

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION
CERTIFICATION APPLICATION —
PART 1**

NPS Office Use Only

Property Name Clyde School
Property Address 620 Broadway, Clyde, Cloud Co., KS

Project Number

5. Description of physical appearance

The Clyde School is a two-story on basement, load-bearing brick and reinforced concrete masonry structure with Collegiate Gothic Revival influence, built in 1917-1918 in its first phase, completed in 1923-1924. The flat roof is hidden behind a stepped parapet with a projecting cast stone cornice and coping. The exterior walls are polychromed with red brick on the basement level separated by a molded cast stone water table from a darker brown brick on the floors above. The basement level is laid in common bond where every seventh course is rusticated. The upper floors feature windows outlined with belt courses of brick headers and stretchers, with spandrels decorated with blind panels set with cast stone corner blocks. Windows on the building are 9/9 double-hung sashes set in single openings or in groups of 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Windows above the side (east and west) entrances feature an unusual arrangement of three 9/9 double-hung sashes set above another group of three 9/9 double-hung sashes. The side entrances contain single-light metal frame replacement doors with replacement two-light sidelights and two-light replacement transoms, set in a one-story projecting brick frontispiece polychromed with alternating bands of cast stone. The front (north) entrance contains single-light metal frame replacement double door with replacement two-light sidelights and three-light replacement transom, set in a one-story projecting brick vestibule spanned by a cast stone Gothic arch and decorated with foils, quatrefoils, and panels decorated with Gothic tracery. Above, the spandrel between the first and second floors contains a cast stone panel with the title "Clyde School" flanked by blind panels with Gothic tracery. (continued)

Date of Construction: 1917-18, 1923	Source of Date: Local newspapers, architectural plans
Date(s) of Alteration(s): ca. 1985	
Has building been moved? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no. If so, when?	

6. Statement of Significance

The Clyde School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for its significance as well-preserved and increasingly rare example of a Town Graded School property type designed to reflect the planning principles of the Progressive Era of Kansas' public schools, as defined in the Multiple Property Documentation Submission "Historic Public Schools of Kansas", and its Associated Historic Context, "The Public School Buildings of Kansas (1854-1955)". As such, the Clyde School is eligible for listing under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a locally significant example of the Town Graded School subtype designed in the Collegiate Gothic Revival style. Its period of significance begins in 1917 with its construction and ends in 1960, at the time when a new high school was built and the older building shifted for use by elementary and middle school grades. The building retains a great deal of its original integrity of massing, roof form, original building materials, patterns of window and door openings, ornamentation and detailing, and interior corridor configuration, all of which comprise the minimum requirements for assessing integrity for properties nominated under the Multiple Property Submission. (continued)

7. Photographs and maps.

Attach photographs and maps to application

Continuation sheets attached: yes no

CONTINUATION/AMENDMENT SHEET

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5. Description, continued:

In plan, the building consists of three levels of classrooms and other support spaces arranged in a U around a gymnasium and auditorium with mezzanine level stacked one on top of another. The ability to stack the two high-ceilinged spaces was made possible by recessing the floor of the gymnasium deeper into the ground than the basement level surrounding it. Circulation among the rooms of the school was provided by a T-shaped corridor with entrances and stairs in each of the north, west and east facades. The corridors are detailed with a plain baseboard and doorways trimmed with simple backbanded architraves. The stairs in the building have solid balustrades topped with a molded wooden handrail, or on the outside walls of the stair core, a wooden handrail built into the wall. The stair cores were amended ca. 1985 with metal framed, glass partitions and doors to serve as airlocks. Original doors throughout the structure are either single-light, two-panel configurations serving classrooms and administrative spaces, or three-panel doors for coat closets and other tertiary spaces. Most classrooms still retain their original blackboards, coat closets and storage closets. Windows on the interior are devoid of trim save for a molded stool. A handful of original acorn globe ceiling fixtures remain intact on the second floor.

The gymnasium has a narrow walkway around three sides of the perimeter that then steps down to the gym floor itself with three seating terraces on either side, all constructed of reinforced concrete. Six steel piers provide additional support to the auditorium above. The auditorium was a relatively compact, square room with seating facing the stage and additional seating provided on four terraced levels on the mezzanine. The mezzanine level is supported by simple piers. The paneled stage bows out slightly from the line of the proscenium, which is itself trimmed with a simple backbanded architrave. Small prop storage or dressing rooms are located to either side of the stage behind the proscenium. On the mezzanine level, many of the fixed, decorative cast iron and molded plywood seats on the mezzanine remain in place today. The auditorium was altered ca. 1985 with the installation of a ceiling to close off the mezzanine from the main floor, resulting in the upper portion of the proscenium being cut off from the stage below. A partition was inserted into the part of the proscenium that extended above the new ceiling, leaving the fly loft still usable for the stage. The rooms surrounding the mezzanine on the second floor were taken out of service and "mothballed" at that time.

6. Significance, continued:

The Clyde School was built in 1917-1918 and completed in 1923-1924 from the plans of Wichita-based architect Lorentz Schmidt (1884-1952), one of the most accomplished and prolific architects in Kansas's history. Schmidt, who was born and raised in Clyde, was widely known for his designs for public schools executed throughout his long and productive architectural career from 1915 to 1952. His first school commission came about in the first year of his practice when he won the contract to design the Roosevelt-Lincoln High School in Salina (1915). The Clyde School and the Horace Mann Elementary School in Wichita (1917) are the second and third of Schmidt's known school projects. He would go on to design a dozen other schools around the state and another dozen in Wichita alone. He was also the architect of numerous churches, hospitals, commercial buildings and residences in Wichita and the surrounding region.

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6. Significance, continued:

The need for a new school in Clyde came about as a result of a fire on October 11, 1916 that destroyed the town's second graded school, originally built in 1879-1880. Commercial buildings, church halls and other rooms in the town of 1,057 people (1910 Census) were pressed into service as temporary classrooms for the next year and a half until the new school could be completed.

Schmidt's plans for the school are dated April 20, 1917 and provided for nine classrooms, a study hall, a chemistry laboratory, a school office, an "emergency room" for the use of the school's medical provider, two rooms each for "Domestic Arts" and "Manual Arts", and girl's and boys locker room/toilets, along with the physical plant, storage rooms and other support spaces. Constraints and uncertainties brought about by the country's entry into World War I led the town's school board to take a cautious approach to the building project, and the decision was made to construct only the front (north) and west sets of classrooms in the initial building phase. As a result, one of the rooms originally dedicated for the "Domestic Arts" program was developed for the girl's locker room/toilet. Some form of a temporary structure was also developed for use as an auditorium, however, because the dedication of the new school was held in the "new Public School Auditorium" on April 8, 1918.

The largest graduating class in the history of the Clyde School was the Class of 1923, where degrees were conferred on 44 students; the high number of students in this particular class was due in part to the closing of the town's parochial school at the end of the 1921-1922 academic year, and in part due to the closing of all town and county schools in the middle of the 1918-1919 academic year because of the Spanish Influenza epidemic. The average graduating class numbered more on the order of 30-35 students.

The health of the local economy permitted the town school board to move forward with the completion of the second phase for the construction of the building. Schmidt revisited his original plans and updated them in light of the work completed in the first building phase five years before. The size of the gym/auditorium footprint was extended by another ten feet to the north, which allowed the axis of the gym to be rotated 90 degrees for the construction of a set of seating terraces on each side of the gym floor. Construction got underway in August of 1923, and the entire project was completed the next spring.

The city school in Clyde had always been a focal point for the community, but the completion of the new school building in 1924 made the school even more important, not just to Clyde, but also to the families of the outlying farms whose children were permitted to attend school in Clyde. The auditorium was the scene of school plays, band and choral concerts, and even an annual community carnival during the 1920s and 1930s. Apart from its intended function for general physical education and team sports like boys and girl's basketball, the gym also served as the lunch room for the students who lived outside of town; in-town students generally walked home for their lunch.

The use of the building was organized very much along the lines designed by Schmidt. The basement level was home to the Domestic Arts (Home Economics), science and gym classes. The elementary and middle grades occupied the first floor, and the high school classes were held on the second floor. In order to accommodate everyone in the building, the 1st and 8th grade classes met individually, but the other elementary and middle classes were paired-- 2nd and 3rd; 4th and 5th; and, 6th and 7th.

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6. Significance, continued:

The Clyde School kept this arrangement in place until the fall of 1960, when the construction of a new high school in town allowed the elementary and middle school classes to use the entire building. Kindergarten was offered for the first time a little later in the same decade. After consolidation of the Clyde Schools with those of the nearby town of Clifton in 1980, the 7th and 8th grades were moved from Clyde to a school in Clifton; two years later, the 6th grade class followed. It was about this time that the second floor of the school was mothballed, and a ceiling extended over the mezzanine level of the auditorium. Due to dropping enrollments county-wide, the Clifton-Clyde School Board voted to close the Clyde School at the end of the 2001-2002 school year. The building has been vacant ever since.