

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Kim Schools

other names/site number 5LA.1815

2. Location

street & number 425 State Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Kim [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Las Animas code 71 zip code 81049

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 [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- [] entered in the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register
[] other, explain [] See continuation sheet.

Kim Schools
Name of Property

Las Animas County, Colorado
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	Total

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

New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

RECREATION & CULTURE/Sports Facility

RECREATION & CULTURE/Auditorium

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/School

RECREATION & CULTURE/Sports Facility

RECREATION & CULTURE/Auditorium

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & EARLY 20TH CENTURY

AMERICAN MOVEMENTS

Other: WPA Rustic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Sandstone

walls Sandstone

roof Asphalt

other _____

Narrative Description

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

Kim Schools
Name of Property

Las Animas County, Colorado
County/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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL HISTORY

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Periods of Significance

1933 - 1956

Significant Dates

1934

1936

1940

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Civil Works Administration

Works Progress Administration

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Colorado Historical Society

Kim Schools
Name of Property

Las Animas County, Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.87 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

- | | | | | |
|----|------|---------|----------|----------------------------|
| 1. | 13 | 646088 | 4123338 | (NAD27) |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 2. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 3. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 4. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | [] See continuation sheet |

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Abigail Christman, Survey Coordinator (for property owner)
organization Colorado Preservation, Inc. date 5/26/2006
street & number 333 West Colfax Avenue, Suite 300 telephone 303-893-4260
city or town Denver state Colorado zip code 80204

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Kim School District #88
street & number P.O. Box 100 telephone 719-643-5295
city or town Kim state Colorado zip code 81049-0100

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. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Kim Schools
Las Animas County, CO

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(New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains MPS)

DESCRIPTION

The southeastern end of Las Animas County is known as Kim Country, with the small, isolated town of Kim at its center. Kim is roughly 70 miles east of Trinidad, 60 miles south of La Junta, and 50 miles west of Springfield. The Kim Schools includes three buildings: an elementary school, gymnasium, and high school. The three buildings are located in a row on State Street, and are the most substantial buildings in the small community of Kim. The population of Kim has been shrinking since the 1930s and minimal physical changes have been made since the schools were constructed. This cluster of buildings retains its integrity of design, materials, workmanship, location, feeling, and association.

The school buildings face east, looking onto the plains with no buildings visible beyond. A sidewalk connects the three buildings and patchy grass is located around the buildings. Small lawns are located in front of the high school and elementary school, with short sidewalks leading from the main sidewalk to the front steps. At the gymnasium the front steps abut the main sidewalk. Sidewalks also run between the buildings. Street parking is available directly in front of the schools and on the south side of the high school. Playground equipment is located to the west (rear) of the elementary school and between the elementary school and the gymnasium. The play area behind the elementary school is graveled and unenclosed. The other play area has grass and is enclosed by a chain link fence. Three deciduous trees are located in front of the elementary school, one tree is located between the elementary school and the gymnasium, and two trees are located in front of the high school. Behind the elementary school is another tree and a large shrub and another shrub is located at the southeast corner of the high school.

All three school buildings are constructed of locally quarried sandstone, giving the schools a unified appearance. The buildings rest on stone foundations and feature quarry-faced masonry with beaded grapevine joints. The design of the elementary school and high school is very similar, both low, flat-roofed buildings with stepped parapet roofs. While the Rustic style is predominant in the appearance of the buildings, the use of stepping and set backs reflects the influence of the Art Deco style. Both the elementary and high schools feature regularly coursed ashlar masonry. The gymnasium building, located between the elementary and high schools, is higher in profile and topped with a hipped roof with cross gables. It is constructed of random coursed ashlar.

Elementary School

The northernmost of the three school buildings is the elementary school. The second to be built with construction starting in 1936, this single-story building measures 72' x 133'. The quarry-faced masonry walls are laid in regular courses. The roof is flat, surrounded by a stepped parapet wall on the front and sides. The current roof material is mineral surface roofing felt installed around 1990. The school has a modified rectangular plan with projecting bays at the northeast and southeast corners. An entrance is centered on the east facade and additional entrances are centered on the north and south sides. All the entrances are distinguished by stepped bays which project above the top of the parapet wall. Concrete steps laid in a concentric pattern lead up to the entrances. The steps are original, but the metal pipe railings on them are not. The entrances are set within segmental masonry arch openings and hold double metal and glazed doors topped by 10-light, wood-framed transoms. The doors are replacements, but the transoms appear to be original. A large rectangular block of stone, smoother than the surrounding stones, is located above the front entrance. The stone seems to have been intended for an inscription, such as those above the front entrances of the high school and gymnasium, but it is blank. A standard WPA (Works Progress Administration) bronze plaque is located to the north

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of the front entrance.

All the window openings are topped by masonry segmental arches and have stone sills. The original windows have been removed and most openings have smaller aluminum-frame windows surrounded by infill panels; a few window openings have been completely infilled. There are ten window openings on the facade and six windows on each side. A band of twenty windows extends across the length of the rear wall.

Inside the hallways form a T-shape, with the hallway leading from the front door intersecting the hallway connecting the north and south entrances. Classrooms are located off the hallways. The original interior finishes were hardwood floors and plastered walls and ceilings. The hardwood floors are still intact but have been covered with carpet. A drop ceiling has been installed and the exterior walls have been covered with insulation, furring, and new gypboard.

Gymnasium

The gymnasium is located between the elementary school and the high school. It was the first to be built with construction starting in December 1933. It is constructed of quarry-faced ashlar blocks laid in random courses. It is taller than the elementary and high school buildings, with a raised basement, main level, and balcony level. A hipped roof covers the building, which measures 100' x 60'. The building has a modified cross-shaped plan with a full-height vestibule section centered on the east facade and a rear cross gable section extending to the north and south. The vestibule is covered with a front gable roof. The rafter tails are exposed on the hipped and gabled roofs. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. According to a historic photo, the original roof material appears to have been shingle as well, though the current roof is not original. Beneath the gable ridge of the vestibule, a polygonal shaped stone is inscribed with "CWA" (Civil Works Administration). An exterior masonry chimney is located on the northern end of the west (rear) side; the base of the chimney is larger than the shaft.

The front entrance is inset within a masonry segmental arch opening. Above the arch there is a stone with "Kim Gym" inscribed on it. Non-original double metal doors fill the front entry with paneling and a sign reading "Kim Activity Center" above. Stone steps with a non-original metal pipe railing lead up to the entrance. Additional doors are located at the basement level. There are doors on the north and south sides of the vestibule. Four doors are located on the cross gable, two on the east side and two on the west side. Most of the openings have been infilled. The only doorways not infilled are on the south side of the vestibule and on the northeast side of the cross gable. The doors are not original.

Windows are located on the basement, main floor, and balcony levels. The windows are all topped by masonry segmental arches. The openings on the basement and balcony levels have all been infilled. No original windows remain. Multi-light metal frame windows are located on the main level of the north side and aluminum-frame windows set within infill panels are located on the main level of the south side. The main level window openings on the vestibule also have aluminum-frame windows set within infill panels. There are six window openings on the east facade, nineteen window openings on each of the north and south sides, and three windows on the west side. On the east, north and west walls the windows are equally distributed between the three levels. On the west wall the windows are only on the basement level.

Inside, the basement has concrete floors with plaster walls and ceilings; these finishes are original. The basement level is being used for storage. On the main level, the original gymnasium floor remains, but

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the balcony was removed due to safety concerns. The original ceiling was composed of celotex panels. These have been removed and replaced with acoustical tile. The exterior walls have been covered with insulation, furring, and new gypboard.

High School

The southernmost building is the high school, which was the last to be constructed. The single-story, building measures 82' by 113'. The quarry-faced masonry walls are laid in regular courses. The roof is flat, surrounded by a stepped parapet wall on the east facade and sides. The roof extends beyond the rear (west) wall; its overhanging eaves have exposed rafters. The current roof material is mineral surface roofing felt installed around 1990. The high school has a modified rectangular plan with small projecting bays at the northeast and southeast corners. A cornerstone laid by the M.W. Grand Lodge A.F. and A.M. of Colorado in December 1939 is located at the northeast corner. A small red brick chimney is located at the southwest corner of the school. An entrance is centered on the east facade and additional entrances are centered on the north and south sides. A rectangular stone with "Kim High School" carved in relief is located above the front entrance. All the entrances are distinguished by stepped bays which project above the top of the parapet wall. The entrance doors are recessed within segmental masonry arch openings. At the east and north entrances wood vestibules have been built within the openings. The vestibules protrude about 3 feet beyond the stone opening and have double metal doors topped by single-light transoms. At the south entrance, there are double metal doors with a single-light transom like those on the east and north entrances but there is no vestibule. Concrete steps with non-original metal pipe railings lead up to the entrances. New concrete has been poured over the historic stairs to create larger steps. The original stairs had the same concentric pattern as the stairs on the elementary school.

The windows openings on the high school have smooth ashlar lintels and quarry-faced sills. There are eight windows on the facade, six windows on each of the north and south sides, and thirteen windows on the west side. The original windows have been removed and most openings have smaller aluminum-frame windows surrounded by infill panels. The window openings on the north side have been completely infilled.

Inside, the hallways form a T-shape, with the hallway leading from the front door intersecting the hallway connecting the north and south side entrances. A WPA bronze plaque, matching that located on the exterior of the elementary school, is mounted on the wall north of the entrance. An auditorium is located to the north of the front entrance and offices are located to the south. Classrooms line the north-south hallway. The auditorium was originally furnished with wood benches. The current theater seating came from a theater in Trinidad in the 1950s. The original interior finishes at the high school were hardwood flooring, plaster walls, and celotex ceilings. The hardwood flooring has been covered with carpet. The original celotex ceiling remains in the corridors and auditorium; acoustical tile ceilings have been installed in the rest of the school. The exterior walls have been covered with insulation, furring, and new gypboard.

Alterations & Integrity

Though all the windows and doors of the Kim Schools have been replaced, the important character-defining features of the Kim Schools are intact. The stonework is the most visually distinctive element of the school buildings. It is the quarry-faced stonework that gives the buildings their rustic character. The stonework is the essential component of the integrity of design, materials, feeling and

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workmanship for the Kim Schools. The stonework is also an essential part of the Kim Schools association with the New Deal, since rustic stonework using locally quarried materials was a common element of WPA construction.

The Kim School District has always had limited financial resources. Changes to the buildings reflect whatever was essential for their continued functioning. There have been makeshift solutions to create more energy efficient buildings, including filling openings with insulating Styrofoam blocks. Some alterations have also been made to the interior such as drop ceilings and adding insulation to exterior walls. The interior of the school buildings has always been very simple, without ornamentation. So despite some changes made to the finishes, the overall character has changed little.

Historic photographs of the gymnasium and high school provide some information on their original appearance. The large window openings on the gymnasium were filled with three 6/6 wood-framed sash windows. There was infill between the top of the rectangular frames of the windows and the curve of the segmental arch opening. The stone steps are original, though historically there was no railing. At the high school, a photo shows that the original entry doors were paired fifteen-light wood-framed doors topped by a seven-light transom. Historic photographs taken near the time of the original construction of the buildings show the surrounding site as bare packed dirt without landscaping, paving or other site features. The sidewalks, grass, parking, and playground equipment have been added over time.

The schools were wired for electricity in 1951 (previously Kim only had electricity for two hours in the evening). Bathrooms were installed in the elementary and high school buildings in the 1959. Prior to this, outhouses were located behind the buildings. A new gymnasium and cafeteria was constructed in 1972. Some believed the old gymnasium could no longer be safely used. But it was saved by those who fondly remembered it from their school years and others who "wished to preserve the stately old landmark." The gym was remodeled to serve as the Kim Activity Center. At this time a new roof was put on the gymnasium and the balcony level was removed (students had been injured jumping off the balconies). This is also when the acoustical ceiling was installed. The current windows were installed in the elementary and high school in the early 1980s.

These alterations do little to detract from the buildings' association with the New Deal or the workmanship evident in the buildings' stone construction. For the CWA and WPA programs, pre-manufactured elements such as windows and doors are not as critical to integrity since they do not directly relate to the program's purpose of providing local jobs or its emphasis on hand craftsmanship.

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SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed between 1933 and 1941 under the Civil Works Administration (CWA), Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA), Kim Schools are nominated under the *New Deal Resources of Eastern Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). Kim Schools meet the registration requirements of two property types delineated in the MPDF—Education Buildings (subtype: Primary and Secondary School Facilities) and Recreational & Cultural Resources (subtype: Community Centers, Auditoriums/Gymnasiums).

Kim Schools meet Criterion A for significance in the areas of Social History, Education and Entertainment/Recreation. Representing the work of several New Deal programs, the three buildings were constructed over eight years, providing a source of employment in the Kim area for much of the Depression. The schools were the first substantial educational buildings constructed in the community, replacing earlier, small pre-fabricated frame structures; and they remain the only school buildings in Kim. The gymnasium was the only facility for physical education, athletic competition, dances, and graduations in Kim until the 1970s; it continues to be used for community events.

The buildings meet Criterion C for Architecture as good examples of New Deal Rustic design with craftsmanship, materials and construction methods that reflect their origin as public works programs intended to provide employment. They were built from locally quarried stone and materials salvaged from federal buildings demolished at Fort Lyons. This use of local materials and traditional construction techniques are characteristics of CWA and WPA architecture.

The period of significance begins in 1933 with the start of construction of the gymnasium as a CWA project and ends in 1956. Although the Kim Schools remain in active use and continue to be a vital part of the Kim community, the period of significance arbitrarily ends in 1956 in order to comply with the National Register's fifty year rule. The significant dates of 1934, 1936 and 1940 correspond to when the majority of construction occurred on the gymnasium, elementary school and high school, respectively, thereby defining their architectural style.

Social History

The Kim Schools are significant for their association with several New Deal programs—the Civil Works Administration (CWA), the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The three buildings represent an important record of federal relief programs administered on the eastern plains of Colorado during the Great Depression. Although all of Colorado was affected by the dire economic conditions of the 1930s, the agricultural-based economy of the eastern plains was especially hard hit due to the drought conditions that led to the Dust Bowl. The public works jobs helped families as well as communities survive during the Depression years, and provided an infrastructure that would not have otherwise been built. The Kim Schools speak to the determination of its residents to survive the Depression years, and to the federal government programs that were developed to help them do so. A young and isolated town, Kim was in particular need of aid. The series of school construction projects provided much needed jobs throughout the Depression as well as replacing schools damaged by dust storms. The community need was evident in the fact that three school projects were approved for Kim.

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Education

Schools and gymnasiums were very popular New Deal projects. Many small school districts could not afford gymnasiums or new school buildings and the New Deal programs were an ideal opportunity to improve their educational facilities. Prior to the New Deal programs, Kim had no gymnasium and its schools were housed in make-shift frame buildings. The CWA and WPA projects clearly improved public education in this rural area.

School improvement projects, such as roof repairs, leveling grounds, laying sand for playgrounds, painting and constructing horse or bus barns were much more common for the CWA than major construction projects. Schools in Las Animas County with CWA school improvement projects included Aguilar, Prairie Star, Valley View, Model, Trinidad, and Trinchera. Many more school improvement projects in the county were approved, but never constructed. The only other large CWA construction project in Las Animas County was for an adobe and concrete gymnasium at Branson. Like the Kim gymnasium, the project was transferred to the WPA when the CWA ended. The WPA constructed many rural school projects in Las Animas to serve the county's disperse population including buildings at Thatcher, El Moro, Weston, Rugby, Aguilar, and Segundo. The Kim Schools are an unusual collection of educational buildings with a separate gymnasium, elementary, and high school building.

Entertainment/ Recreation

The gymnasium/community building reflects aspect of the New Deal construction programs that emphasized providing civic, educational, and health benefits for a community. A large number of projects were related to recreation, athletics, and health. During the difficult times of the Depression, New Deal agencies also recognized the psychological benefits of recreational and cultural activities. Its initial construction begun by the CWA, the gymnasium/community building provided a location for physical education and athletic events as well as dances, movies, and other community gatherings. It was the first such building for this small rural community, established only sixteen years earlier and it provided a vital morale boost to a community suffering during the Depression.

Architecture

The Kim Schools are excellent examples of New Deal Rustic design. Rustic characteristics featured in the buildings include the use of native stone, traditional construction methods, evident hand craftsmanship, and simple, functional design. The elementary and high school buildings also have the low silhouettes and horizontal emphasis often found in Rustic designs. The craftsmanship, materials, and construction methods of these buildings are reflective of their origin as public works programs designed to provide employment. These sturdy stone buildings also gave an appearance of permanence to a new community.

The Rustic design originated with the National Park Service and emphasized the use of native materials and adaptation of indigenous or "frontier" forms and methods of construction. This design philosophy was an ideal fit with the CWA and WPA. The goal of these programs was employment, so the majority of costs were to be spent on labor. Native materials were used because they were usually the least expensive and easily available. Traditional construction methods were used to save the expense of power tools and large machinery and because they provided more employment. Rustic architecture and federal relief buildings were both meant to be simple and functional.

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Historical Background

The community of Kim dates to 1917 when the first post office was established here by O.D. Simpson. The name for the town was provided by Simpson's wife, who had just finished reading Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*. In 1925, *The (Trinidad) Chronicle-News* described Kim as an optimistic "sturdy, thriving youngster of a town." It was home to a couple hundred residents and the hub of a thriving farming area. Crops included wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, broom corn, beans, Kaffir, and Milo maize. According to the paper, the town was up-and-coming and well situated for future growth; "seizing its opportunities and reaching out, Kim has hitched up to the procession of Progress and is moving right along."

The first grade school was established around the same time as the post office, held in a half dug-out building. As the school outgrew this building, two small tar paper shacks were constructed, one for grades 1-4, the other for grades 5-8. In 1920 a one-room pre-fabricated building was purchased to be used as Kim's first high school. It opened in September 1920 with one teacher offering a two year course consisting of four subjects: Algebra, U.S. History, English, and Latin. Three students completed the first year and were promoted to sophomores. In 1924 a new pre-fabricated building was added to the school and a four year high school program begun. In 1925 four bus routes were established to bring students to Kim. The teaching staff and enrollment continued to grow and by the early 1930s the school buildings were overflowing.

In the 1930s Kim and the surrounding area had a population of about 700 with roughly 200 grade and high school students attending school in Kim. During the community's early years, there was great enthusiasm for dryland farming and ranching. In 1933 the town of Kim was a commercial center for the surrounding farm and ranch land. The town had three general merchandise stores, two cafes, three gas stations, a newspaper, barber shop, bank, cobbler, drug store, hotel, and tourist cabins. But beginning in the late 1920s the Kim area was struck hard by drought and dust storms, devastating its agricultural economy.

The Civil Works Administration (CWA) was organized in late 1933. It was designed to be a public works program that could put people to work quickly, providing immediate relief to help people through the winter. Jobs were typically small, since the projects were intended to last only 90 days. Road improvements, flood control, and recreational facilities were popular projects in Colorado. The Public Works Administration (PWA) had been established earlier in the year, but its large scale projects required careful planning and technical expertise so few were underway yet. In December 1933, Kim was awarded a CWA project for the construction of a gymnasium and community building. According to *The Chronicle-News*, the Kim gymnasium and community building was one of 33 projects approved in Las Animas County, and a project that would "greatly serve the east end of the county." According to the CWA files, plans and specifications were prepared by J.R. Clark, the school board president. The CWA project application budgeted \$4290 for the project. Kim would contribute \$500 in cash and \$708 in materials and labor including a supervisor, a truck, rock, and sand. Many from the community donated time and money to the project. The project foreman, Otis Dickey, gave back almost all the salary he received and local farmers donated their time and use of tractors. Work started on December 12, 1933, and construction was estimated to last 60 days.

Construction on the gymnasium would take much longer than estimated, a problem that plagued all the Kim school projects. The first supplemental application was made in January 1934 soon after work began. It requested an additional \$1539 in federal funds be added to the project funding to pay for grading and leveling the school yard around the gym and for plastering the gymnasium. At the end of

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February 1934 (roughly 60 days after work started) there was another application to continue work on the gymnasium. At this point the gymnasium was 30 percent completed, with foundations placed and walls up to a height of 5 feet. This new application was for \$5369.50 in federal funds, primarily for labor, including stone masons, carpenters, a truck driver, and quarrymen. A local contribution of \$1760 would be made in building supplies including cement, windows, doors and hardware, sheeting, lumber, rock, and trucks. The application strongly advocated for the continuation of the project:

Kim is an inland town 50 miles from a railroad and it is much in need of the structure which they have started. The community is enthusiastic about the project and very anxious to see it completed. The walls will have to be carried up about 12 feet more and roof trusses set in place, also all interior work. Community has contributed bountifully to this work both in practical materials and labor. . . . to abandon this project now would mean a waste of all money put into it thus far and would deprive this town, which is the center of a drought stricken area, of an improvement which is almost a necessity to the inhabitants. Rock is piled all around the building making it unsafe for children at play (CWA file, Project No. 33).

On March 31, 1934, the CWA program was absorbed into the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). In April 1934, the Kim gymnasium and community building was transferred to FERA. At this point the project was 50 percent complete with the walls up to the first floor and subflooring for the gym installed. Work remaining included carrying the walls up about 12 more feet, roofing, and interior work. It was reported that the community "has contributed heavily" to the project. Construction continued throughout 1934. *The Chronicle-News* optimistically reported in August that Kim would soon have a fine new community building, with the dedication expected in November. However, in February 1935 the building was still reported to be nearing completion. Exactly when work was completed is not known, but it was likely sometime in the spring of 1935. Kim residents do remember that a dance was held to celebrate the completion of the gym. The building was packed. Admission was two bits, but if you did not dance you did not have to pay.

Despite the additional time and funds supplied to construct the gymnasium, when it was completed in 1935, it still lacked heat and lighting. In March 1936, a WPA project was approved to finish the boiler room, complete exterior and interior finishings, and install a boiler, water storage, lights, seating, and window screens. According to the project application, "the building is practically useless without heat, lights, and seating facilities." The total project cost was \$8205 with \$5695 of that in federal funds. The WPA provided all labor and the Kim School District provided all the materials. The project was completed in October 1936.

Pleased with the new facilities and jobs that the New Deal programs could provide, and evidently not too concerned with the gymnasium's lack of heating, the Kim School District had applied for a new school building project before applying for funds to complete the gymnasium. In September 1935 an application was submitted for a stone elementary building to replace the current elementary school that had been badly damaged in a dust storm the previous winter. The total cost was estimated at \$26,776.16 with the school district contributing \$4,025. The local contribution included some material costs as well as equipment rental. The WPA contribution included all labor costs, with estimates for \$6160 in unskilled labor, \$4363 for intermediate labor, \$4662 for skilled labor, and \$1866 for superintendence. According to the WPA files, J. M. Broan and Paul Church (WPA Engineers) prepared the plans. The sponsor agent was C.C. Church, the president of the school district. The project was approved in November 1935 and the estimated date of completion was May 1936.

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Once again, construction in Kim did not go as quickly as planned. In August 1936 there was an application requesting an additional \$9489 to continue the project. At this time the new elementary school was estimated to be about 75 percent complete. At a project inspection in December 1936 the school was reported to be 85 percent completed. The project inspector reported that work had been very slow, recommending that the WPA should not approve future building projects in Kim since "proper labor" is not available in such a small community. The work was finally completed in March 1937 and the dedication ceremony was held on April 5, 1937. Attending the ceremony were F.W. Corn of Denver, assistant state WPA administrator in charge of publicity, E.J. Roberts of Trinidad, in charge of county WPA projects, and A.H. Preston, the county superintendent of schools. The dedication marked "another forward step in the upbuilding of the far-flung educational school system of Las Animas County." However, despite the project being almost a year behind schedule, not all of the rooms of the elementary school were finished. Mose Russell remembers agreeing to finish a room, including installing a ceiling and stove, in exchange for being able to use the room for veterans returned to Kim after World War II.

Typical of the frugality of the WPA, materials salvaged from federal buildings demolished at Fort Lyons were reused as interior framing in the construction of the elementary school. Many old buildings at Fort Lyon were removed as part of WPA improvements at the veteran's facility. Materials from these buildings were in great demand and used in WPA projects throughout southeastern Colorado. Bent County officials wanting materials for use in a county office building reported that they had to compete with six other counties currently requesting salvaged materials from Fort Lyons.

Despite delays in the previous projects and the inspector's negative recommendation, a third school project was approved for Kim in the fall of 1938. This was a stone building for the county high school. According to the project application, the current frame buildings were too small to accommodate the students and were also a fire hazard. The total cost was estimated at \$39,315 with the county commissioners contributing \$4,669 of that amount. Although the WPA file for the high school is missing, one of the newspaper articles listed Herbert Nelson as the project engineer. The project included demolishing the two frame buildings currently used by the high school and salvaging as much material as possible for use in the new building. The reused materials would count as part of the county's contribution. Classes were held in adjacent buildings while the building was under construction. All labor costs were covered by the WPA. The application budgeted a total of \$30,435 for labor costs. This included: 60 unskilled laborers working 88 hours per month for six months at a rate of \$44 per month, 23 intermediate laborers working 88 hours per month for two to six months at a rate of \$50.16 per month, and 19 skilled laborers working 88 hours per month for two to six months at a rate of \$63.36 per month. The supervisor, foreman, and timekeeper all worked 176 hours per month. The supervisor was paid \$140 per month, the foreman \$110 per month, and the timekeeper \$90 per month.

The Chronicle-News reported that work was to begin in December 1938. According to an inspection report in November 1939, good progress was being made with the old buildings demolished, the foundations of the new building almost complete, and a third of the walls completed up to 3' above the footings. Getting materials to the site was a major part of the construction effort, with water hauled six miles, sand hauled 14 miles, and stone hauled 13 miles. Twenty-five men were employed at the quarry site. Members of the Grand Lodge of Colorado laid the cornerstone in December 1939, in a full Masonic ceremony. WPA, county, and high school officials attended, celebrating this "occasion of distinct importance." Attendees included Paul D. Shriver, Colorado Administrator for the WPA.

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In August 1940, the WPA approved additional funds to complete the school. According to the project application, inclement weather made quarrying the stone difficult causing the project to go over its original budget. In the supplemental application, the cost was more evenly split, with the federal government contributing \$8,674 and the county commissioners contributing \$7,061. The new high school building was finally dedicated on January 6, 1941. Community residents as well as WPA and school officials attended the event, with Paul D. Shriver returning to give the address.

With the many construction delays, there were federal relief school projects going on in Kim every year between 1933 and 1941. There are many likely reasons for the delay. The majority of the work force was farmers with no construction experience. The buildings were erected using shovels, chisels, pulleys, and scaffolding. There were no power tools or large machinery. In addition to constructing the schools, the workers had to quarry the stone and transport it to Kim. The workers may also have felt no sense of urgency, happy to be able to stay employed on the projects for as long as possible. The elementary school project employed a crew of 55, a substantial number for a small community. According to local residents, the eagle carved beneath one of the high school windows was done by a stone mason killing time. Though local residents remember three skilled stone masons (Benito Ryobel, Phillip Sanchez, and Juan Vanchez) who worked on the projects, the complaints of the project inspector for the elementary school suggest that Kim's isolated location and agricultural economy may have made it difficult to get all the trained labor needed for the projects. The fact that Kim received three projects in spite of these difficulties speaks to both the great need of those in this remote, drought-stricken agricultural area as well as the determination of the residents not to give up on their community. In 1934 *The Chronicle-News* described Kim as having a "fine community spirit" with a community club "active in a movement to advance and develop their area." It is likely this determination that got the three projects approved and completed.

The Kim Schools have always been a very important part of the community. According to Kim residents, building the new schools provided much needed work for local people and resulted in three beautiful buildings. Kim residents were very happy with the CWA and WPA. President Roosevelt was considered a savior for providing jobs and enabling men to provide for families. He was likely the only Democrat that some locals ever voted for. The school buildings have served the community well, remaining in continuous use. In addition to athletics and physical education, the gymnasium was used for recreation, dances, parties, and community functions. The gym also had dark shades that could be pulled down to show movies. During the Depression, a local WPA project to make mattresses met in gymnasium.

The Kim School District survived as many other small rural districts in Las Animas County were consolidated in the 1950s. In the first part of the twentieth century, there were more than 100 districts in the county; today there are just six. The schools have remained remarkably unchanged. With a shrinking population, there were few funds for improvements and no need for enlargement. Agriculture in the area was severely impacted by the dust bowl. Kim is now much smaller than it was in more optimistic days. In the 1930s the population was around 500 in the 1930s; the 2000 census reported just 65 residents in Kim. About 60 students are now enrolled in grades K-12.

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The WPA work crew, date unknown



The 1935 yearbook included a photograph of the new gym.

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_____. "New Deal Resources in Eastern Colorado" National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2005. On file in the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society, Denver Colorado.

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Archives

National Archives and Records Administration, Maryland. (CWA and WPA project files).

Interviews

[Local residents who attended Kim schools between 1926 and 1958]. Interviewed 24 January 2006 at the Senior Citizens Center, Kim, Colorado by Abigail Christman:

Edith Wright Anderson
Frank Goode
Buela May Krieger Honnicutt
Ewel Honnicutt
J.Y. Johnson
Mose Russel

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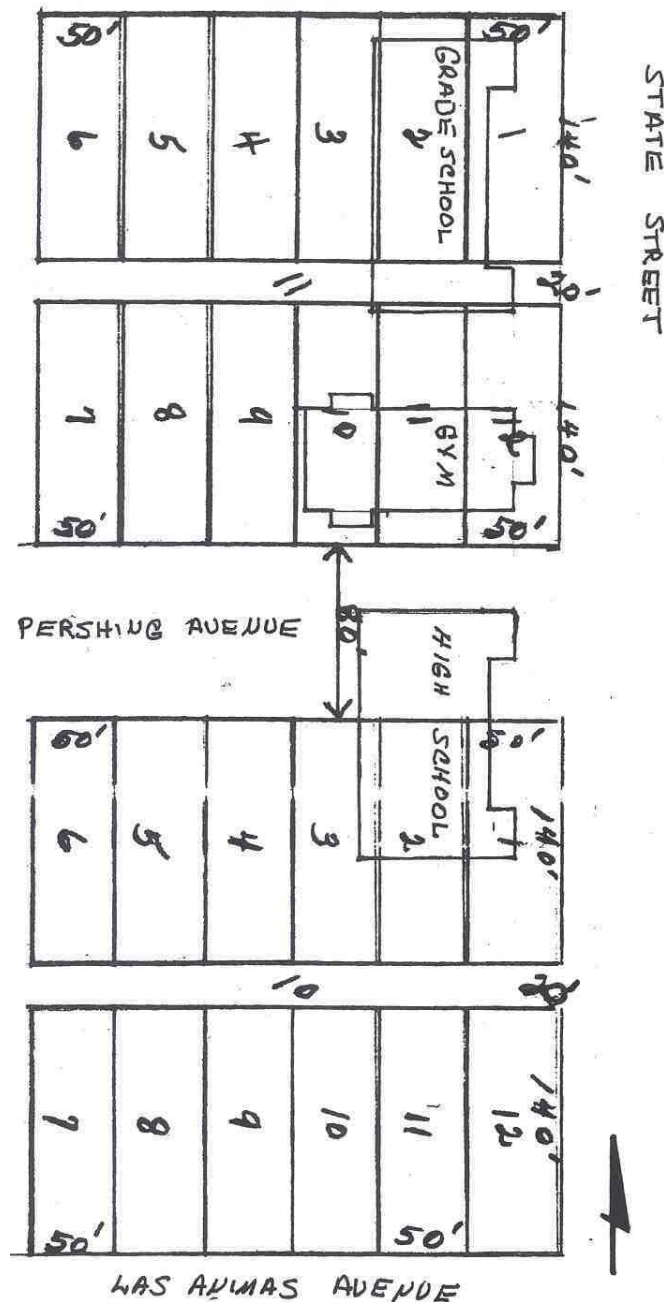
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12 of Block 11; Lots 1, 2, 3 of Block 10; and 150 feet of the Pershing Avenue right of way west from State Street, in the town of Kim, Las Animas County, Colorado.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated parcel includes the land on which the three buildings sit.



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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to all photographs:

Name of Property: Kim Schools
Location: Las Animas County, Colorado
Photographer: Abigail Christman
Date of Photographs: January 24, 2006
Location of Negatives: Digital files submitted to National Register, Washington, D. C.

(Images were printed on Hewlett-Packard Premium Photo Paper with Hewlett-Packard 100 Gray Photo Cartridge.)

Photo No.	Photographic Information
1	Kim High School, Gymnasium, and Elementary School (left to right). View to northwest.
2	Kim Gymnasium and Elementary School. View to northwest.
3	Kim Elementary School and Gymnasium. View to southwest.
4	Kim Gymnasium and High School. View to southwest.
5	Front of Elementary School. View to northwest.
6	Entrance of Elementary School. View to west.
7	North side of Elementary School. View to south.
8	Rear of Elementary School. Gymnasium visible on right. View to southeast.
9	South entrance of Elementary School. View to northeast.
10	Interior hallway of Elementary School. View to south.
11	East facade of Gymnasium. View to southwest.
12	Entrance of Gymnasium. View to west.
13	North side of Gymnasium. View to south.
14	Rear of Gymnasium. High School is visible on right. View to southeast.
15	Rear of Gymnasium. View to northeast.
16	South side of Gymnasium. View to north.
17	Interior of Gymnasium. View to east.
18	East facade of High School. View to west.
19	East facade and north side of High School. View to southwest.
20	North side and rear of High School. View to southeast.
21	Rear of High School. Gymnasium is visible on left. View to northeast.
22	East facade and south side of High School. View to northwest.
23	Detail of eagle carving under front window of High School. View to west.
24	Interior of High School showing auditorium. View to north.

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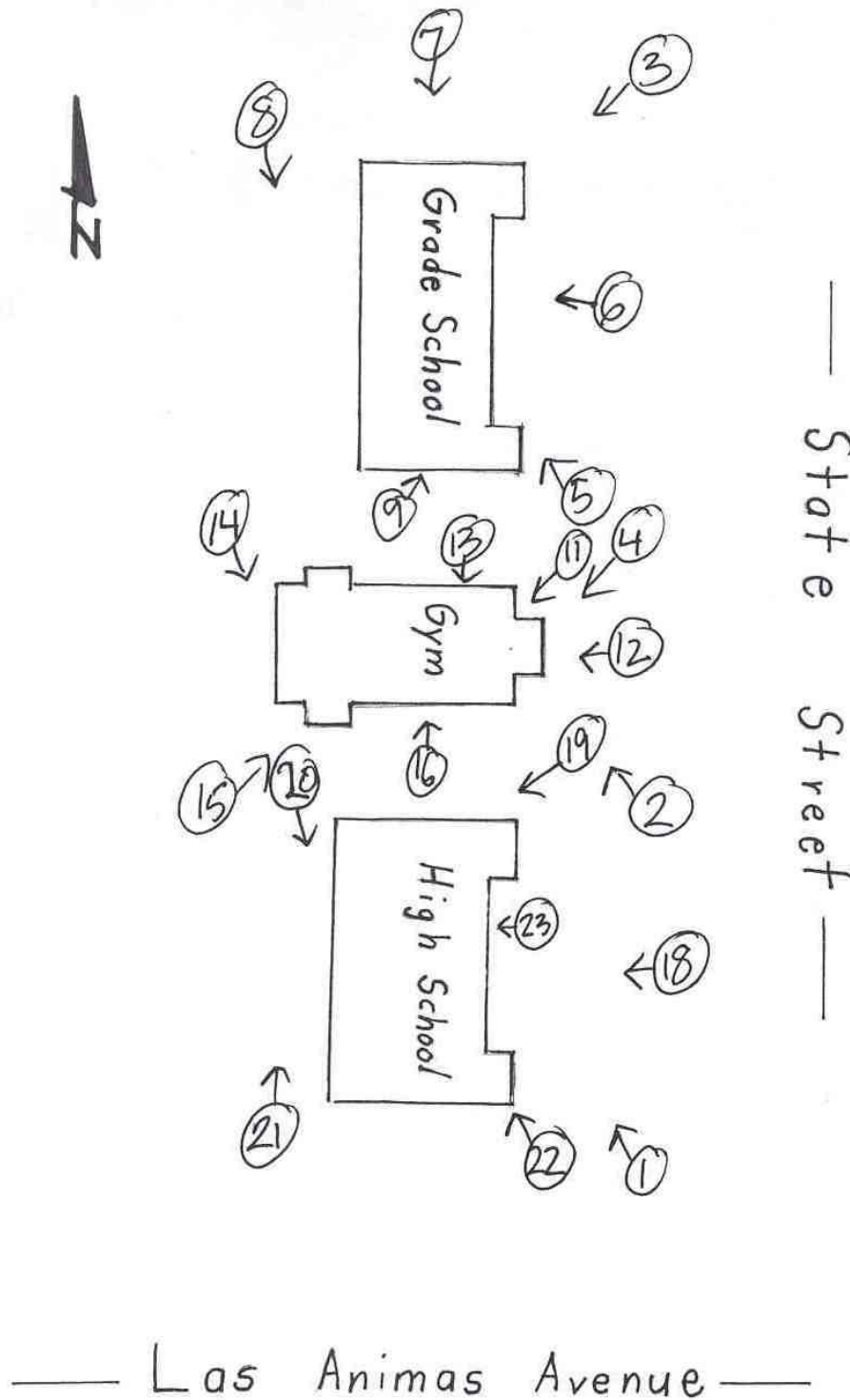
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Photograph Key

(not to scale and interior photos not shown)



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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Kim South Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

UTM: Zone 13 / 646088 E / 4123338 N (NAD27)
PLSS: 6th PM, T32S, R53W, Sec. 22 E SW NW NW
Elevation: 5693 feet

