a lawyer, a drugstore, two hotels and a post office.”⁴



Figure 1: View of Grafton’s second (1882) and third (1914) school buildings, facing northeast (date unknown).⁵

Grafton’s first school “was a one-room schoolhouse on the east side of town.”⁶ In 1882 it was replaced with “a two-story building, with three rooms on each floor,” built on the north side of town, whose “first graduating class was that of 1885.”⁷ Grafton’s third school—the nominated property—was built to the second school’s southeast, much closer to the streets’ T intersection, in 1914 at a cost of \$25,000, which the town obtained through a bond issue.⁸ The second school was demolished at an unknown date.

Criterion A: Education

Grafton High School represents a small town’s commitment to educational facilities at a particular moment in the early twentieth century in an effort to remain competitive with nearby

² Wilbur G. Gaffney, ed., *The Fillmore County Story* (Geneva, NE: Geneva Community Grange No. 403, 1968), 273.

³ Gaffney, *The Fillmore County Story*, 274.

⁴ Gaffney, *The Fillmore County Story*, 274–75.

⁵ Kim Peterson, ed., *Grafton School Directory* (n.p.: pub. by author, n.d.), 4.

⁶ Gaffney, *The Fillmore County Story*, 276.

⁷ “State School Notes,” *Omaha (NE) Daily Bee*, Friday Evening, May 12, 1882, Newspapers.com; Gaffney, *The Fillmore County Story*, 276.

⁸ Gaffney, *The Fillmore County Story*, 276; “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

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towns and larger, more distant cities. It engaged then-modern approaches to pedagogical architecture and was used and survived far longer than any other school in the town. Grafton High School is inherently significant to the period 1914–1975, or from its construction until fifty years before the time of nomination, because the town only ever had one operating school building at a time. Additionally, it is also the locality’s best physical representation of a clear historical trajectory experienced by rural people and institutions: the period began with countryside anxieties about schools in towns—of any size—attracting young people away from farms and causing depopulation, and ended with small towns having the same anxieties about larger cities and metropolises.

Regulation of public-school education in Nebraska began with the Kansas–Nebraska Act of 1854 that formed the territories and promoted public schools. As in other states divided by the Public Land Survey System (PLSS), square-shaped sections 36 square miles in area and measuring one mile on each side were grouped into congressional townships of thirty-six sections. The Land Ordinance of 1785, which established the PLSS, reserved Section Sixteen for the benefit of local education. Later legislation, such as the Kansas–Nebraska Act, also reserved Section Thirty-Six for such purposes.⁹

From an early date, Nebraska legislators gave education their attention. An 1855 law provided for public primary schools. In 1858 the state enacted a law providing for school districts at the township level, to be taxed for and regulated at the township-level.¹⁰ Less than four months after Nebraska became a state in 1867, it replaced the township system established in 1858 with an independent-district system that empowered county superintendents to establish school district boundaries and create as many districts as they deemed necessary, and that allowed voters to “designate schoolhouse sites, build and sell buildings, borrow money, tax residents, and determine school term[s],” as long as the last met certain requirements of duration based on the number of students.¹¹ Numerous other laws followed over the last one-third of the nineteenth century and first one-third of the twentieth, which permitted the consolidation of districts, provided for public access, mandated attendance, permitted funding mechanisms such as bond issues, permitted the establishment of county-level high schools to serve districts that had none, established common facilities such as libraries, and standardized curricula and teacher certification.¹²

The nominated 1914 school anticipated educational reforms attributed to the early twentieth century, which Nebraska school districts adopted particularly after the First World War—and the Grafton school’s construction. As *Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska* explains, “elementary school curriculum expanded beyond the ‘three Rs.’ Attention was directed at developing well-rounded individuals with the inclusion of ‘manual training’ for boys, especially woodworking; and ‘domestic science’ for girls, specifically sewing and cooking.... A rising concern for health and nutrition led to the inclusion of a gymnasium, lunchroom, and indoor bathrooms. In many cases, an assembly room or auditorium was also included, either as a separate room or as a stage at one end of the gymnasium.”¹³ Grafton High School featured such spaces, offering in the basement a gymnasium, locker rooms, restrooms, and “manual training”

⁹ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–1.

¹⁰ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–2.

¹¹ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–2, E–4.

¹² Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–2.

¹³ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–11.

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and “domestic science” classrooms; on the first floor four classrooms and restrooms; and, on the second floor, two classrooms, an office, a laboratory, and an assembly room with a stage.

The construction of the school building represented a substantial community response to chronic needs. The county newspaper described the 1914 school as a “Modern Home for Educational Workers” (by which it meant “the Grafton boys and girls”).¹⁴ Introducing a Grafton correspondent’s discussion of the school’s details the county paper declared, “The people of Grafton and of the whole northwestern corner of the county are to be congratulated over the spirit shown in the erection of this building and the excellent plans on which the building was erected.”¹⁵ Grafton’s second school had become obsolete many years earlier. Perhaps with some boosterist exaggeration, the reporter wrote that, by having the 1914 school constructed, the town had shown “good judgment in putting up a school building of which they need not be ashamed. The old school building had long since served its day. Erected in the early eighties, it was probably as good a school building as the average small town was at that time putting up, but each year since that time has shown marked progress in education and the old building in its dilapidated condition fell far short of supplying the needs of the school boy and girl and teacher of today.”¹⁶ The enthusiastic reporter enumerated all the school’s interior spaces; boasted of the furnace’s heating abilities, the capacity of the hot water heater and coal room, and the attention given to the circulation of air; and noted the availability of hot and cold water in all classrooms and the modernity of the laboratory’s and recitation room’s furnishings.¹⁷

Grafton High School was welcomed as a broad community effort undertaken “to secure for Grafton the means of obtaining the educational advantages enjoyed by larger towns.” The building is a testament to a period in which small towns believed they could compete with larger towns and cities. As the reporter wrote—accurately or not is unimportant—

The new high school building places Grafton in the top row with the towns of the state in educational advantages. It means for the children of this vicinity all the privileges of a splendid high school education. . . . Patrons of the community need no longer search for larger towns in which to reside that the educational welfare of their children may be properly taken care of. . . . We feel safe in saying that every stage in the school-life of the boy or girl from the first to the twelfth grades inclusively can be as profitably and happily spent in the school of Grafton as of any other town in the state.¹⁸

This claim’s accuracy is unimportant. The mere fact that it was made in conjunction with the 1914 school’s construction is significant. As the MPDF explains, during the period in which US Americans were settling Nebraska, “Since education was generally viewed as an important value, it was often used in the new territory as a way to attract more settlers. The territory’s new communities often boasted of their strengths, including their schools, to attract more settlers.”¹⁹ The reporter may have overstated her case, but her discussion of the instrumentality of the school board’s six members and numerous local tradesmen to the new school indicates that educational

¹⁴ “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

¹⁵ “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

¹⁶ “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

¹⁷ “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

¹⁸ “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

¹⁹ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E-1.

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facilities, along with railroads, grain elevators, hotels, general stores, and other businesses, could still be appealed to as a way to promote a town.

Twenty years later, the school still touted the comprehensiveness of its academic, arts, and athletics opportunities. In one mid-1930s enrollment advertisement, for example, it claimed to be “one of the major accredited high schools of the state. Graduates are prepared to enter the State University without further preparation or entrance examinations. By the practice of alternation and combination of subjects, supplemented with courses made available through supervised correspondence from the State University, the curriculum of the Grafton High School has been broadened and enriched.”²⁰ The school offered many courses in business and home economics; routine schedules of English, mathematics, science, social science, and Latin; and a year-long course in shopwork for boys.²¹ During their final years of high school, students could also take correspondence courses administered by the University of Nebraska’s Extension Service.²² Students could also participate in drama, band, music, and sports.²³ For several decades the school frequently hosted events at which students involved in the arts or athletics would compete.

Grafton High School was built and operated for all grades during a period of anxiety about rural depopulation and the quality of rural life. It was built in 1914, only a few years after the Commission on Country Life, established by U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt to study the quality of life in rural areas, its problems, and their potential solutions, reported its findings. The Commission was alarmed at rural people’s and places’ increasing difficulty to compete economically and socially with towns and cities. Measured against what did and did not happen at town and city schools, what did and did not happen at rural schools was both a major cause and a major symptom of the rural US’s problems. In the Commission’s opinion, “The schools are held to be largely responsible for ineffective farming, lack of ideals, and the drift to town. This is not because the rural schools, as a whole, are declining, but because they are in a state of arrested development and have not yet put themselves in consonance with all the recently changed conditions of life. The very forces that have built up the city and town school have caused the neglect of the country school.”²⁴

Among the Commission’s many recommended ways to reinvigorate rural society, it advocated that rural schools—that is, those located in the country rather than in a town or city—“redirect” the education they provided toward rural people’s practical needs, namely, agriculture, for “merely to add new studies will not meet the need, although it may break ground for new ideas.”²⁵ The Commission expressed deep concern for problems and solutions not only of agricultural production but of agricultural life. Much of its discussion related to rural people’s ability to intellectually and spiritually appreciate their lives in the countryside, and to be rewarded

²⁰ “Grafton Public School Opens Mon., Sept. 7th,” *Fillmore Chronicle* (Fairmont, NE), August 27, 1936, Newspapers.com. See also “Grafton School Opens Monday, September 2,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), August 22, 1935, Newspapers.com.

²¹ “Grafton Public School Opens Mon., Sept. 7th,” *Fillmore Chronicle* (Fairmont, NE), August 27, 1936, Newspapers.com.

²² “Grafton Public School Opens Mon., Sept. 7th,” *Fillmore Chronicle* (Fairmont, NE), August 27, 1936, Newspapers.com.

²³ “Grafton Public School Opens Mon., Sept. 7th,” *Fillmore Chronicle* (Fairmont, NE), August 27, 1936, Newspapers.com.

²⁴ Senate, *Report of the Country Life Commission. Special Message from the President of the United States Transmitting the Report of the Country Life Commission*, S. Doc. No. 705, at 53–54 (1909).

²⁵ Senate, *Report of the Country Life Commission*, S. Doc. No. 705, at 54 (1909).

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intellectually and spiritually for living there. In addition to hoping that more practical education would help achieve these results, however, it also hoped that more interaction with the wider world through commerce, communication, and transportation would enrich rural communities and rural people's lives—but not entice them to continue migrating to towns and cities.

Historians of agricultural and rural life have found that such changes as those proposed by the Commission accelerated rural depopulation and further weakened rural social institutions, especially as the industrialization of agriculture continued and intensified through the early twentieth century.²⁶ Whether the Commission's members themselves foresaw or could have foreseen such results lies beyond the scope of this nomination. Within the nomination's scope, however, is contemporary discussion of rural school consolidation by those who supervised the school district of Grafton.

The biennial reports of Nebraska's state superintendents of public instruction in the early twentieth century advocated the consolidation of rural school districts with what may seem in retrospect like a reckless abandon. In the context of the reformist Progressive Era, however, consolidation offered a means of implementing pedagogical practices that were deemed more suitable for modern life. In 1911, State Superintendent of Public Instruction E. C. Bishop wrote that "the consolidation of school districts is solving" the problem of communities that lacked "a proper interest in the education of [their] own children" failing "to provide the proper facilities for their education."²⁷ The consolidation of rural school districts seems to have been popular and people's enthusiasm evident from construction projects. "The question of consolidation has been agitated in many parts of the state and much interest shown in many communities. While as much as desired has not been accomplished in the way of actual consolidation of districts, the interest shown and agitation that has been made has done much to improve country school conditions. As a result of this interest, many new buildings have been constructed upon modern lines," the report stated.²⁸ Further commentary emphasized consolidation as the most effective means of strengthening "the weakest point in the development of the best interests of the American people"—namely, "the lack of schools with modern facilities."²⁹ However, the superintendent expected that consolidation would strengthen rather than weaken the institutions of rural life, saying: "Consolidated or centralized country schools does not mean the abolition of the country school.... What will come out of this is a modern country school for country children, and whether it is located in a small village or at the crossing of the roads it must breathe the atmosphere of country life; it must create a love for country things and it must teach in terms of country life which the country child understands."³⁰ Subsequent report reiterated school consolidation's advantages.

The advocacy of school consolidation indeed coincided with construction of and investment in new, modern educational facilities to remain competitive with other communities by

²⁶ David Danbom, *Resisted Revolution: Urban America and the Industrialization of Agriculture, 1900–1930* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1979) and Mary Neth, *Preserving the Family Farm: Women, Community, and the Foundations of Agribusiness in the Midwest, 1900–1940* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).

²⁷ E. C. Bishop, *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to the Governor of the State of Nebraska for the Biennium Beginning January 7, 1909 and Ending January 5, 1911* (Lincoln: n.p., 1911), iv.

²⁸ Bishop, *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 2.

²⁹ Bishop, *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 75.

³⁰ Bishop, *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 75.

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towns of all sizes, including Grafton.³¹ Eventually, however, towns school districts such as Grafton had to consolidate just as rural ones had. When Grafton's school opened for the 1956–1957 year, it opened only for students in kindergarten through eighth grade.³² Grafton's population of primary students remained large enough to justify keeping the school open for several decades after it could no longer live up to the name engraved above its primary entrance. The school district's student body and resources continued to dwindle, but they did so slowly. Only from the 1991–1992 school year onward did seventh- and eighth-grade students need to attend school in another town.³³ The nominated school building continued in use as a school through the 1994–1995 school year, during which Grafton constructed a new school building and attached gymnasium.³⁴ Finally, in December 2000, Grafton's school board voted to close the school district entirely at the end of the school year, in May 2001.³⁵

The pace of the Grafton school district's decline is visible in the persistence of the grandest educational facility it ever built. The district remained large enough to continue using a building originally made for both primary and secondary education. Declining rather than growing, the district did not need to enlarge its facilities, whether by adding to the nominated building, replacing it with a new one, or further developing the site. At the same time, the district remained large enough to maintain the building sufficiently for many decades before it was replaced, used for storage, and vacated.

Criterion C: Architecture

Grafton High School is architecturally significant at the local level as the work of an architectural master and as an embodiment of a type of construction made for use in education that reflected contemporary ideas about teaching and learning. These two elements of Grafton High School's local significance to architecture are strengthened by the preservation of the nominated building's design, despite immediately noticeable changes to the fenestration and the building's

³¹ Bishop, *Twenty-First Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 49–57; James E. Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to the Governor of the State of Nebraska for the Biennium Beginning January 9, 1913 and Ending January 7, 1915* (Lincoln: Woodruff Press, 1914), 198–203.

³² “County Lowers Mill Levy For Current Year,” *Fillmore Chronicle* (Fairmont, NE), August 30, 1956, Newspapers.com; Peterson, *Grafton School Directory*, 4. According to the 1940 and 1950 Fillmore County, Nebraska enumeration district maps of the U.S. census, the nearest town school was located in Fairmont, six miles to the east of Grafton. 1940 Census Enumeration District Maps – Nebraska – Fillmore County – ED 30-1 – ED 30-25; Enumeration District Maps – Nebraska – Fillmore County; Enumeration District and Related Maps, 1880–1990; Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives at College Park – Cartographic, College Park, MD [online version available through the Archival Research Catalog (ARC identifier 5834797) at www.archives.gov; March 6, 2025]; 1950 Census Enumeration District Maps – Nebraska (NE) – Fillmore County – Fillmore County – ED 30-1 to 27; Enumeration District Maps – Nebraska – Fillmore County; Enumeration District and Related Maps, 1880–1990; Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives at College Park – Cartographic, College Park, MD [online version available through the Archival Research Catalog (ARC identifier 23806155) at www.archives.gov; March 6, 2025].

³³ Peterson, *Grafton School Directory*, 4.

³⁴ Peterson, *Grafton School Directory*, 5.

³⁵ “Grafton School Board Votes to Close School,” *Lincoln (NE) Journal Star*, December 3, 2000, Newspapers.com; “Grafton School to Graduate Its Last Class Before Closing Doors,” *Grand Island (NE) Independent*, April 21, 2001, Newspapers.com.

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overall condition. Grafton High School is the oldest and largest non-rural school building located in Fillmore County—that is, located in one of the county’s towns—that has not received a major addition. The other two historic schools in towns of the county, located in Ohioa (school built 1922) and Strang (school built 1929), are much smaller than the Grafton school.³⁶ Their school districts, too, have discontinued their use. Both are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries educational reformers and administrators considered the role of schools’ architectural design in the success of teaching, learning, and healthy living.³⁷ Guidance was published and circulated throughout the period, but especially after the First World War authorities and experts systematically advised rural and urban school districts of the minimum facilities requirements for students and courses alike that were increasingly crystallized and standardized. “School design grew to become a specialized problem in the field of architecture where architectural philosophy was combined with educational philosophy. For example, educational requirements emphasizing health and playground activities led to larger athletic facilities and the placement of schools on larger lots,” the MPDF explains.³⁸ Schools were designed and built to make certain course offerings, course content, and teaching methods more effective: “New curriculum requirements often affected the types of specialized teaching areas that were incorporated into the design of school buildings, primarily at the junior high school and high school level, but also for the larger urban elementary schools. For example, a rising concern for health and nutrition led to the inclusion of a gymnasium, lunchroom, and indoor bathrooms. In many cases, an assembly room or auditorium was also included, either as a separate room or as a stage at one end of the gymnasium.”³⁹

Grafton High School is an example of what at the time of its construction were “many new school buildings [that] are modern in respect to seating, heating, lighting, and ventilating.”⁴⁰ It is, therefore, an artifact of the community’s work not only to meet its local needs for a more commodious space (discussed above) but also to abide by then-modern standards of pedagogical architecture. To do so, it engaged the services of Claude W. Way (1870–1948), a Michigan-born architect who practiced in the city of Hastings, Nebraska between 1906 and the early 1920s, before relocating to Houston, Texas.⁴¹ Way’s portfolio included residences, libraries, courthouses, warehouse-factories, performance venues, and schools. Five of his projects have been listed in

³⁶ Bill Callahan, “Ohioa Public School,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005); Janet K. Lentfer, “Strang School District #36,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1992); and Stephanie Rouse and Michelle Cunliffe, *A Historic Survey of Fillmore County, Nebraska* (Omaha, NE: RDG Planning & Design, 2020), 12, 14, 17, 21–24. Of the Fillmore County towns’ early-twentieth-century schools, that of Fairmont was replaced in the early 1980s and that of Geneva in 1974; those of Exeter (built 1915), Milligan (built 1913), and Shickley (built 1908) have received modern substantial, character-changing additions.

³⁷ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–8–E–15.

³⁸ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–14.

³⁹ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–11.

⁴⁰ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 198–203.

⁴¹ “Claude W. Way (1870–1948), Architect,” Place Makers of Nebraska: The Architects, Nebraska State Historical Society, last modified January 12, 2025, accessed March 7, 2025, [http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Claude+W.+Way+\(1870-1948\),+Architect&oldid=21713](http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Claude+W.+Way+(1870-1948),+Architect&oldid=21713).

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the National Register of Historic Places, none a school.⁴² Indeed, the only other school known to have been designed by him has received additions making it ineligible.⁴³

On a scale more practical for a small town, Grafton High School adopted many elements of design that were part of an emerging consensus of how a modern school should be built—a consensus that, by the mid-1920s, included many “standards for junior high school buildings,” such as “a laboratory, gymnasium, auditorium, library, and rooms for both academic instruction and teachings in practical arts and recreation. The design requirements for a junior high school building were similar to those of elementary schools, although specialized rooms were needed for the variety of elective courses offered, including home economics, laboratories, and mechanical shops for industrial arts.”⁴⁴ As will be remembered from this nomination’s narrative description and the discussion of its significance to the historical theme of Education, the town’s correspondent with the county newspaper noted that Way accounted in his design for sanitation, square footage per student, ventilation, plumbing, drinking fountains, heating, fire-proof materials, multiple floors of instructional rooms, and separate spaces for the gymnasium and assembly, manual training, and domestic science rooms.⁴⁵ The correspondent gave the enumeration and specification of the school’s modern appurtenances more space than any other single element of the story of the new school’s creation:

The second floor contains an assembly and high school room 30x70 feet with cloak rooms adjoining, a large laboratory, a supply room, the professor’s office, a book room and a recitation room. A roomy corridor runs the length of the building between the assembly and high school room and the last mentioned ones. On the first floor are the primary, the third and fourth, fifth and sixth, and the seventh and eighth grade rooms, a large hallway and two toilet room apartments containing toilets for all grades from the fifth to the twelfth. The juvenile toilets are located on the grade floor. The basement contains a gymnasium 30x60 with a store room at each end, a manual training room, a domestic science room, janitor’s store room, boiler room and fuel room with concrete floor. The basement is equipped with two shower baths, and dressing rooms. The building is heated by an American Ideal steam heater, which, in the coldest weather, will heat the building to 75 degrees. The hot water tank has a capacity of sixty gallons, with a pressure of eighty-five. A car load of coal can be placed in the fuel room. The basement windows are protected by galvanized iron wire mesh guards. The building

⁴² Jill E. Dolberg, “Brenizer Library,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2007); Patrick Haynes, “Clay Center Library and Gymnasium,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2022); Patrick Haynes, “Harvard Carnegie Library,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2022); David Murphy, “Victory Building,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987); and Dana L. Pratt, “Clarke Hotel,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1987).

⁴³ “Claude W. Way (1870–1948), Architect,” Place Makers of Nebraska: The Architects, Nebraska State Historical Society, last modified January 12, 2025, accessed March 7, 2025, [http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Claude_W._Way_\(1870-1948\),_Architect&oldid=21713](http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Claude_W._Way_(1870-1948),_Architect&oldid=21713); Save America’s Heritage, *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Reconnaissance Survey Final Report of Buffalo County, Nebraska* (Lincoln, 1993), 119.

⁴⁴ Slattery, “Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska,” E–14.

⁴⁵ “Grafton Public School,” *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

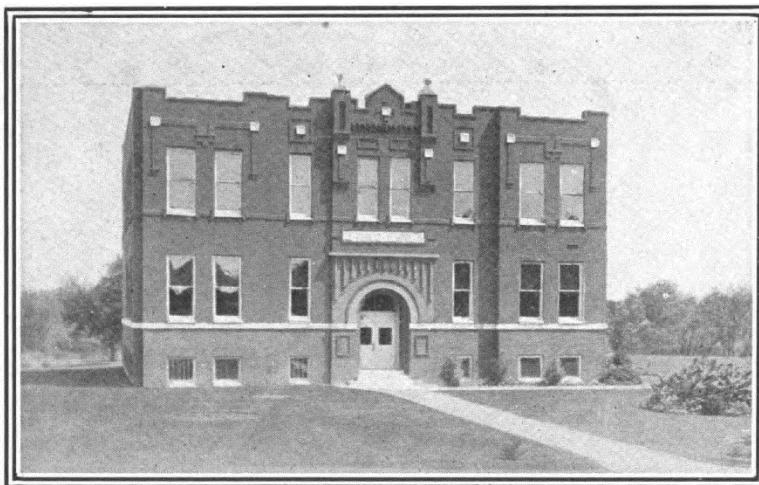
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contains three entries and stairways. There are transoms over all doors. Heat exits and ventilation have been given the closest attention. The building is electrically lighted. All rooms are supplied with hot and cold water and sanitary drinking fountains are to be found in all halls. The laboratory is now equipped with a complete set of new furniture, as is also the recitation room which contains modern recitation chairs. Domestic science is being taught in the school this year under the Crete system.⁴⁶

Equipped with such spaces and furnishings, Grafton High School could educate students as well as any other. The report also shows that the school district retained the building's internal arrangement as originally constructed.

Aesthetically, too, Grafton High School exemplified the early-to-mid-1910s in which it was designed and built. Some of the biennial reports of Nebraska's superintendents of public instruction included illustrations of recently-constructed school buildings. The report that covered 1914, the year of Grafton High School's construction, shows many that resemble it and one another in their two-story-over-basement form, often with Neoclassical Revival proportions and/or ornamentation, and accents or styling in the Late Gothic Revival or Tudor Revival style. Grafton High School fits among them, often not only in design but in construction cost or geography, by being located in a neighboring county.



ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1911. Cost \$14,000

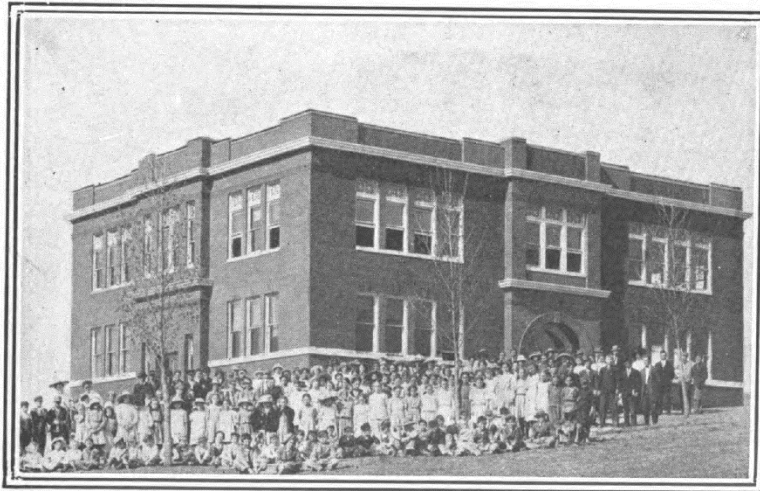
Figure 2: Alexandria Public School, similar design and location (Thayer County, adjacent to Fillmore)⁴⁷

⁴⁶ "Grafton Public School," *Nebraska Signal* (Geneva, NE), October 15, 1914, Newspapers.com.

⁴⁷ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

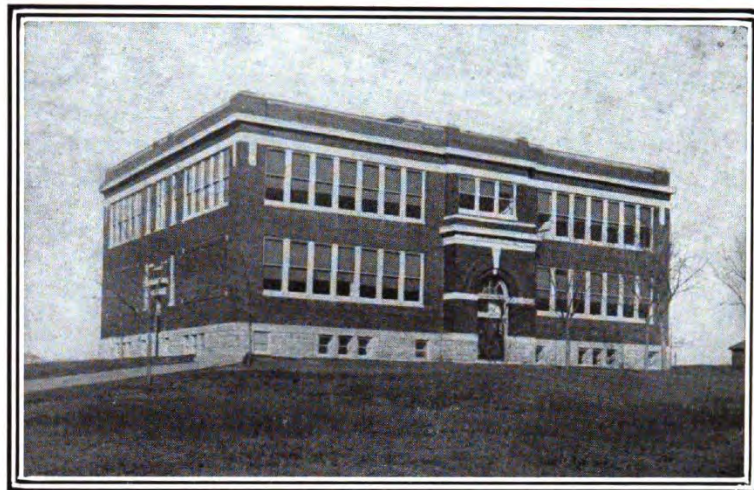
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ANSLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1912. Cost \$25,000

Figure 3: Ansley Public School, similar design and cost⁴⁸



HEBRON PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1912. Cost \$25,000

Figure 4: Hebron Public School, similar design, cost, and location (Thayer County, adjacent to Fillmore)⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

⁴⁹ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

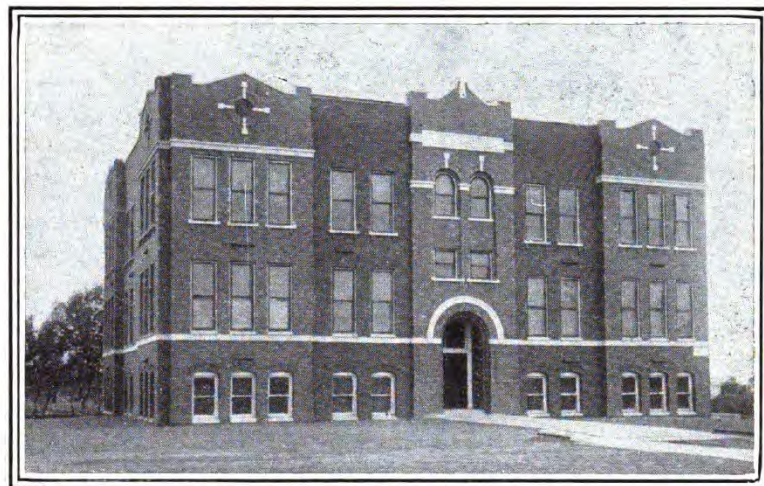
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HUMPHREY PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1913. Cost \$30,000

Figure 5: Humphrey Public School, similar design and cost⁵⁰



KENESAW PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1913. Cost \$26,000

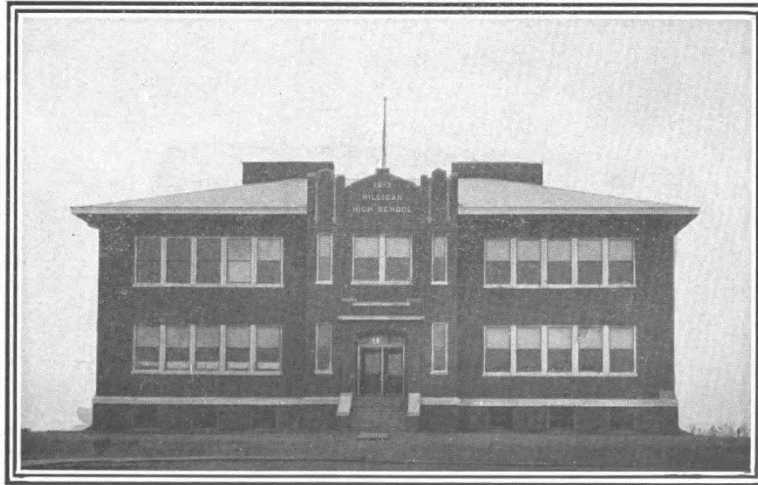
Figure 6: Kenesaw Public School, similar design and cost⁵¹

⁵⁰ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

⁵¹ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

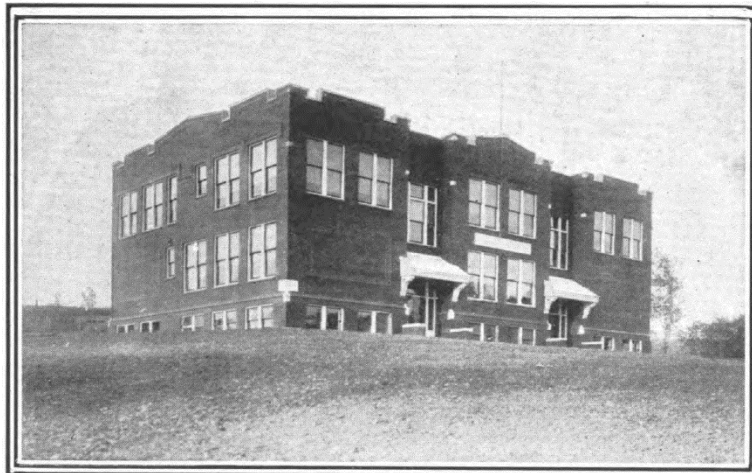
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MILLIGAN PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1913. Cost \$20,000

Figure 7: Milligan Public School, similar design, cost, and location (Fillmore County)⁵²



NELIGH PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1913. Cost \$35,000

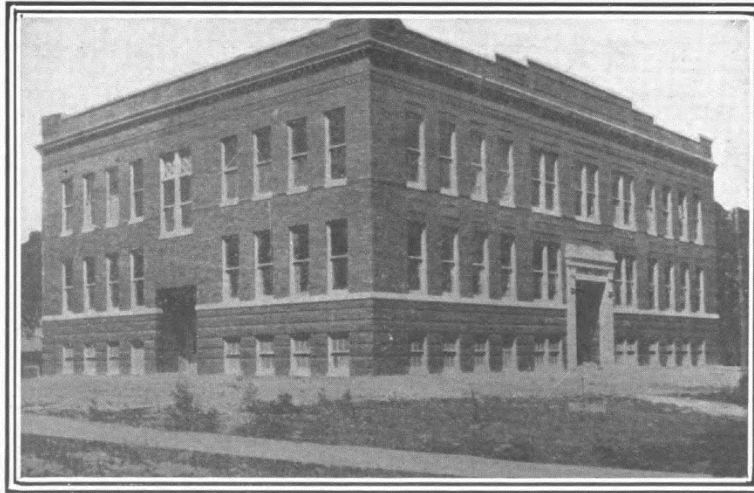
Figure 8: Neligh Public School, similar design⁵³

⁵² Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

⁵³ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

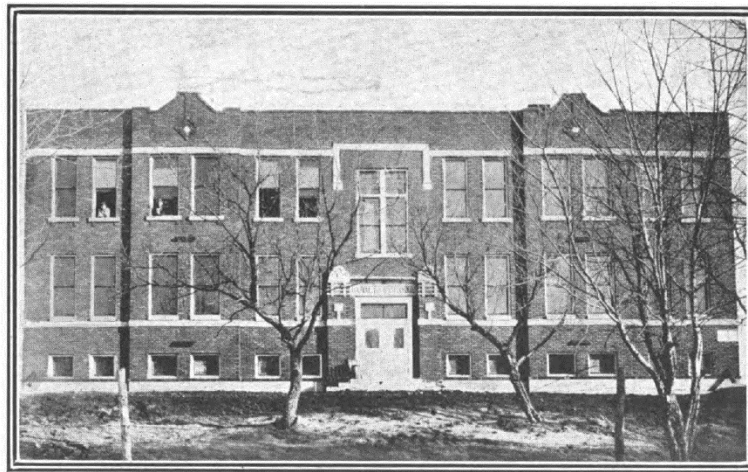
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NORTH BEND PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1911. Cost \$46,000

Figure 9: North Bend Public School, similar design⁵⁴



STEELE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL
Erected 1914. Cost \$15,000

Figure 10: Steele City Public School, similar design and location (Jefferson County, adjacent to Fillmore)⁵⁵

Grafton's and similar schools' provisions for voluminous spaces and the admission of natural light have enduring usefulness and value. In the case of Grafton High School, the current owner (a coauthor of this nomination) hopes to rehabilitate the building and put it to use in music education.

⁵⁴ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

⁵⁵ Delzell, *Twenty-third Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, between 192 and 193.

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Omaha, NE: RDG Planning & Design, 2020.

Save America's Heritage. *Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey: Reconnaissance Survey Final
Report of Buffalo County, Nebraska*. Lincoln, 1993.

Slattery, Christina. "Historic and Architectural School Buildings in Nebraska." National Register
of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form. Washington, DC: U.S. De-
partment of the Interior, National Park Service, 2000.

Other Secondary Sources

Danbom, David. *Resisted Revolution: Urban America and the Industrialization of Agriculture,
1900–1930*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1979.

Gaffney, Wilbur G. ed. *The Fillmore County Story*. Geneva, NE: Geneva Community Grange
No. 403, 1968.

Nebraska State Historical Society. "Claude W. Way (1870–1948), Architect." Place Makers of
Nebraska: The Architects. Last modified January 12, 2025. Accessed March 7, 2025.
[http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Claude_W._Way_\(1870-1948\),_Ar-
chitect&oldid=21713](http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Claude_W._Way_(1870-1948),_Ar-
chitect&oldid=21713).

Neth, Mary. *Preserving the Family Farm: Women, Community, and the Foundations of Agri-
business in the Midwest, 1900–1940*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

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 # _
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _

10. Geographical Data

Grafton High School
Name of Property

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Acreeage of Property: 2.2

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Datum if other than WGS84:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 40.633643 | Longitude: -97.713960 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

 NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated property occupies a legally recorded parcel, namely Lot 74 and parts of the vacated streets adjacent to Lot 74 in Bouton's First Addition in Grafton, Nebraska, which is approximately 277 x 346.05 feet in size.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nomination boundary includes the property and its immediate surroundings, which were historically associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Michael M. Belding III and Svetlana Yashirin
organization: National Register Coordinator, Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office and
Owner, respectively
street & number: 1500 R St.
city or town: Lincoln state: NE zip code: 68508
e-mail: michael.belding@nebraska.gov and syashirin@gmail.com, respectively
telephone: 402-613-1591
date: March 26, 2025

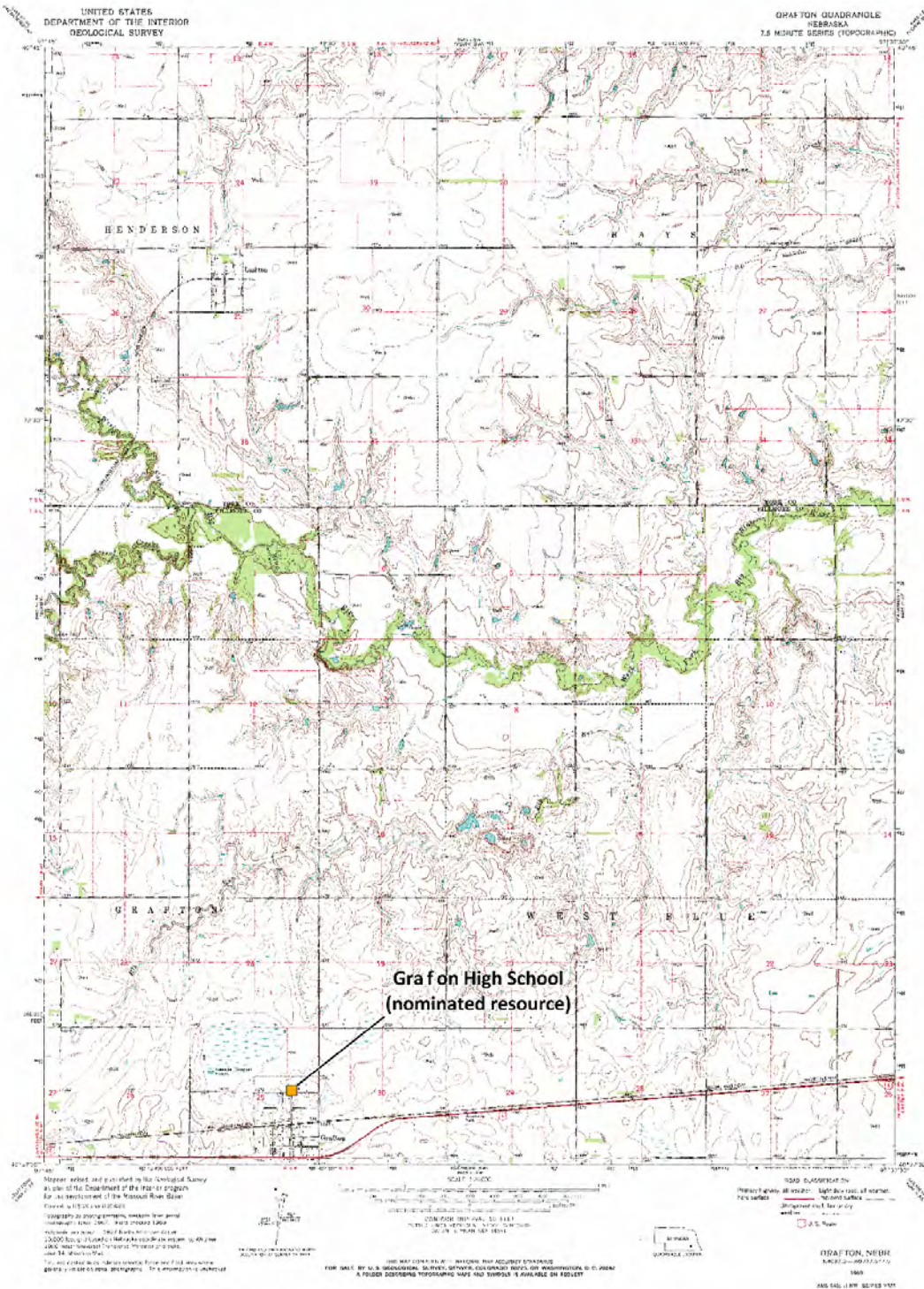
Grafton High School
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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Maps: A USGS map or equivalent (7.5- or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.



Map 1: Location of nominated resource (USGS)

Grafton High School
Name of Property

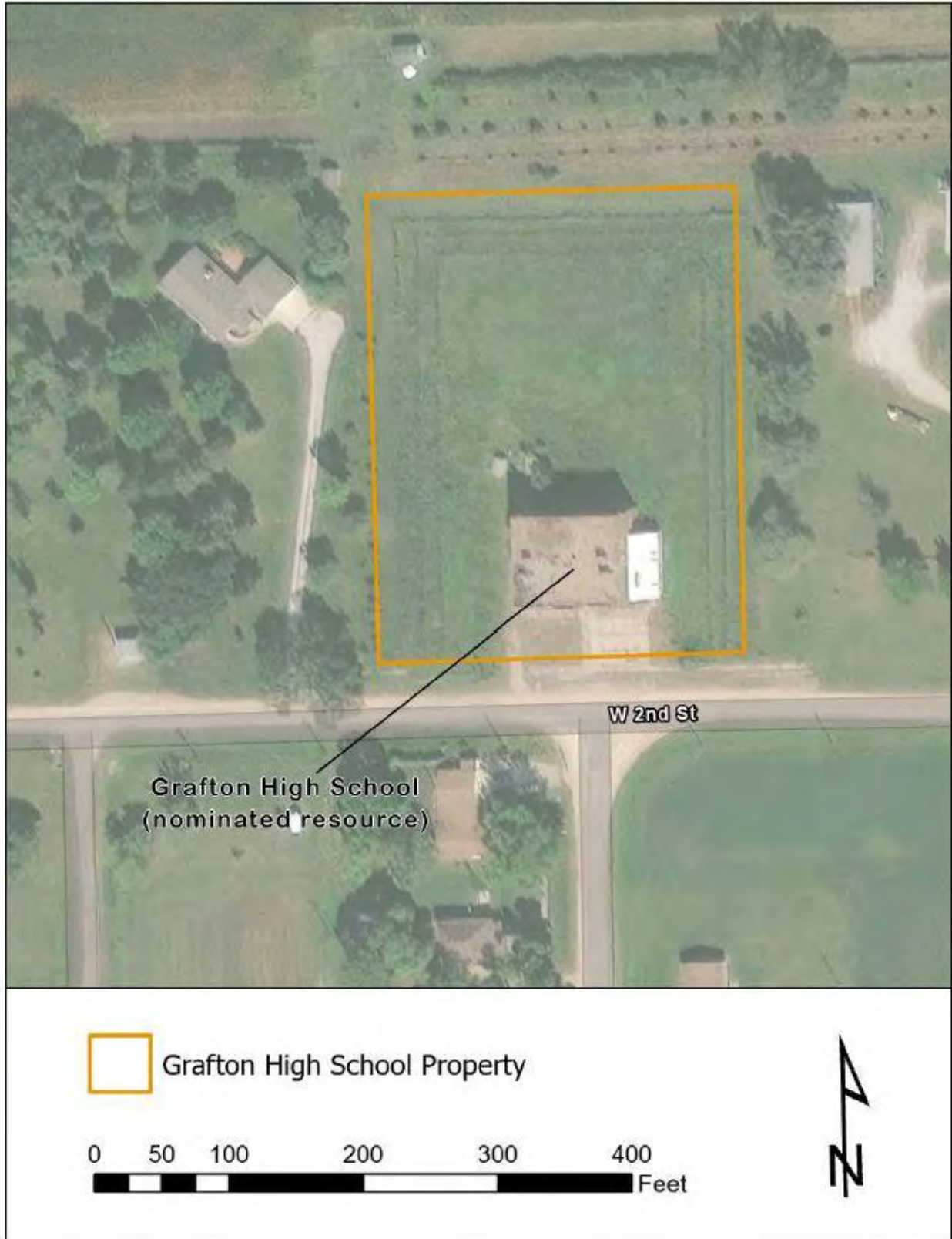
Fillmore County, Nebraska
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Map 2: Location of nominated resource within Grafton, Nebraska

Grafton High School
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Map 3: Location of nominated resource within Grafton, Nebraska (detail)

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Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
Key all photographs to this map.

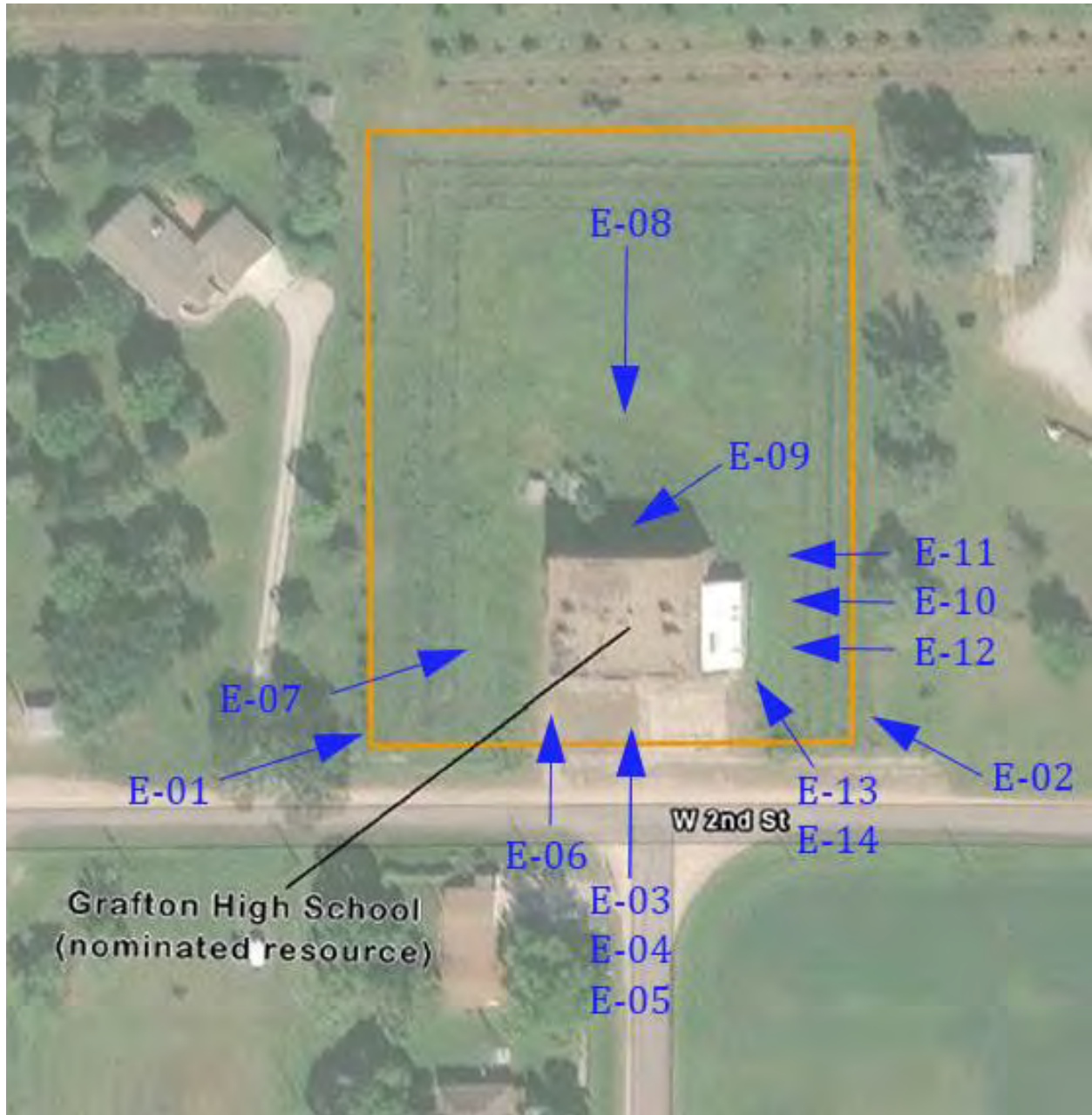


Figure 11: Photo Key (exterior)

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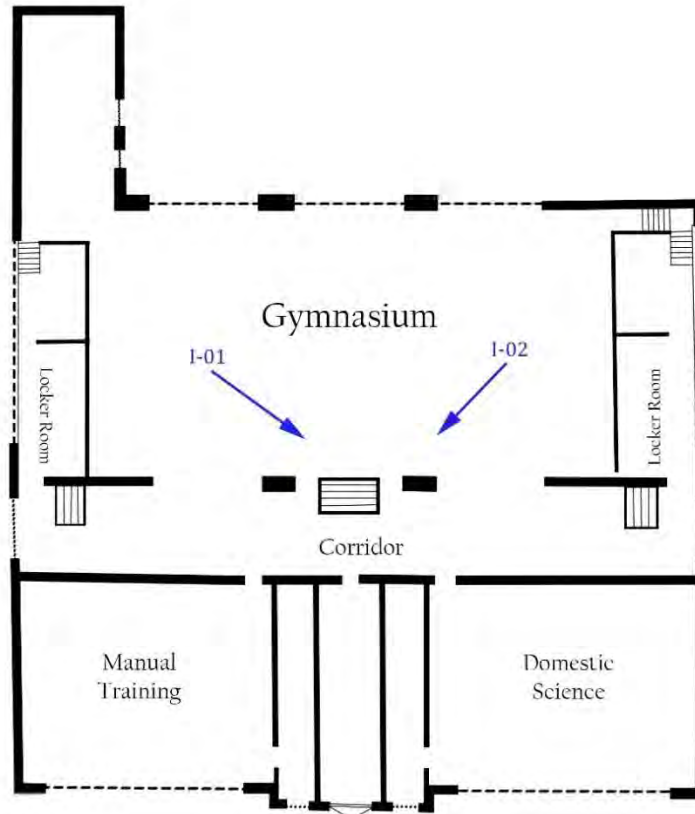


Figure 12: Photo Key (interior, basement)

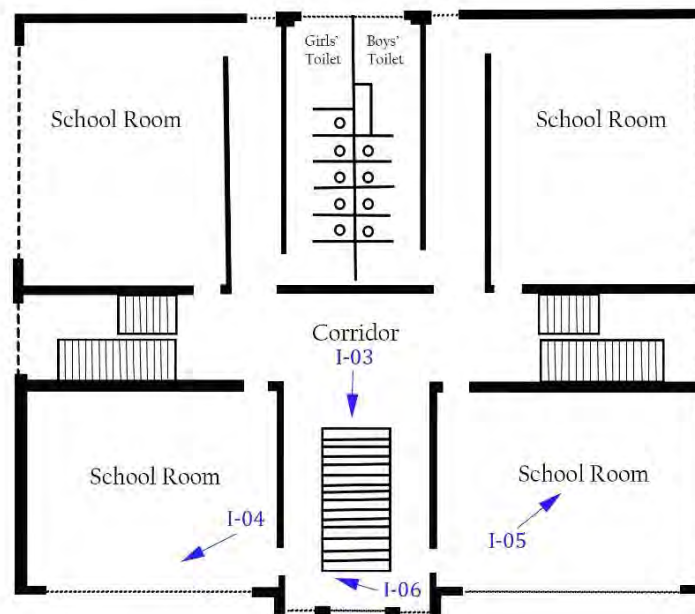


Figure 13: Photo Key (interior, first story)

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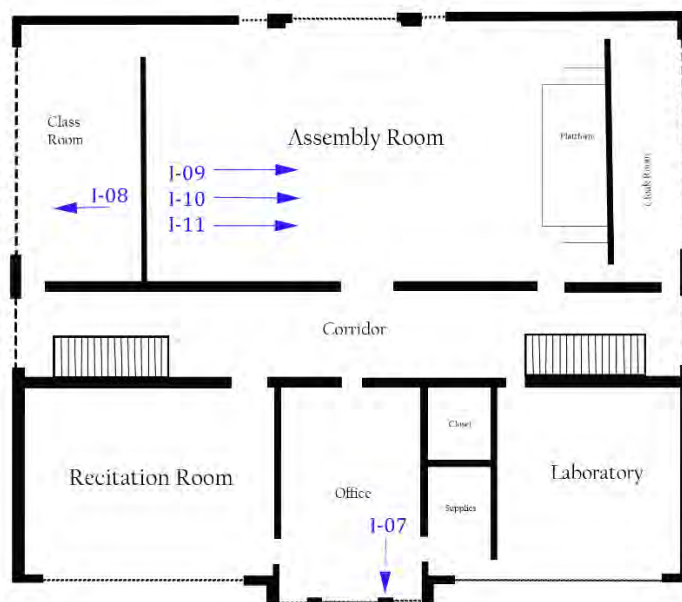


Figure 14: Photo Key (interior, second story)

Additional items:

(Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

N/A

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Grafton High School
City or Vicinity: Grafton
County: Fillmore State: Nebraska
Photographer: Svetlana Yashirin, Amy Renard, and Jade Mendoza
Date Photographed: January 4, 2024 (Yashirin); January 17, 2025 (Renard); and March 13, 2025 (Mendoza)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Exterior (by Mendoza)

E-01 (1 of 25): View of south (primary) façade and west façade. Camera facing northeast.

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- E-02 (2 of 25): View of south (primary) façade and east façade. Camera facing northwest.
- E-03 (3 of 25): View of south (primary) façade. Camera facing north.
- E-04 (4 of 25): View (detail) of parapet, cornice, and engraving, centered on south (primary) façade. Camera facing north.
- E-05 (5 of 25): View (detail) of front entrance, centered on south (primary) façade. Camera facing north.
- E-06 (6 of 25): View (detail) of parapet and cornice decorative elements, south (primary) façade. Camera facing north.
- E-07 (7 of 25): View of west façade. Camera facing northeast.
- E-08 (8 of 25): View of north façade. Camera facing south.
- E-09 (9 of 25): View of basement window infill on north façade. Camera facing southwest.
- E-10 (10 of 25): View of east façade and attached lean-to. Camera facing west.
- E-11 (11 of 25): View (detail) of decorative drop repeated at outer corners on the second story on south (primary), west, and east façades, shown on east façade. Camera facing west.
- E-12 (12 of 25): View (detail) of second-story blind window on west and east façades, shown on east façade. Camera facing west.
- E-13 (13 of 25): View (detail) into front of lean-to attached to east façade. Camera facing northwest.
- E-14 (14 of 25): View (detail) into rear of lean-to attached to east façade. Camera facing northwest.

Interior

- I-01 (15 of 25): View of gymnasium at basement. Camera facing southeast (by Yashirin).
- I-02 (16 of 25): View (detail) of archways into gymnasium at basement. Camera facing southwest (by Renard).
- I-03 (17 of 25): View of entrance at south (primary) façade, at first floor. Camera facing south (by Yashirin).
- I-04 (18 of 25): View of classroom at first floor (southeast corner). Camera facing south-southwest (by Yashirin).
- I-05 (19 of 25): View (detail) of a classroom wall at the first floor (by Renard).
- I-06 (20 of 25): View (detail) of railing around front staircase and classroom door with transom. Camera facing northwest (by Renard).
- I-07 (21 of 25): View (detail) of a second-floor classroom door (by Renard).
- I-08 (22 of 25): View (detail) of roof, at second floor (by Yashirin).
- I-09 (23 of 25): View of assembly room at second floor. Camera facing east (by Renard).
- I-10 (24 of 25): View (detail) of stage at east end of assembly room. Camera facing east (by Renard).
- I-11 (25 of 25): View (detail) of assembly room light fixture (by Renard).

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours

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Tier 3 – 230 hours
Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.







HIGH SCHOOL

1914



HIGH SCHOOL

1914



DANGER
DO NOT
ENTER

DANGER
DO NOT
ENTER



















PRIVATE PROPERTY
NO TRESPASSING









EXIT















