

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 Will G. Price Elementary School

Other names/site number Khri 173-13057

Name of related Multiple Property Listing Historic Public Schools of Kansas

2. Location

Street & number 6123 E. 11th Street North

--

 not for publication

City or town Wichita

--

 vicinity

State Kansas Code KS County Sedgwick Code 173 Zip code 67208

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 Patrick Zollner, Deputy SHPO Date _____

Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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 _____

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/Not In Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete
walls: Brick
roof: Shingle
other: _____

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

Narrative Description

Summary

The Will G. Price Elementary School was built in Wichita's McEwen Estates neighborhood in 1957, one of several new public elementary schools designed to educate the city's rapidly growing population. Positioned to serve the neighborhood south of 13th Street and west of Woodlawn, the school was located on an irregularly-shaped site that fronts 11th Street on the north. Located in the McEwen Fourth Addition, the school's mid-century design fit well in the 1950s neighborhood characterized by one-story and split-level ranch homes.

The Modern school building is characteristic of the period in which it was constructed reflecting modern educational tenets and modern construction materials and techniques. The concrete and steel structure is a long rectangular form with one-and-a-half story multipurpose room centrally located at the rear. The distinguishing physical characteristic of the school is its mid-century style defined by its expansive horizontal form. The shallow gable roof features a deep wood fascia over exterior walls composed primarily of horizontal-light glass windows. Red brick is used at the east and west ends of the building and on restroom bays with narrow horizontal glass clerestory windows below the eave. The fascia band along the length of the building reinforces the building's horizontal form.

Characteristic of its Modern design, the exterior of the school reflects its interior function with classrooms lined with bands of windows while restrooms and multipurpose room generally have solid brick walls. While the school's design embraced a general rejection of ornament, subtle design features like the projecting gable roof and skylights, contribute to the character and quality of the school building.

School offices and the multi-purpose room were centrally located inside the front entrance. Classrooms are located along a double-loaded corridor that runs through the center of the east and west wings and along the north side of the central multipurpose room. This wide corridor with brick and block walls, is a distinguishing interior feature with a row of skylights providing natural light along the long corridor. A majority of original built-in features remain with built-in wardrobes, shelving, and chalkboards in place in most classrooms and metal lockers lining the corridors. Extant original finishes include exposed brick and block walls, textured acoustic plaster ceilings, and VAT flooring.

The school has experienced no major exterior or interior alterations, retaining a high degree of architectural integrity. The Will G. Price Elementary School clearly portrays its original design and construction as a mid-century public elementary school.

Elaboration

Location and Setting

The Will G. Price Elementary School was part of Wichita's public schools post-WWII massive growth during which several new elementary schools and a fourth high school were constructed to serve the city's rapidly growing population. The site selected for Price School was in McEwen Estates located west of Woodlawn and south of 13th Street northeast of downtown Wichita. The newly developed neighborhood provided easy access to Wichita State University and McConnell Air Force Base. McEwen Estates was developed in the early 1950s with one-story and split-level modern homes on large lots with wide frontage along curvilinear streets, an aesthetic in which the modern school building, on a large open site, was harmonious.

The school was located on a six-acre irregularly-shaped site bordered by 11th Street on the north, Farmstead Street on the northwest, Beachy on the southwest and Patricia on the south. The east side of the site abuts residential lots between 11th and Patricia Streets. Positioned on the north third of the site, the school building is a rectangular form that runs east/west, facing 11th Street on the north. A front drive parallel to the building is accessed off Farmstead northwest of the school, extending to a paved parking area northeast of the school with a drive off 11th Street on the north. Concrete sidewalks run along 11th, Farmstead, and Beachy with perpendicular walks extending to building entrances on the north and west. A sidewalk extends the short distance from the parking lot to the east building entrance and a concrete pad is centrally located off the south side of the school with a curved sidewalk from the east parking lot. Located on the rear concrete pad is a one-story classroom building ca. 1960s. Mechanical equipment, including a large condenser is located south of the southwest corner of the gym, west of the classroom building. A paved basketball court is located south of the auxiliary classroom.

The school site is generally an expansive grass lawn with rear playground and recreation space although no playground equipment is extant on the site. Mature trees are spaced along the front of the school building and large shrubs are

Price Elementary School

Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS

County and State

centrally located near the foundation at the front facade. A dense tree line is located along the east property line separating the school site from adjacent residential lots.

Exterior

Price Elementary School is a one-story concrete and steel structure with red brick and horizontal-light windows over colored cement board panels set between square steel columns that form glass ribbons along the classroom bays. The building has a rectangular footprint with a recessed bay near the center of the north facade that serves at the school's front entrance with access to the multipurpose room and administrative offices. The one-and-a-half story multipurpose room opposite the front entrance and offices, rises above the long horizontal form with a band of clerestory windows beneath the fascia. The multipurpose room has a flat roof with deep wood fascia and a rectangular brick chimney off the west wall near the south end. The roof structure is steel joists, originally with composite roofing. White membrane roofs with metal edge flashing have been installed on the classroom windows and multipurpose room at an unknown date.

Although the building almost appears symmetrical, it is not – the recessed entry and administrative bay and raised multipurpose room is near the center of the building but there are four rooms east of the entrance and five on the west. Other subtle design features include a shallow gable roof that appears flat and the roof ridge that extends out from the ends of the building to form a canopy at recessed east and west entrances.

The bays on the front facade do not correspond to individual classrooms but rather to interior function. From the east, the first bay is a span of 2/2 horizontal-light double-hung windows over opaque lower panels corresponding to two classrooms. Bay two is a solid brick wall with a band of six horizontal clerestory windows where restrooms are located on the interior. Bay three is comprised of the horizontal-light windows over opaque panels at one interior classroom. Bay four is the administrative bay with the recessed front entrance at the east end of the bay. The administrative offices have horizontal-light windows over opaque panels like the classroom bays. Bay five is a long band of the horizontal-light windows over opaque panels that reflects three original classrooms. Bay six is a solid brick wall with clerestory windows corresponding to the bathrooms in the west wing and bay seven is comprised of the horizontal-light windows over opaque panels at one interior classroom. The front entrance, at bay four, is a pair of slab doors with long narrow vertical glass lights, with glass sidelights and transom. The recessed entrance is framed by red brick wing walls with the roof forming a flat canopy above. West of the doors is a brick wall with the school's name affixed in applied letters.

Red brick wing walls extend beyond the north and south facades at the east and west ends of the building. The end facades are solid red brick walls with a very shallow gable roof. Brick wing walls also project from the center bay of the east and west facade framing a recessed entrance composed of an aluminum-framed storefront system with a pair of doors framed by side lights and transom.

The south facade is comprised of three distinct bays. The east and west classroom wings are a long, continuous band of the 2/2 horizontal-light double-hung windows over colored cement board panels set between square steel columns. The central bay is the multipurpose room which rises above the east and west classroom wings with a red brick facade and flat roof. Two vertical openings break up the brick horizontal form, dividing the gym facade into five sections. Bays two and four are full-height masonry openings with 2/2 horizontal-light windows set below the roof eave with an opaque panel and door below. A one-story flat canopy extends over the west door and covers mechanical equipment that is located on the building facade. Additional mechanical equipment sets on grade south of the building at the west end of the gym and east end of the classroom wing.

The distinguishing physical characteristic of the school is its mid-century style defined by its expansive horizontal form. The nearly flat roof features a deep wood fascia over exterior walls composed primarily of bands of horizontal-light glass windows. Red brick is used at the east and west ends of the building and on restroom bays with narrow horizontal-light clerestory windows below the eave. The fascia band along the length of the building, as well as the ribbons of windows, reinforce the building's horizontal form.

Price Elementary School is classified under the Modern style, characterized by its asymmetrical horizontal form and horizontal bands of windows. This style also reflects physical changes in school design in which the exterior of buildings reflect the function within with little to no applied ornament.

The rear auxiliary classroom was placed south of the school at an unknown date, likely in the mid-to-late 1960s when the school's population peaked at over 400 students. The building is frame construction, rectangular in form with a shed roof with canopy on the south side. It was set on a concrete block foundation with metal steps up to the entrance at the east end of the north facade. A rear door is located at the east end of the south facade and four 2/2 horizontal windows are located below the canopy. There are no openings on the east and west sides and the north side has two sets of 2/2

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

horizontal-light double-hung windows, the east is a set of two windows, the west is a set of three windows. The exterior is painted vertical siding.

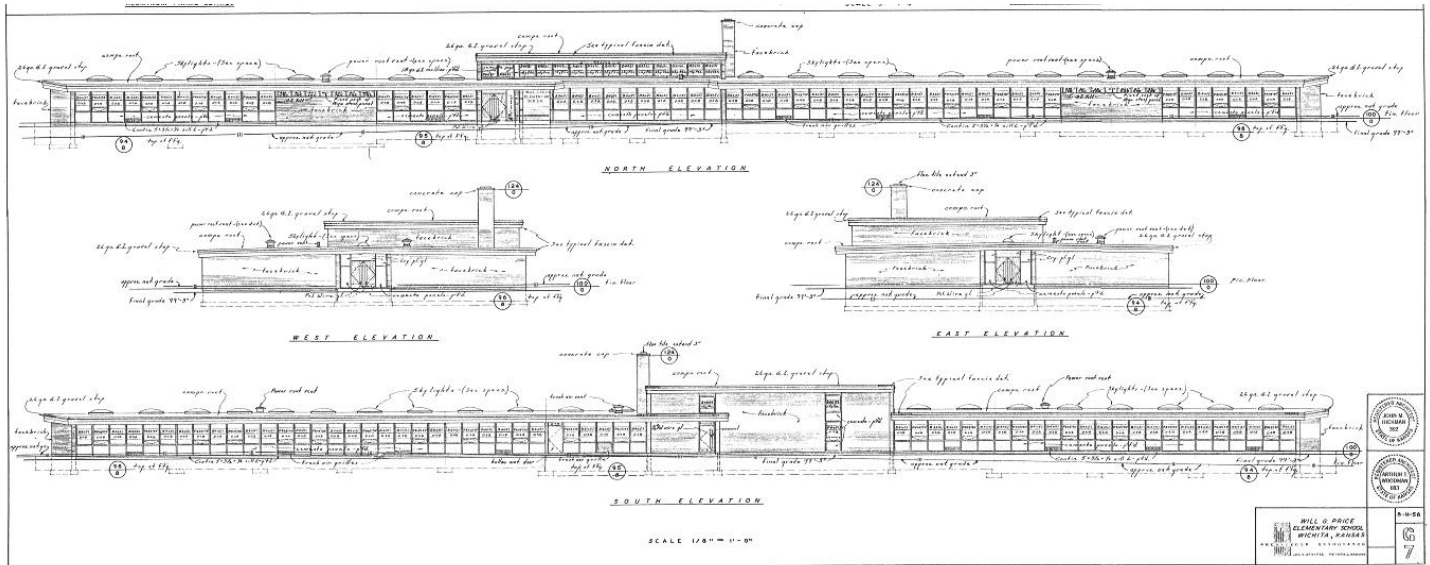


Figure 1 – Elevations, Sheet G-7. Original design documents by Architects Associated (Hickman & Woodward), 8-14-1956, Provided by Wichita Public Schools.

The only known exterior alterations is replacement of the original composition roof with the existing membrane roofs. The existing metal exterior doors may be replacements however, they match the style of the original wood slab doors shown in the original drawings. The site saw the addition of the auxiliary classroom at the rear within the school's first decade. With the exception of the signage which was changed with the school's name in 2006, no other exterior modifications are evident or recorded by the school district.

Interior

The school retains its original plan configuration with few exceptions. Based on original drawings, there were fourteen classrooms, a library, and two sets of restrooms, one in each wing. The central bay housed school offices on the north side, west of the main school entrance opposite a multipurpose room. The front entrance provides direct access to the multipurpose room as well as school offices. A mechanical room is located west of the multipurpose room on the south side of the corridor.

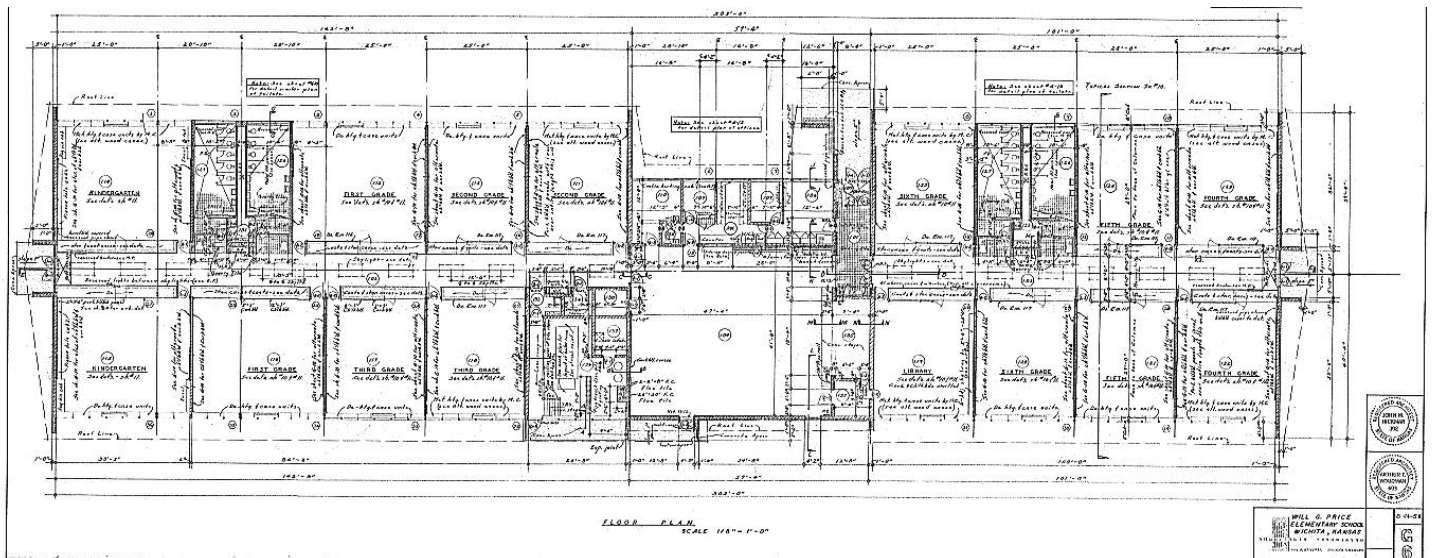


Figure 2 – Floor Plan, Sheet G-6. Original design documents by Architects Associated (Hickman & Woodward), 8-14-1956, Provided by Wichita Public Schools.

Price Elementary School

Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS

County and State

The only known changes to the plan configuration has been removal of the demising wall between the library and adjacent classroom for expansion of the library on the south side of the east wing, and removal of a demising wall between two classrooms on the northside of the west wing for creation of a cafeteria.

The classrooms are located along a double-loaded corridor that runs through the center of the east and west wings and along the north side of the central multipurpose room. This wide corridor with brick and block walls, is a distinguishing interior feature as there are paneled skylights along the full length of the corridor providing natural light throughout. Metal lockers are inset in sections along the corridors. The classrooms were designed with wardrobes and storage cabinets along the shared corridor wall with plexiglass clerestory windows above the built-in cabinets that provide natural light into the classrooms supplementing light from the ribbon of windows along the perimeter walls. Similar built-in cabinetry is accessed from the corridor (versus inside of the classrooms) on the shared corridor wall at the restrooms.

The concrete structure has exposed brick and exposed concrete block walls on the building interior, the block having a painted finish. Ceilings originally had a sprayed textured finish called acoustical plaster on the original drawings. This ceiling finish that remains exposed in some classrooms, the corridors and multipurpose room but is covered by suspended acoustical tile ceilings in some classrooms and in the school offices. The original flooring was VAT throughout which remains exposed in the corridors and most classrooms. The exception was original quarry tile in the bathrooms, flooring that remains in place. The multipurpose room has replacement VCT flooring and carpet has been installed over the VAT in some areas of the school offices.

As simple and utilitarian as the finishes are, the school had a number of quality wood features including slab oak doors and cabinetry with matching oak veneer, all with a light colored finish. In addition to the wardrobe and storage cabinets, the classrooms had wood-framed green slate chalk boards with chalk trays and framed tack boards above on one or two walls. Ventilation units, in metal cabinets, are located below windows on perimeter walls in the classrooms. Between the metal mechanical units are built-in wood shelving. With few exceptions, these built-in features are in place throughout, the primary exception being the library and cafeteria rooms.

The multipurpose room centrally located on the south side of the building opposite the school offices, reflects a common feature in post-war schools. The multipurpose room at Price School was designed to serve a variety of functions including school assemblies, plays or music recitals, gymnasium and cafeteria. The finishes match those in the rest of the building with red brick and painted concrete block walls, textured plaster ceilings and existing VCT flooring. A stage framed by brick piers, has a concrete slab floor and angled block walls. A suspended acoustical tile ceiling was formerly installed above the stage only. Clerestory windows along the upper north wall provide natural light into the space and two doors with windows above are located on the south wall of the multipurpose room.

Integrity

The school has not undergone any comprehensive remodeling or renovation projects and retains a high level of architectural and historic integrity. With only minor exterior alterations and no significant changes in setting, the building retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials and workmanship. The interior modifications, namely the expansion of two rooms by removing an original demising wall, upgrades to some floor finishes, and HVAC upgrades, have had minimal effect on the building's historic character. The school, designed and built in 1956-1957, clearly conveys its original design and construction as a mid-century school. It retains integrity of feeling and association as a Modern public elementary school building.

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity 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.)

Property is:

- 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

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1957

Significant Dates

1957

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hickman, John M. & Woodman, Arthur T.,
Architects

Johnson & Simpson Construction Co., Builders

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance is the building's date of construction – 1957.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

None

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

The Will G. Price Elementary School, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas is nominated to the National Register as a 'City Graded School' property type under the Multiple Property Document Form (MPDF) *Historic Public Schools of Kansas*. The school is significant on a local level under Criterion A as an excellent example of an elementary school built during Wichita's massive population growth in the 1950s. Wichita's population had been on the rise starting in the 1920s through the end of WWII, boosted by the aviation and oil industries, but the city's growth exploded in the 1950s, when the U.S. Air Force built McConnell Air Force Base (AFB) to train pilots on the new Boeing B-47 Stratojets. With the new government installation came thousands of new residents. This influx of new residents, combined with the post-war baby boom resulted in construction of forty-three new schools to educate the burgeoning student population that increased by nearly 2,500 pupils each year. The Will G. Price Elementary School opened to students for the 1957-58 academic year and served Wichita's Unified School District 259 until 2011.

The school is also significant under Criterion C - Architecture as a distinct 1950s Modern public school building and as a representative of Wichita architects Arthur T. Woodman and John M. Hickman. Woodman, overlooked by many architectural historians, began his thirty-five-year career at the prestigious Overend & Boucher, then for Thomas & Harris, where he met John M. Hickman, who had just finished his architectural studies with an apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright. In 1954 Hickman and Woodman established Architects Associated. The firm's first project was a new suburban location for Henry's Department Store, followed by the revolutionary batwing-designed Vickers Petroleum Service Station, Haysville, Kansas, (1954, NR, 2019), and the Riverview Country Club (1956). Their partnership lasted four years including the design of the Price School before they established separate firms in 1959. Both architects designed numerous buildings including other schools in Wichita and around the state. The Will G. Price School was constructed by Johnson & Simpson Construction Co., local contractors who were responsible for many other educational facilities in Wichita.

Elaboration

Criterion A: A Product of Wichita's Post-War Growth

Incorporated in 1870, Wichita quickly became a bustling town known as a railroad hub for agricultural products. The town experienced a real estate boom in the 1880s, then bust in the following decade, rebounding in the early twentieth century when Wichita became the third largest city in the state. In 1900, the city had 24,000 inhabitants.¹ By the 1920s Wichita's economy was based upon oil, automobiles, and aviation. When the United States entered WWII, the aircraft factories of Cessna, Beech, and Boeing had a combined payroll of \$400,000 per month.² The proximity of major transportation routes and petroleum refineries fueled the manufacture and movement of raw and finished products.³

In the post-war era, aviation, petroleum, and agriculture remained the three primary drivers of Wichita's economy. In 1951, the U.S. Air Force (USAF) began renting space at the Wichita Municipal Airport to train crews on the new Boeing B-47 Stratojets. Two years later, the USAF took over the airport, activated the 3520th Combat Crew Training Wing, and in 1956, renamed the base McConnell AFB. Twenty-two million dollars in military construction provided new work for thousands of USAF personnel, whose families began moving into Wichita. By 1956, McConnell AFB was the busiest military airport in the U.S.⁴

Wichita's population surpassed its wartime highs by 1950 with 190,000 residents, a number that rose to roughly 255,000 by 1960.⁵ Metropolitan Wichita added more than 82,000 new residents between 1950 and 1956. It was at this time that Wichita outpaced Kansas City as the largest city in Kansas.⁶ Between 1940 and 1960 Wichita city limits grew from just

¹ Population of Cities in Kansas, 1900-2020. Accessed online May 2, 2024 at <https://ipsr.unit.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/population/2pop33.pdf>.

² Craig Miner. *Wichita: The Magic City*. Wichita: Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 1988. 185.

³ Rachel Nugent and Lauren Rieke, *Colorado-Derby Building Kansas Historic Register Nomination*, Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 2015. 10.

⁴ Jay M. Price. *Wichita's Legacy of Flight*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2003. 80 & 94.

⁵ Population of Cities in Kansas, 1900-2020. Accessed online May 2, 2024 at <https://ipsr.unit.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/population/2pop33.pdf>.

⁶ Craig Miner. *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State 1854-2000*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2002. 313.

Price Elementary School

Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS

County and State

under twenty-three square miles to 48.44 square miles.⁷ As new residents flowed in, housing and school construction became Wichita's top priorities.

In August 1952 the *Wichita Eagle* announced the opening of the first phase of development for a new addition called McEwen Estates. Located east of Oliver and south of 13th Street, the new area was platted with curving residential streets with each home having a 70-150' frontage. Advertisements for the new development boasted that the location was within five minutes of two parks, two country clubs, a community center, with ample parking and shopping ease without crossing a street. The proximity of three graded/intermediate schools and Wichita University were noted.

Property development in the city continued to move east and southward closer to the military base. In July 1955, the City approved the purchase of land in the Fourth Edition of the McEwen Estates at 11th and Patricia for the new elementary school.⁸ The Will G. Price Elementary School, designed by Hickman and Woodman, was contracted to Johnson & Simpson Construction Co. for \$253,799 in April 1957.⁹ As the Price Elementary School was under construction six school building projects were nearing completion including the city's fourth high school. The 1957-58 school year began with over 54,000 enrolled pupils in Wichita schools, 35,865 of whom were elementary students.¹⁰

Price School opened to 171 students in grades 1-8 in the fall of 1957 with fourteen classrooms, a library, and a multipurpose room. Six full-time and one half-time teachers, secretary, and custodian comprised the full-time staff in addition to the principal, Miss Dorothy Dunkelberger.¹¹

The student body of Price Elementary grew to 310 students by 1960, and to 381 by 1962. The school's boundary fluctuated each year and by fall 1966, the boundary increased, adding another fifty students. The 1967-68 school year was the zenith for Price with a record enrollment of 413 students. From there the student population declined to approximately 250 pupils in the mid-1970s.

During the 1980s, enrollment declined to the low 200s as the number school age children fell in the surrounding neighborhood. At the end of the decade, the school board made the decision to merge Price with Harris Elementary to form a single school located on two campuses. The Price campus housed kindergarten through second grade while the Harris campus hosted third through the fifth grade. Enrollment at the Price campus averaged about 175 students. Beginning the 1996-97 school year, Price-Harris converted to a communications magnet school. An early 2000s bond issue brought changes to the school. The Price-Harris Communications Magnet was moved to the Harris campus at the end of the 2003-04 academic year. In April 2006, the Board approved a plan to move the Alcott Academy program to the vacant Price Elementary. The school was renamed and operated as the Blackbear Bosin Academy 2006-2011.

At the time of its construction, the Will G. Price Elementary School was named for William Gordon Price (1878-1952), known as Will G. Price. Price was born to Edwin & Sophia L. Price on September 22, 1878, in Cleveland, OH. The family moved to Wichita less than a year later. He married Eva M. Price in 1910. Will Price graduated from Wichita High School in 1896 and taught in rural schools before founding the Wichita Business College, which he led until 1916. Price then founded Price Auto Service at 301 S. Topeka Ave., operating the firm with his sons until his death in 1952. Price served on the Board of Education, City Planning Commission for twelve years, Chamber of Commerce, YMCA, and Community Chest.

The Board of Education voted to rename Alcott Academy to Blackbear Bosin Academy in June 2006 which moved to the vacant Price Elementary School. Wichita Public Schools officially dedicated Blackbear Bosin Academy during a special ceremony on December 14, 2006. The name was chosen to honor the local Native American artist whose sculpture, "Keeper of the Plains," stands at the confluence of the Arkansas and Little Arkansas Rivers and is a symbol of the city.

⁷ Morgan, Kathy L. and Barbara R. Hammond, *Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870-1957*. Multiple Property Documentation Form, City of Wichita, Metropolitan Area Planning Department. 2008. 95.

⁸ *Wichita Eagle*. 26 Jul 1955, 5.

⁹ "Wichita School Expansion Project Total \$6-Million." *Wichita Eagle*. 14 Apr 1957, 47.

¹⁰ "School Enrollment Plans Announced by Officials." *Wichita Eagle*. 20 Aug 1957, 5.

¹¹ Dunkelberger was injured in an auto accident over the summer and an interim principal opened the school year and ran it for a few months.

Price Elementary School

Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS

County and State

Criterion C: A Modern 'City Graded School'

The Will. G. Price Elementary School¹² is nominated as a City Graded School property type under the *Historic Schools of Kansas MPDF*. As noted in the MPDF, the 1950s not only saw the construction of hundreds of schools across the state, city schools began to move into the neighborhoods they served. The suburban schools brought not only a change in the location of schools but also a drastic change in the appearance of schools. The post-war era brought the modern school plan – school design focused on plan form rather than architectural style and a reflection of modern construction materials and techniques. New construction materials and techniques provided inexpensive, lightweight construction that featured wide flexibility for interior spaces. Sprawling one-story facilities became the norm, providing a sharp contrast to the Progressive Era schools that characterize schools design in the early decades of the twentieth century. This new style of building required larger sites. School design, dictated by plan configuration/function versus architectural style, began in the post-war era and endures today.¹³

With few physical modifications, Price Elementary retains a high degree of architectural integrity, clearly conveying its mid-century design and construction. The school portrays the key characteristics of the modern City Graded School property sub-type and meets the registration requirements outlined in the MPDF. Will G. Price Elementary is a fine representative of the City Graded School property type that reflects the Modern Movement in architecture. The school is also a significant representative of the work of architects John M. Hickman and Arthur T. Woodman. The men worked together at the Glen H. Thomas & A.B. Harris firm briefly before establishing their own company, Architects Associated, in 1954. The partnership lasted four years after which both men formed their own successful architectural companies but during their short tenure, the firm designed notable buildings that reflect the modern movement in architecture.

Arthur T. Woodman (1926-2013) was born on March 21, 1926 in Kansas City, Missouri to Clyde and Esther Woodman. After attending primary schools in Overland Park and Shawnee Mission, KS, he earned his degree in architectural engineering from Kansas University in 1948. He married Frances G. Holland in 1946 and they had eight children.

Woodman practiced architecture in Wichita for thirty-five years. He began practicing in Wichita in 1949, where he worked for Overend & Boucher, then for Glen H. Thomas & A.B. Harris, where he worked on projects including the Municipal Airport Building & Tower and the Kansas Gas & Electric Building (1953).¹⁴ He met John Hickman at Thomas & Harris and the two decided to work together. In April 1954, Hickman and Woodman established Architects Associated with offices at 2314 E. Central Ave. The firm's first project was Henry's Department Store at the southeast corner of Douglas & Oliver, followed by the revolutionary bat-wing designed Vickers Petroleum Service Station, Haysville, Kansas, (1954, NR, 2019), and the Riverview Country Club (1956). The firm also designed the Derby (Kansas) Public School (1955) and Oaklawn Junior High (1957). Both men take credit for the Kansas Gas & Electric Building (1953) while working for the firm Thomas & Harris.¹⁵

Hickman and Woodman dissolved the partnership by 1959 and Woodman opened an office in the Central Building. In 1962 Woodman's firm expanded with the addition of Van Doren (who had also worked at Thomas & Harris) and McHenry. The trio designed numerous commercial and civic structures including Hattan Chevrolet, Quality Chevrolet, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church (1963), First National Bank Building and Garage at Douglas & Water (1966), and the Farm Bureau Building (1977) in Wichita.

John Moore Hickman (1925-1964) was born May 28, 1925, to Joseph Moore and Daisy Hickman in Amarillo, Texas. His family came to Wichita in the late 1930s where Hickman attended Robinson Intermediate and East High Schools. Hickman worked as an illustrator of manuals for the Aero Parts Manufacturing Company while in high school, but left his senior year to work as an illustrator for Lockheed Aircraft Company in California. Hickman entered the Army Air Corps during World War II and received his fighter pilot wings in 1944. After the war, he returned to Wichita and completed the work necessary for his high school diploma while also employed as an illustrator at Beech Aircraft Company. In 1945, he married Mary Jane Jackson and the couple had four girls. Hickman studied architecture at the University of Illinois and worked as an apprentice under Frank Lloyd Wright. Hickman returned to Wichita where he worked for the architectural

¹² Much of this school history is taken from the "History of Wichita Public School Buildings," compiled by Nina Davis (1978) and updated by Sara Lomax (1996). The document was accessed on May 6, 2024 online at <https://www.usd259.org>.

¹³ Brenda Spencer. *Historic Public Schools of Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form*. Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 2005. E25, E34.

¹⁴ "Architect Imparts Worth into Designed Structures." *Wichita Eagle*. 20 Feb 1963, 8.

¹⁵ Ibid, and "Architect Gains Philosophy of Profession from Mentor." *Wichita Eagle*. 6 Jun 1967, 7.

Price Elementary School

Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS

County and State

firm Thomas & Harris before starting Architects Associated with Arthur Woodman. He founded John M. Hickman and Associates, Architects & Planning Consultants by the end of the decade and partnered with Roy K. Varenhorst in 1961. Hickman died April 23, 1964.¹⁶

Hickman is best known as the architect of Century II Performing Arts & Convention Center (completed in 1966), the Ablah Library at Wichita State University (1962), and the Vickers Petroleum Service Station, Haysville, Kansas, (1954, NR, 2019). Additional designs included Pleasantview Elementary School (1957) and Payne Elementary School (1960) with Roy K. Varenhorst. Other school designs included Wineteer Elementary School, Derby, KS (1958-59) and Wichita's Rea Woodman Elementary, the state's largest elementary school when constructed in 1962.

Builders E.W. Johnson and Chet Simpson formed Johnson & Simpson Construction Co. in 1954. The partnership lasted four years, after which both formed their own firms and were in business in Wichita for decades. While working together they undertook numerous projects including eighteen for Wichita's public school district in 1957 alone, followed by the Griffith Elementary School in 1958.¹⁷ The firm's bid for the general contract for the Will G. Price Elementary School in 1956 totaled \$253,799, including Vaughn Plumbing and Heating and Doonan Electric.

Earl Warren Johnson (1921-2009) build numerous structures in Wichita including Goddard High School (1969), Friends University Library (1968), Lutheran Social Services Building (1960), Riverside Christian Church (1966), Southwest National Bank (1964), additions to the North High School (1962), Marshall School (1962), Osteopathic Hospital (1968), Valley Center Elementary School in Abilene (1966), and Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church (1963). Johnson also constructed the high school in Medicine Lodge, KS (1960) and numerous portable classrooms for Wichita during the 1950s and 1960s.

Chet Simpson (1918-1986) founded Simpson & Associates in 1958. The firm is operating as a fourth-generation company in 2024. Through the years Simpson's projects have included the elementary school in Mulvane (1988) and the Rose Hill school cafeteria (1990), as well as other public buildings such as the Via Christi Regional Medical Center (2009). The firm continues to build schools in Wichita including the Dodge Literacy Magnet Elementary School (2011) and the St. Mary Parish Catholic School (2010).

Conclusion

The Will G. Price Elementary School is nominated to the National Register as a locally-significant resource under Criteria A – Education and C – Architecture. The school qualifies under the *Historic Schools in Kansas MPDF* as a good representative of the City Graded School property sub-type and an excellent representative of a post-war Modern elementary school designed by local architects John Hickman and Arthur Woodman. Constructed in 1957, the school represents post-war educational trends when schools followed suburban neighborhood development. Wichita's dramatic post-war growth and population boom resulted in construction of forty-three schools in 1950s. Will G. Price Elementary was one of the schools opening in 1957 and serving the community until 2011 when its fifty-plus year role in educating Wichita students came to an end.

¹⁶ "John M. Hickman." *Wichita Beacon*. 24 Apr 1964, 26.

¹⁷ "30 Building Permits Issued." *Wichita Eagle*. 26 Jun 1957, 8.

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Davis, Christy. *Kellogg School NR Nomination (built 1941), Dodlinger & Sons, Contractors*, Washington, DC: National Park Service, 2010.

Hickman and Woodward Architects Associated. *Will G. Price Elementary School Original Drawings*. 1956. Provided electronically by Wichita Public Schools.

"History of Wichita Public School Buildings," compiled by Nina Davis (1978) and updated by Sara Lomax (1996). The document was accessed on May 6, 2024 online at <https://www.usd259.org>.

Johnson, Kristy. *Vickers Petroleum Service Station*. Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 2019.

Miner, Craig. *Kansas: The History of the Sunflower State 1854-2000*. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2002.

Miner, Craig. *Wichita: The Magic City*. Wichita: Wichita-Sedgwick County Historical Museum, 1988.

Miner, Craig, *The Wichita Reader: A Collection of Writing about the Prairie City*, Wichita, KS: Wichita Eagle and Beacon Publishing Co., 1992.

Morgan, Kathy L. and Barbara R. Hammond, *Residential Resources of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas 1870-1957*. Multiple Property Documentation Form, City of Wichita, Metropolitan Area Planning Department. 2008.

Morgan, Kathy L. and Kyle M. Palmer, *Draft Multiple Property Documentation Form, Commercial and Industrial Resources Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas*, City of Wichita, Metropolitan Area Planning Department, 2013.

Nugent, Rachel and Lauren Rieke, *Colorado-Derby Building Kansas Historic Register Nomination*. Topeka, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 2015.

Price-Harris Communications Magnet Elementary School, accessed online on 26 Apr 2024 at <https://www.usd259.org/domain/1773>.

Racette, Celeste Bogart. *Century II Performing Arts and Convention Center National Register Nomination*. Washington, DC: National Parks Service, 2019.

Roy K. Varenhorst Collection of John M. Hickman and Roy K. Varenhorst Papers, MS-2006-02. Manuscripts. Wichita State University. <https://archivesspace.wichita.edu/repositories/3/resources/395>. Accessed 13 May 2024.

Spencer, Brenda. *Historic Public Schools of Kansas Multiple Property Documentation Form. National Register of Historic Places. 2005*.

Spencer, Brenda and Michelle Spencer, *Ash-Grove Historical District on East Douglas Avenue (Wichita) National Register Nomination*, Kansas State Historical Society, 2015.

Spencer, Brenda and Michelle Spencer, *Grandview Terrace Apartments (Wichita) National Register Nomination*, Kansas State Historical Society, 2015.

Tihen, Edward N. "Dr. Edward N. Tihen's Notes from Wichita Newspapers," Special Collections and University Archives, Wichita State University Libraries.

Van Meter, Sondra. *Our Common School Heritage: A History of Wichita Public Schools*. Wichita, KS: Board of Education of Unified School District No. 259, 1977.

Wichita Eagle. Multiple dates. Accessed on newspapers.com.

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

Acreeage of Property approx 3 acres

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

Provide latitude/longitude coordinates OR UTM coordinates.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

1 37.704924 -97.265232
Latitude: Longitude:

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

The nominated property is comprised of approximately three acres - the north portion of the parcel described below:

Block D, McEwen Fourth Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas, described as: Beginning at the Southwest Corner of Lot 21, Block E, McEwen Fourth Addition, Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas; thence North along the West lines of Lots 21, 8, 7, in Block E extended, a distance of 591.14 feet to a point in the South line of 11th Street; thence Westerly along the South line of 11th Street at an included angle of 90°15'30" a distance of 150.14 feet to the P.C. of a curve to the right, having a radius of 508 feet; thence along said curve, being the Southerly line of 11th Street, a distance of 224.17 feet to the Southeasterly line of Farmstead Street; thence Southwesterly along the Southeasterly line of Farmstead Street, being a curve having a radius of 915 feet, a distance of 390.9 feet to the Northeasterly line of Beachy Avenue; thence Southeasterly along the Northeasterly line of Beachy Avenue, a distance of 519.62 feet to the P.C. of a curve to the left having a radius of 2399.66 feet; thence along said curve to the left being the Northeasterly line of Beachy Avenue, a distance of 72.1 feet to the Northwesterly line of Patricia Avenue; thence Northeasterly along the radius to said curve, being the Northwesterly line of Patricia Avenue, a distance of 104.19 feet to the P.C. of a curve to the right having a radius of 293.52 feet; thence along said curve to the right, being the Northwesterly line of Patricia Avenue, a distance of 137.8 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The entire school parcel is reflected by the legal description above. The boundary of the nominated property is approximately three acres encompassing the north end of the parcel - the land around the school building including original access off Farmstead and 11th Streets as illustrated on the photo key at the end of this nomination. This boundary was selected to maintain the option of selling the rear portion of the site.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Michelle and Brenda Spencer
organization Spencer Preservation date 25 June 2024
street & number 10150 Onaga Road telephone 785-456-9857
city or town Wamego state KS zip code 66547
e-mail brenda@spencerpreservation.com

Property Owner: (complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Tom Geroge Investments, LLC
street & number 1900 Red Brush Ct. telephone 316-207-1866
city or town Wichita state KS zip code 67206

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.).

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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.

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Photographs

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

Photograph Log

Name of Property: Will G. Price Elementary School

City or Vicinity: Wichita

County: Sedgwick State: Kansas

Photographer: Brenda Spencer

Date Photographed: 11 March 2024

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

<u>#</u>	<u>Camera Direction</u>	<u>Description</u>
1 of 14	SW	View of School from entrance off 11 th Street
2 of 14	NW	South and East facades with free-standing rear classroom
3 of 14	NE	West end of south facade
4 of 14	SE	North and west facades
5 of 14	S	Central section of north/front facade
6 of 14	W	Peak of shallow gable roof projects over east entry (same on west)
7 of 14	W	Central corridor with skylights, metal lockers and brick walls with opaque upper panels that provide natural light from skylights to classrooms
8 of 14	NW	Built in cabinetry with coat rack and shelving in main corridor (also in classrooms)
9 of 14	SE	Central multi-purpose room open to corridor with stage on east end
10 of 14	NE	Central multi-purpose room open to corridor with clerestory windows
11 of 14	W	Classroom with windows along one wall, chalk boards and built-in cabinets
12 of 14	W	Typical classroom with VCT floor, CMU walls and plaster ceilings
13 of 14	NW	Detail of original 2/2 horizontal light aluminum windows (typical)
14 of 14	NW	Detail of built-in cabinets and chalkboard on corridor wall of each classroom with opaque panels above providing diffused natural light

Photo Key on following page

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

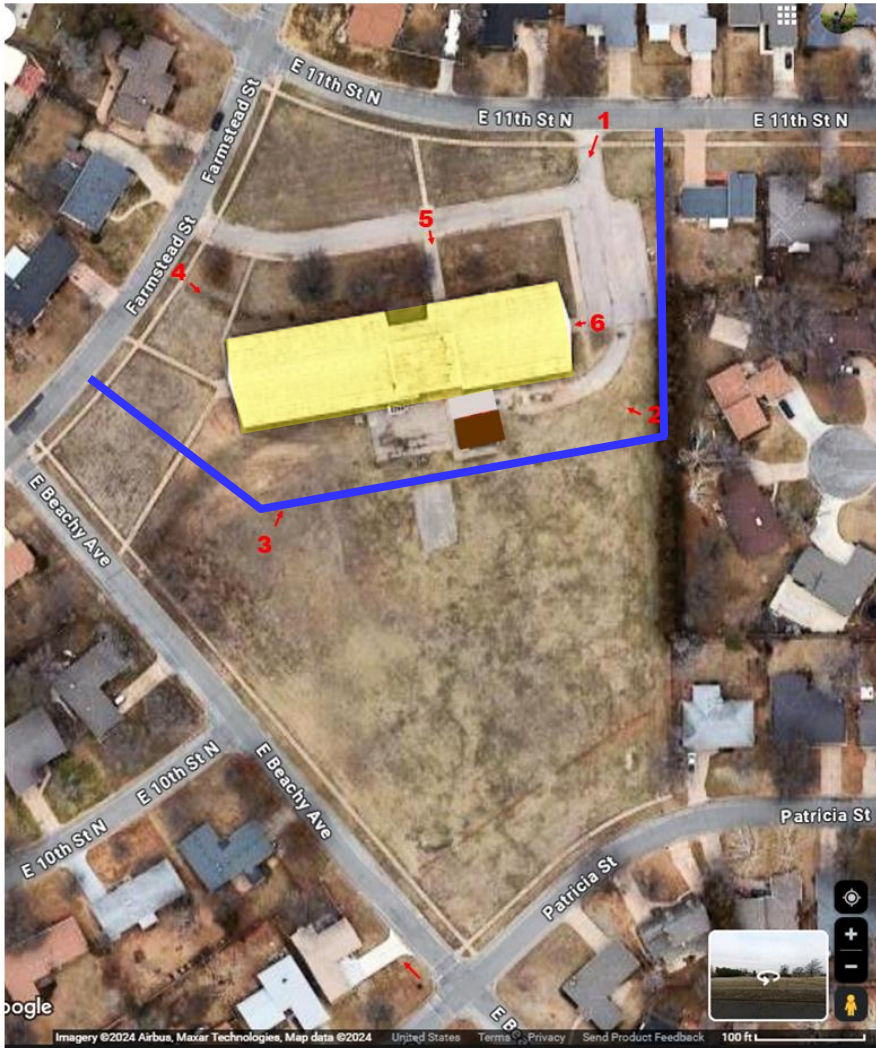
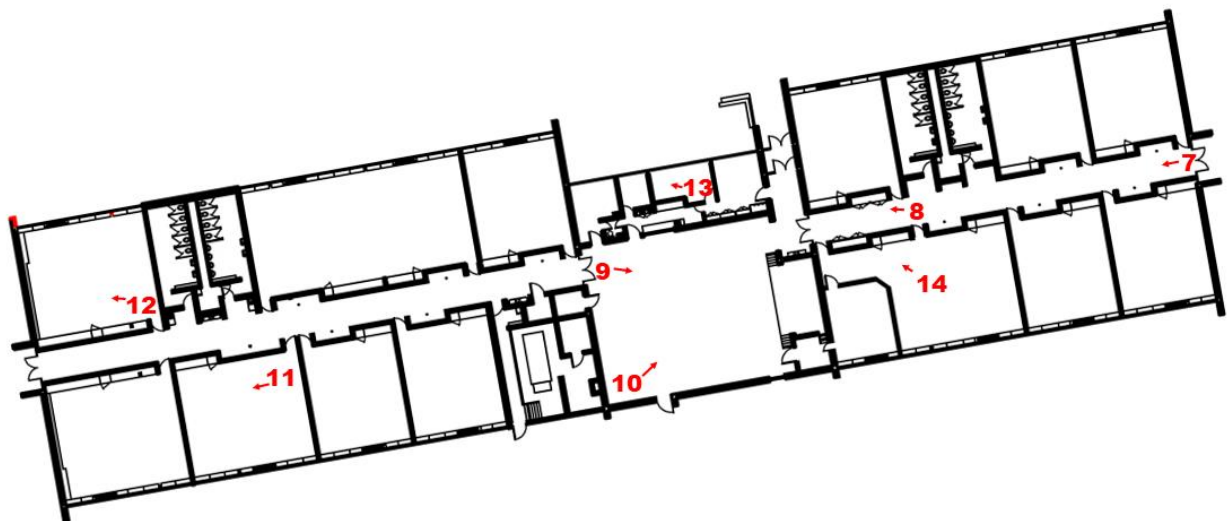


PHOTO KEY

**Price Elementary School
6123 E. 11th Street N, Wichita**

Google Maps 2024 used as site plan
Floor Plan from Wichita Public Schools (NTS)

The blue line indicates the nominated property - a three-acre boundary at the north end of the parcel.



Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

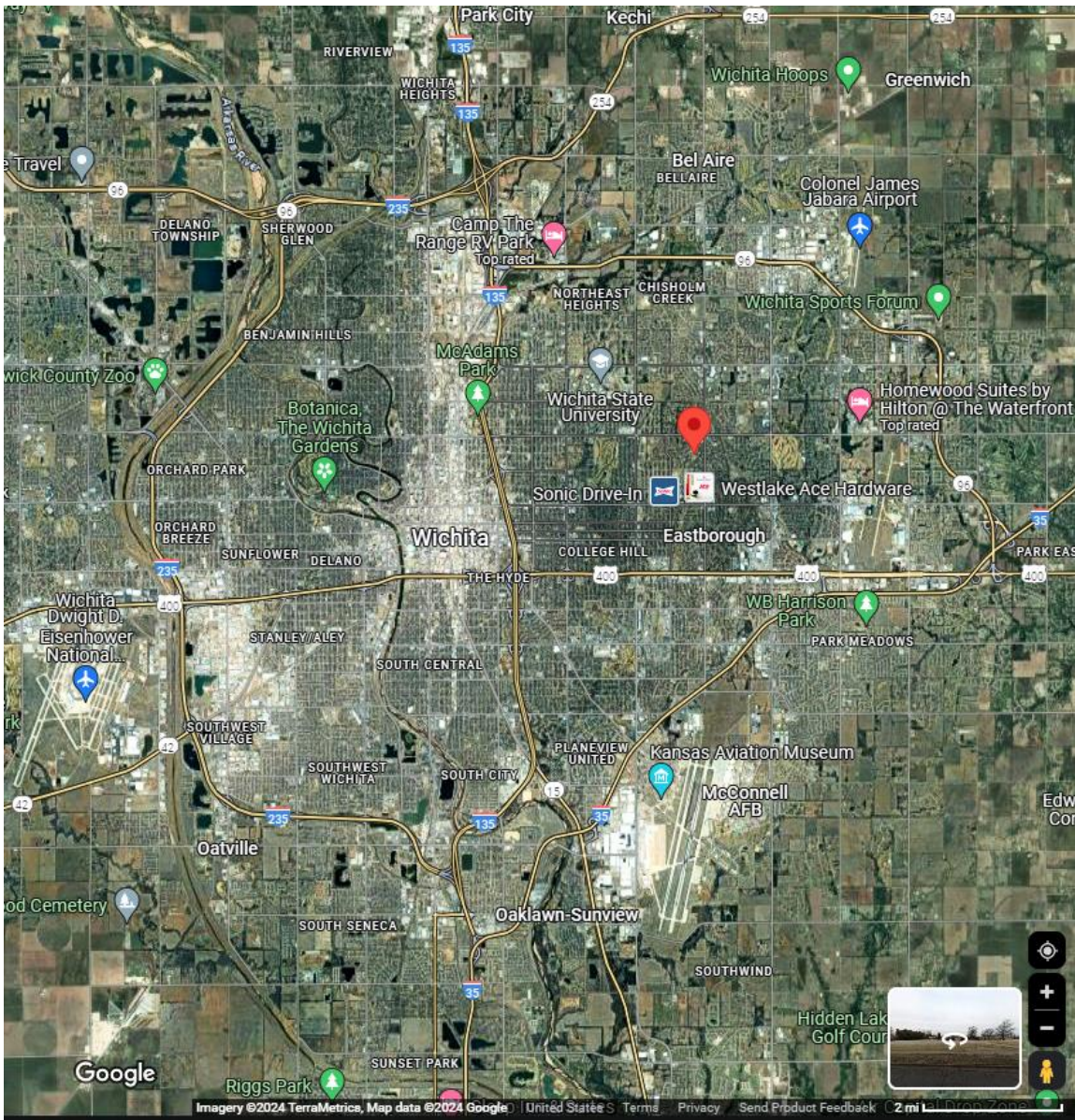


Figure 3 – Wichita Context Map

Google Maps 2024

Will G. Price Elementary School, 6123 E. 11th Street N. Sedgwick County, Wichita, KS
WGS 84, Latitude 37.704924, Longitude -97.265232

Price Elementary School
Name of Property

Sedgwick County, KS
County and State

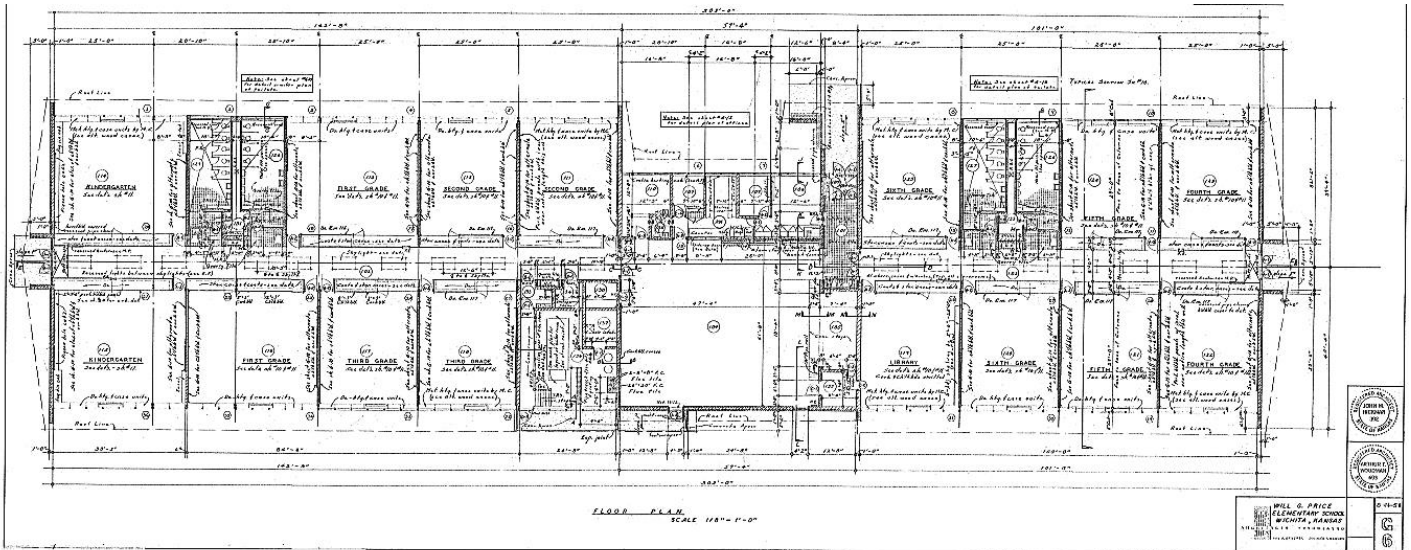
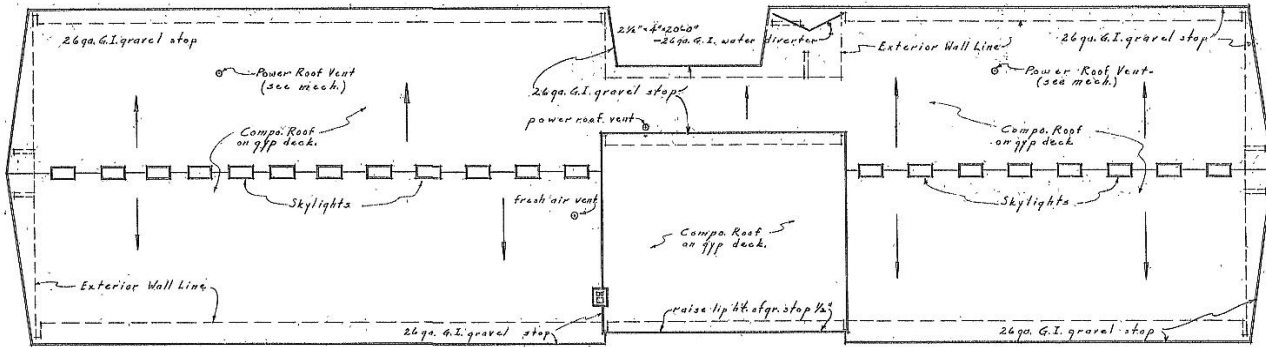
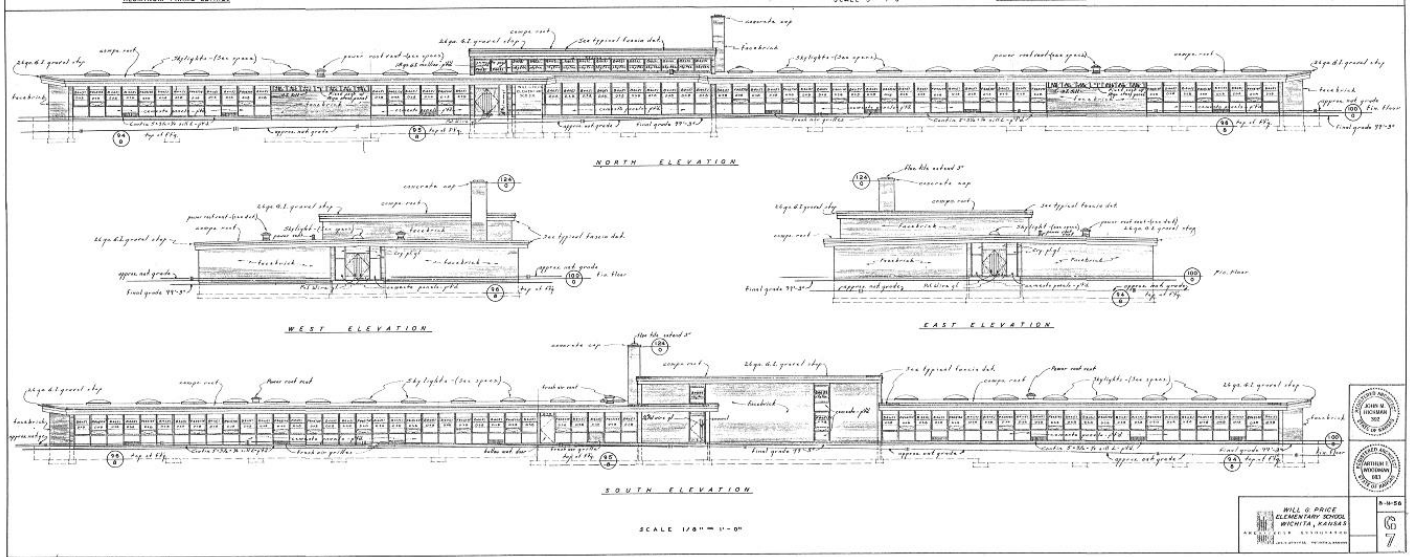


Figure 5 – Floor and Roof Plan and Elevations from Original Drawings (Full set available at Kansas SHPO)
Will G. Price Elementary School
Wichita, Kansas
John M. Hickman and Arthur T. Woodman Architects Associated, 14 August 1956