### United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

#### 1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Kisatchie School Other Names/Site Number: Kisatchie Junior High School, Kisatchie High School, Kisatchie Community Center Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

#### 2. Location

Street & Number: 1811 Highway 118 West City or town: Provencal Sta Not for Publication: Vic

State: LA Vicinity: 🔀 County: Natchitoches

Date

Date

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  $\square$  nomination  $\square$  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  $\square$  meets  $\square$  does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend	that this	property be co	onsidered significan	t at the following	level(s) of s	ignificance:
national	state	🛛 local				

Applicable National Register Criteria: 🖂 A 🛛 🗌	B	⊠C	∐D
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Signature of certifying official/Title: Kristin Sanders, State Historic Preservation Officer

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property is meets indoes not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Title:

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

#### **Kisatchie School**

Name of Property

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> Natchitoches Parish, LA County and State

# Signature of the Keeper

**Date of Action** 

### 5. Classification

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

Х	Private	
	Public – Local	
	Public – State	
	Public – Federal	

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

Х	Building(s)
	District
	Site
	Structure
	object

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

Contributing	Non-contributing	
3	1	Buildings
		Sites
	1	Structures
		Objects
3	2	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.): SOCIAL/meeting hall

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### 7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.): Spanish Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.) foundation: BRICK walls: BRICK, STUCCO roof: ASBESTOS other:

### **Narrative Description**

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

### **Summary Paragraph**

The former Kisatchie School served as the primary provider of elementary and high school education for the community of Kisatchie from 1922 until 1962. It is located near the intersection of Highways 117 and 118 across from Hollis Booty Road. The school was constructed ca. 1920 and remodeled in 1931 to provide more space and correct structural issues. The changes made in 1931 included application of stucco to the exterior and a large, decorative entry resulting in a restrained example of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. Changes to the building's exterior since 1931 are limited to boarded windows and doors, weather damage, and some vandalism. The property also includes a gym (contributing), boiler room (contributing), metal fire station (non-contributing) and water tank (non-contributing). The contributing buildings retain a high degree of integrity at both the interior and exterior despite decades of intermittent vacancies. For these reasons, the former Kisatchie School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **Narrative Description**

The former Kisatchie School is located in rural Natchitoches Parish near the intersection of Highways 117 and 118. It is approximately 30 miles south of the city of Natchitoches and roughly 50 miles west of Alexandria. Evidence of Native American occupation of the general Kisatchie region has been dated to the Paleo Indian Period (ca. 12,000 – 6,000 BCE).<sup>1</sup> Euro-American settlement of central Louisiana began in the early 1700s and the small community of Kisatchie had been formed by the mid-1800s. Early attempts at organized education in the community include the Kisatchie Union School in 1848 and the Kisatchie School, on the site of the extant Kisatchie School, in 1862.<sup>2</sup>

The extant Kisatchie School was constructed ca. 1920 as part of the statewide initiative to consolidate rural schools. It served children at all grade levels with its first graduating class earning degrees in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kisatchie National Forest, "Kisatchie Heritage Program," <u>https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/kisatchie/learning/history-</u> <u>culture/?cid=fsbdev3\_024697</u>, accessed January 28, 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Rickey Robertson, "The Historic School Building at Kisatchie, Louisiana," June 2013, <u>http://www.sfasu.edu/heritagecenter/7774.asp</u>, accessed January 28, 2021.

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1927.<sup>3</sup> This two-story brick school was remodeled in 1931 to provide more classroom space and correct brick deficiencies. The 1931 remodel was designed by J.W. Smith & Associates, architects of Monroe, Louisiana, a firm responsible for all Natchitoches Parish School Board construction plans in the 1920s and early 1930s. Although not confirmed, the firm likely was responsible for the original Kisatchie School design.

A photograph of the school from the 1920s depicts a two-story brick building with arched fenestrations. The entry door was made of wood and deeply recessed into the façade. The windows were 9/9 wood-framed sash. The windows of the venter bay were set slightly higher on the elevation than those at the wings. No ornamentation or decoration is shown in the frame. A staircase to the second floor is visible through the windows to the right of the entry.<sup>4</sup>

The 1931 remodel included application of stucco to the brickwork, construction of decorative front entry, and the addition of two classroom wings to the rear of the building. The addition modified the original rectangular footprint into a U-shape and provided a restrained Spanish Colonial Revival aesthetic to the façade.

During the period of significance, the school complex included a total of 12 buildings, all built at various times. These included: the main school building, the gymnasium, a boiler house, a well pump house, two outhouses, a home economics building, an industrial arts building, a lunch building, and three teacher cottages. Figure 1 and 2 are maps of the Kisatchie School complex, ca. 1965; Figure 2 is a map drawn from school board records by Northwestern Louisiana State University Master's of Arts candidate Tamara Miller. Of these, the location of the lunch building is unknown, and the industrial arts building and teacher cottages were located across Highway 118 from the main school building. The teacher cottages stood until 2013, when 2 of the 3 appear to be destroyed by fire; 1814 LA Highway 118 still stands. All three of these buildings were transferred out of Natchitoches Parish School Board ownership in the 1960s.<sup>5</sup> The main school building (contributing building), boiler house (contributing building), and gymnasium (contributing building) are still extant; the two outhouses are derelict and no longer intact (not counted). The home economics building and well pump house no longer stand, but both were north of Highway 118 on the southwest corner of the school property. They were demolished and the existing prefabricated fire house (non-contributing building) was constructed in that area sometime between 2013-2016.<sup>6</sup> A large water tank located near the street (non-contributing structure) is unrelated to the historic school.

Adjacent to the school property on the east, outside of the nominated boundary, is the Kisatchie Baptist Church. The current building does not date from the period of significance; however, a 1952 conveyance record sheds light on the history of the church in this area. The conveyance, a sale of the southwest corner of the school property from the Natchitoches Parish School Board to the Kisatchie Baptist Church and Kisatchie Union Lodge No. 379 F & AM is dated November 26, 1952. Even though this sale is the first time the property is transferred to the church, the description makes it clear that the church building was already standing on the conveyed property (emphasis added):

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Mrs. Boyter recorded by Mabell R. Kadlecek and Marion C. Bullard, *Louisiana's Kisatchie Hills* (Book Crafters, Chelsea, Michigan), 1994, 179.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation, "Kisatchie High School," photo ca. 1925.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Google Earth Historic Imagery, 2013,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Natchitoches Parish Conveyance Office, Conveyance Office, Map Book, Page 119.A, February 24, 1966; Conveyance Book 273, Folio 886, January 20, 1967, Sale of Property to Kisatchie Community Center, Inc. and Kisatchie Union Lodge No. 379 F & AM. Tamara S. Miller, "Kisatchie School Documentation: Saving a Part of The Past," thesis at Northwestern State University, 2005, map, 1. Google Earth Historic Imagery, 2013-2021.

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Starting from the Northwest corner of Northwest quarter of Southeast quarter, Section 15, Township 5 North, Range 8, and measuring 535 feet in an Easterly direction to a point on the North edge of State Highway 173 *in front of the Kisatchie Baptist Church*, for a point of beginning thence North 15° East, 167 feet, thence East 167 feet, thence South 15° North, 175 feet, to the North edge of the right-of way of State Highway 173 thence along the boundary of said highway, 189 feet to point of beginning, containing .67 acres, more or less, and being more fully described as being bounded on the North by property of the vendor, East by property of vendor, South by State Highway 173, and West by vendor.<sup>7</sup>

The earliest identified aerial photographs of the area date from 1955, and they depict a small building in the southeast corner of the property, north of Highway 173 (now LA Highway 118). By 1981 aerial photographs depict a longer building that appears to be the same configuration as the current building, a long roughly north-south rectangular plan with a small half cross-gable on the eastern façade; it is possible that the current building includes part or all of the original structure.

The school remained in operation until 1962 when it was closed, and the students sent to other schools in the parish. It is now a community center, but only limited portions of the building are accessible. Painted boards occupy the fenestrations both as a tribute to the community and as a measure of protection against vandalism. The building has been compromised by at least two hurricanes.

### **Kisatchie School Building**

# Façade – South Elevation (Photos 1-5)

The façade of the former Kisatchie School measures approximately 80 feet in length and is oriented south toward Highway 118. It is two stories tall and three bays across. A 2009 report states the brick walls of the original construction are approximately 12 inches thick.<sup>8</sup> The center bay includes the primary entry and a decorative parapet. The hip roofline is covered in broad asbestos shingles with red tiles at the seams. The building rests on a concrete foundation.

The flanking bays are identical and feature four vertical pairs of arched windows in a regimented pattern. The arched window detail was original to the ca. 1920 design.<sup>9</sup> Painted boards protect the remaining windows which are 9/9 wood-framed panes set in sash.

The center bay measures 40 feet in length and projects two feet from the original façade. It features a deep recessed entry with wooden doors and currently is boarded. Two small windows covered in metal grates are set to either side of the entry. Three windows are set into the second story of the center bay; they are identical to the windows of the flanking bays. A concrete drip mold frames the top of the entry and extends above the center window in an arch shape. A concrete relief of a quill and book are set above the entry. Six bricks extend from the stucco to create a decorative false vent halfway between the pinnacle of the mold and the peak of the parapet. Small, rounded vent dormers are visible.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Natchitoches Parish Conveyance Office, Conveyance Office Book, 217, Folio 886, November 26, 1952, Sale of Property from Natchitoches Parish School Board to Kisatchie Baptist Church and Kisatchie Union Lodge No. 379 F & AM.
<sup>8</sup> Miller, 2005, 65.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Photo, ca. 1925 included in Kadlecek and Bullard, *Hills*, 179.

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The parapet roofline begins with pilasters to each side. The parapet rises above the hip roofline behind it to a flat plane rather than a peak. Flat red tiles are located on the slopes of the parapet and the tops of the parapet and pilasters.

### Sides - East and West Elevations (Photos 6-7, 9-10)

The side elevations of the former Kisatchie School are practically identical. Each is clearly divided between the ca. 1920 two-story construction and the 1931 one-story addition. The two-story portion is approximately 20 feet in length with the additions continuing for an additional 70 feet.

Five vertical pairs of windows interrupt the even façade of the side elevations in the original school building. Like the façade, these fenestrations are arched with 9/9 wood-frame sash windows in each (currently boarded). No doors were provided in these elevations.

The one-story addition is laid out as a set of four windows/an entry door/a second set of four windows. The windows are 6/6 wood-frame sash (currently boarded), and the doors were made of wood (also boarded). Each door has a small roof and a concrete stoop. The roofline is hip and covered in the same asbestos shingles as the original construction.

### Rear - North Elevation (Photos 8)

Views of the rear of the original two-story construction are somewhat obscured by the projecting wings added in 1931. The wings connect to the ca. 1920 building at the rear walls of the outer bays. The center bay runs east-west. It holds five pairs of windows evenly spaced. These fenestrations are arched and currently boarded.

The walls of the addition facing one another lack windows and doors. A small porch extends from the ca. 1920 building along the side of the western addition. Small, rounded dormer vents are visible on the roofline.

### Interior - ca. 1920 School (Photos 20-34)

The interior walls of the school building are stucco-over-brick. The stucco has collapsed in certain places to reveal the bricks laid in common bond.

The floorplan of the 1920 classroom building is simple – three rooms across at both the first and second floors. The building lacks interior halls: classrooms instead flow into one another. At the first floor, classrooms framed a central lobby with a library and the stairs to the second story. The classroom to the north was dedicated to fifth and sixth grades. Upstairs, a classroom for math and business was directly above the 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade space. A portion of this room was partitioned off to serve as a typing room. The large space above the lobby was dedicated to English classes for the upper grades. It contained the central stairs. The remaining classroom was set aside for science classes.

These classrooms had wooden floors and wooden ceilings. Plaster covered the walls. Exterior walls held 6/6 wood-frame windows. A blackboard was located on at least interior wall in each classroom. The extant materials are visible but in poor condition, especially the floors, ceilings, and blackboards.

### Interior - 1931 Rear Additions (Photos 11-19, 35-36)

In 1931, two large additions were constructed at the rear of the extant school building. The additions project to the north. Each is a single-story in height and rectangular in shape. The hip shape of the rooflines mimics the roof shape of the larger school building.

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The western addition includes a wooden porch on the elevation facing the eastern addition (i.e., the interior of the U). A shed-style wooden roof shades the porch. It is supported by squared porch columns. Simple wooden railings extend between the columns. Two rectangular classrooms occupy the interior of this addition. Thin wooden planks form the floor of the northern classroom. It once was used as a music room.<sup>10</sup> Plaster covers the walls. A drop ceiling of wooden slats and compressed tiles remains extant, although it is in poor condition and pieces have collapsed. 6/6 windows in wood frames are visible along the exterior walls. A long blackboard occupies the interior wall (porch elevation). A six-pane transom is extant above the wooden door to the connecting hall. This hall leads to a small cloakroom that was converted to a teacher workroom. It also has wooden floors and plaster walls. The second classroom is identical, but the original materials are generally in worse condition than those of the other classroom due to a fire following the school's closure. A door to the 1920 building was added following the school's closure to accommodate a temporary commercial use. Originally, this addition was accessible only through exterior doors, i.e., teachers and students had to walk outside to enter this addition.

One room of the eastern addition has been updated to accommodate meetings and other large gatherings. It once was the first and second grade classroom.<sup>11</sup> This room is in better condition than its counterpart and includes a drop ceiling, plaster walls, and wood floors of the original 1931 construction. A second classroom also is extant within this addition. It was for third and fourth grades.<sup>12</sup> It is nearly identical to the classroom in design and materials to that of the western addition. This addition is accessed via a wooden door facing the porch of the western addition. The interior of the addition is not accessible from the interior of the 1920 school building and was not accessible for this survey.

# **Boiler House Building (contributing)**

The boiler house is located immediately north of the school building and was constructed at the same time as the main school building. It is rectangular in plan, and measures approximately 30' x 25'. The hipped roof is still covered in asbestos shingles. It is constructed of bricks laid in common bond, and still contains the original Kewanee steam boiler. There is a single door, facing the south and the school building, and two wood windows on the same south façade that includes the door, one 6-light and one 6-over-6. There is also a single 6-over-6 wood window on the north façade; there are no other openings on the envelope, other than the steam pipe exit.

# Gymnasium (contributing)

The auditorium/gymnasium was constructed in 1950 as a multipurpose space by P & M Construction, of Ringgold, Louisiana, for \$30,920.00. It was to be completed within 150 days, and on May 2, 1950, the school board issued a change order to include the following:

- The contractor shall construct a 28' -0" X 65' -0" addition to the rear of the Auditoriumgymnasium for Kisatchie School, Kisatchie, Louisiana. 45 feet shall be used for the lunchroom; 20 feet shall be used for a future meat preparation and storage facility. The latter shall not be finished in anyway.
- 2. Owner will furnish and allow the general contractor the use of all necessary secondhand material on the site (salvaged from wrecking previous auditorium) in constructing addition.
- 3. General construction outline as follows
  - a. Foundation; concrete footings, brick piers, wood sills and wood floor joists

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Miller, "Kisatchie," 114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Miller, "Kisatchie," 114.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Miller, "Kisatchie," 114.

# Kisatchie School

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- b. Floors; sub-flooring 15-pound asphalt felt. Finish floor (to be sanded and finished in lunchroom portion only)
- c. Exterior walls; storm sheathed covered with 15-pound asphalt felt finish to be asbestos siding
- d. Interior walls; ceiling shall be of second hand beaded ceiling brushed down, then receive three coats of paint
- e. Light fixtures; owner to furnish light fixtures for lunchroom, contractor to furnish 4 porcelain receptacles for kitchen, one for meat room
- f. Openings; general contractor shall furnish metal windows and new wood doors for required openings
- g. Roofing; over new (1) one inch roof decking the contractor shall apply 30-pound asphalt felt and 210-pound finish asphalt shingle roof, same color as the main building new roof
- h. Plumbing, heating; the contractor shall provide cold and hot water (from the gym hot water tank) connect 3 compartment sink presently being used by the school, shall provide adequate grease trap and shall modify the original septic tank installation to fit this change.<sup>13</sup>

Current conditions of the gymnasium are deteriorated. Many of the windows are broken, although the metal window frames appear original. The lunchroom that was added in the rear still stands. There are new gutters and downspouts. The roof appears to be new asphalt shingles. The cladding is original asbestos shingles, that are in poor shape.

# Water Tank (non-contributing)

There is a tall cylindrical water tank that fronts LA Hwy 118. This was constructed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, outside the period of significance, and does not contribute to the Kisatchie School.

# Prefabricated Fire House (non-contributing)

There is a prefabricated fire house that fronts LA Hwy 118 on the southwest corner of the property. This was constructed between 2013-2016, outside the period of significance, and does not contribute to the Kisatchie School.<sup>14</sup>

# Integrity

The Kisatchie School building retains a significant degree of integrity of materials, design, workmanship, setting, feeling, and location. Although there is significant deterioration of the roof, floor, windows, doors and stairs, most materials are original. A pass-through has been cut between the art and the 5th-6<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms, but the layout is otherwise intact. The 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom has been significantly altered to accommodate the Kisatchie Union Lodge, but most other classrooms retain the original layout, as does the entrance and the administrative office. The architectural details, including the Spanish Colonial stucco, roofline, and arches, as well as interior elements like transoms, chalkboards, and windows, speak to the integrity of workmanship. The surrounding area is not substantially different, despite the loss of several associated buildings; the rural setting along LA Highway 118 remains. Because the area remains rural, and the school retains the primary building configuration, the school retains the feeling of a consolidated rural school.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Miller, "Kisatchie," 36-37.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Natchitoches Parish Conveyance Office, Conveyance Office, Map Book, Page 119.A, February 24, 1966; Conveyance Book 273, Folio 886, January 20, 1967, Sale of Property to Kisatchie Community Center, Inc. and Kisatchie Union Lodge No. 379 F & AM. Tamara S. Miller, "Kisatchie School Documentation: Saving a Part of The Past," thesis at Northwestern State University, 2005, map, 1. Google Earth Historic Imagery, 2013-2021.

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Neither the Kisatchie School nor its ancillary buildings have been moved, retaining integrity of location. The Boiler House and the Gymnasium are deteriorated, but still retain enough integrity of materials, design, workmanship, location and feeling to contribute to the main building.

### 8. Statement of Significance

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

X	Α	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
	В	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X	С	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:

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.): EDUCATION, ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance: 1922 - 1962

Significant Dates: 1931

Significant Person (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above): N/A

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion D is marked above): N/A

**Architect/Builder (last name, first name):** original architect unknown, 1931 renovation by J.W. Smith and Associates

**Period of Significance (justification)**: The dates recommended for the Period of Significance represent the years the Kisatchie School educated local children. The school opened for the fall 1922 session and graduated its first class in 1927. The school closed in 1962 when it consolidated with the nearby Provencal High School.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary): N/A

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

The Kisatchie School is locally significant under Criteria A in the area of Education as an example of both the School Consolidation Movement and of public education in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana. The school served as served as the primary provider of elementary and high school education for the white children in the rural community of Kisatchie from 1922 until 1962. Additionally, the building is locally eligible under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a notable example of the Spanish Colonial Revival style in northwest Louisiana. Despite the fact that the building has been largely unused for decades, and has been a target of vandalism, the Kisatchie School retains a significant degree of integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling. The period of significance is 1922-1962, the years the building was in operation as a school.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

# Criterion A: Education—School Consolidation Movement

The Kisatchie School is eligible under Criterion A: *Education* at the local level for its association with the School Consolidation Movement of the late nineteenth/early twentieth centuries.<sup>15</sup> Ideas into the best approaches for public education in the United States evolved throughout the 1800s. Obviously, the segregation of schools was the most marked and notable disparity in public education nationwide, and Louisiana was certainly no different. However, the disparity circumstances of white children on far-flung farms versus those in urban environments - funding, transportation, availability of textbooks, adequate nutrition, among many others - presented unique challenges for rural educators and education advocates.

As industry in the United States advanced, ideas of organization and scale of economy began to pervade other areas of life, including education. The economy of operating a single schoolhouse for a small number of children taught only by a single teacher seemed inadequate when larger schools could offer specialized curriculum appropriate to age groups as well as opportunities for school athletics and other extracurricular activities.

Even in white communities, educational opportunities in Louisiana were uneven in the decades after the Civil War. Larger cities such as New Orleans provided a more formalized system than other communities throughout the state. In 1877, the state Superintendent of schools estimated that only 20% of educable children were attending public school.<sup>16</sup> Although this figure applied only to white children and did not take into account private schools, it was clear that a majority of all children around the state lacked basic education at that time.

Two provisions in the 1898 state constitution had a dramatic impact on Louisiana schools. One tenet prohibited racially integrated schools in the state. Another provided parishes to enable taxes for school funding.<sup>17</sup> Soon after, between 1904 and 1910, the state established standards for teacher

<sup>15</sup> The term "school consolidation" also is applied to the movements in opposition to and in compliance with racial integration orders in the mid-twentieth century and modern applications tied to student learning achievements. Unless otherwise noted, the "School Consolidation Movement" referenced in this nomination will apply only to the late nineteenth/early twentieth century consolidation of small, rural schools into one large one.

<sup>16</sup> Blokker, *Education in Louisiana*, 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Blokker, *Education in Louisiana*, 23-24.

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qualifications and high school curriculums.<sup>18</sup> This advancement also led to a review of the education provided in the one-room schoolhouses present across Louisiana. The first Inspector of Rural School, C.J. Brown, advocated in 1909 to consolidate at least three rural schools into one larger building to provide teachers the ability to focus on age-appropriate curriculum and improve the physical condition of schools. The plan was approved by the superintendence and consolidation began in earnest the following year.<sup>19</sup> Advances in school reform culminated in 1916 when, for the first time, Louisiana required that children between the ages of 7 and 14 attend school.<sup>20</sup> That same year, the Louisiana Board of Education created the Negro Division, which was tasked with improvement of the quality of African American education.<sup>21</sup>

Consolidation in the education of children remained a goal for both white and African American schools. The success of consolidation and school attendance largely depended on transportation. Traveling the state's muddy, mucky roads was slow and arduous. Though the stories of Louisiana's pitiful road system until the governorship of Huey Long (1928-1932) proliferate, construction in the terms of governors Jared Y. Sanders (1908-1912), Ruffin G. Pleasant (1916-1920), John M. Parker (1920-1924), Henry L. Fugua (1924-1926), and Oramel H. Simpson (1926-1928) advanced the state's transportation networks considerably before the Kingfish took office. For example, in 1911, the stateproduced maps of Louisiana's roadways indicated 25,000 miles of trails for conveyance. Many of these were disconnected and failed to provide a network for transportation. By 1919, 671 miles had been improved to "hard surface" and approximately 252 miles were under construction.<sup>22</sup> By 1924, more than 2,700 miles of "hard surface" roads connected the cities of Louisiana to one another and to other states.<sup>23</sup> The improvement in roads allowed parish school boards across the state to embrace school consolidation; however, parishes did start taking responsibility for the transportation of African American students until 1930. Transportation disparities resulted in the disparity in successful consolidation; white schools consolidated much earlier and more effectively than schools for African Americans.<sup>24</sup>

As previously described, educational opportunities in Louisiana in the nineteenth century were uneven and this pattern held in Natchitoches Parish. Advocates for public education in 1875 clamored for a high school in the city of Natchitoches, "as our children have, since 1869, been suffered to grow up in idleness and ignorance, and their education demands serious consideration."<sup>25</sup> Schools were operating in the rural areas of the parish, but teachers could not be guaranteed pay.<sup>26</sup>

After the constitutional changes of 1898, Natchitoches Parish founded a school board and established public schools throughout the parish. In April 1903, the Board reported a total of 30 "white" schools and 9 schools for Black children in operation. Two additional schools for Black

<sup>20</sup> Robertson, *Education in Louisiana*, 178.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Blokker, *Education in Louisiana*, 24.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Blokker, *Education in Louisiana*, 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Blokker, *Education in Louisiana*, 29-30.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> John W. Scott, "Highway Building in Louisiana before Huey Long" An Overdue Re-Appraisal," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Associates*, Winter, 2003, Volume 44, No. 1 (Winter 2003), pg. 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Scott, "Highway Building," 11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Blokker, *Education in Louisiana*, 25-26. It is notable that statewide in 1947-48, there were still 1,535 African American schools, 729 of which were still one room schools, compared to forty-nine one-room schools out of a total of 825 white schools.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> "School," *The People's Vindicator* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), September 11, 1875, 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> "Public Schools," *The People's Vindicator* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), August 25, 1877, 3; "Natchitoches School Matters," *The People's Vindicator* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), June 2, 1877, 1.

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students were ordered to open for a three-month term.<sup>27</sup> A list of schools in operation was not provided, but by January 1907 at least two schools for white children were in operation in Kisatchie: Kisatchie School and Shiloh School. At this time, the two schools shared an instructor named C.J. Dufrocq, a veteran of the Civil War.<sup>28</sup> A third, the Kisatchie Union School, had a new facility under construction in 1908 and hoped to open in 1909.<sup>29</sup> By 1915, the parish operated five white high schools as well as several "consolidated schools" with two to five teachers at each. As part of this effort, the School Board provided 22 "transfer wagons" consisting of automobiles or one-horse wagons to bring children to/from school if not within walking distance.<sup>30</sup>

In 1913, as part of the state efforts, several smaller local schools consolidated into a single Kisatchie School, although one continued to operate until at least 1916. The consolidated school was located in a wooden building on the property of the extant Kisatchie School near the intersection of modern-day Highways 117 and 118. In 1914, a contributor to *The Natchitoches Times* reported that Kisatchie School students attended school from the middle of June through mid-April. As part of the year-end celebrations, students participated in "recitations; stories, dialogues, debates, and addresses," as well as a ball game against Bellwood School.<sup>31</sup> By 1916, the Kisatchie School reported an enrollment of 50 students.<sup>32</sup>

The November 1919 report of tax assessments in Natchitoches Parish shows the extent of school consolidation by the School Board. Of the eight wards, only Ward 2 paid taxes for school districts. In contrast, Wards 5, 6, 7, and 8 were paying taxes for consolidated school buildings. The Kisatchie School was located in Ward 8.<sup>33</sup> Beginning in 1920, the Natchitoches Parish School Board began advertising construction contracts for brick school buildings to replace the Parish's wooden schoolhouses. Nearly all of these were designed by the architecture firm of J.W. Smith & Associates of Monroe, the firm later responsible for the 1931 remodel of the Kisatchie School. J.W. Smith & Associates were advertised as the architects of the Campti School, contract advertised for bid in November 1919; a two-story brick school, contract advertised for bid January and February 1920; the high school in Natchitoches, contract advertised for bid in April 1921 and again in May 1921; a high school in Weaver, awarded in April 1921; and a school in Flora, contracted advertised for bid in May 1921.<sup>34</sup> J.W. Smith & Associates also were awarded the contract to design "teacherages," small cottages where teachers at rural schools could reside, across several parishes in northeast Louisiana.<sup>35</sup>

A brick school building was completed ca. 1920 on the Kisatchie School property. This school remained in operation as a consolidated facility for the Kisatchie area until 1962 when the school was consolidated with others in Natchitoches Parish due to a severe round of budget cuts by the Parish

<sup>28</sup> "Arbor Day on Kisatchie," The Natchitoches Times (Natchitoches, Louisiana), January 18, 1907, 2.

<sup>30</sup> "Public School Facilities," *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), August 20, 1915, 1.

<sup>32</sup> "Ward 8," *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), July 7, 1916, 4.

<sup>33</sup> "To the Tax Payers of Natchitoches Parish, *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), November 14, 1919, 4.
 <sup>34</sup> "Campti Will Erect Modern High School." The Times (Shreveport, Louisiana), November 2, 1919, 18; "Notice for Bids," The Natchitoches Times (Natchitoches, Louisiana), January 23, 1920, 2; "Notice for Bids" *The Natchitoches Times*, February 6, 1920, 6; "Notice of Bids," The Natchitoches Times, April 8, 1921, 2; "J.W. Smith...," *The Times* (Shreveport, Louisiana), April 22, 1921, 7; "Notice of Bids," The Natchitoches Times, May 6, 1921, 4.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> "Parish School Board," *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), April 10, 1903, 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> "Kisatchie Union," *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), November 13, 1908, 2; "Kisatchie Union," *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana), December 4, 1908, 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> A Student, "Ward 8," *The Natchitoches Times* (Natchitoches, Louisiana,), April 24, 1914, 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> "Widespread efforts...," The Shreveport Journal (Shreveport, Louisiana), August 6, 1920, 10.

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School Board.<sup>36</sup> Many students were transferred to Provençal High School while others went to Gorum School.<sup>37</sup>

## Criterion C: Architecture

The Kisatchie School is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: *Architecture* at the local level for its Spanish Colonial Revival style. The building bears limited hallmarks of Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style popular in the United States in the early twentieth century after an exposition held in San Diego, California, in 1915. The style was one of the many eclectic revival styles popular between World Wars I and II.<sup>43</sup> Common features of Spanish Colonial Revival style include: stucco exterior walls, low-pitched roof, clay roof tiles, rounded/arched fenestrations, parapets, decorative window grates, balconies, spiral columns, multi-pane windows, and decorative vent or tile displays.<sup>44</sup>

The present appearance dates not to the ca. 1920 original school building but to the 1931 remodel of the building by J.W. Smith & Associates. Although restrained, the former Kisatchie School bears several of the hallmarks of Spanish Colonial Revival style, most notably the stucco exterior. Other features include the low-pitched roof, clay tiles visible at the roof seams and parapet, rounded window openings, multi-pane windows, and projecting brickwork in the parapet.

Spanish Colonial Revival is not an uncommon style in Louisiana but is more often seen in urban areas such as New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Shreveport. Of the 43 Louisiana properties listed in the National Register identified as Spanish Colonial Revival style, more than half (24 of 43) were in the state's ten most populous cities.<sup>45</sup> None in Natchitoches Parish are listed in the National Register.<sup>46</sup> A review of the more than 1,300 properties recorded in the Louisiana Historic Resource Inventory identified only four buildings identified as Spanish Colonial Revival style: a local bank branch on Highway 6 in Robeline (LHRI #35-00832), the Texas & Pacific Railroad Depot in Natchitoches (LHRI #35-01173),<sup>47</sup> a gas station in Natchitoches (LHRI #35-01208), and a residence addressed 401 Henry Avenue in Natchitoches (LHRI #35-01245).

The former Kisatchie School retains its architectural integrity and projects a restrained expression of Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The small-scale modifications to the school largely have been limited to the interior and have not interrupted the extant features of the Spanish Colonial Revival

<sup>43</sup> Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, "Spanish Colonial Revival Style 1915-1940,

<sup>44</sup> Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, "Spanish Colonial Revival Style 1915-1940,

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>36</sup> "Natchitoches School Board Adopts \$3,744,558 Budget," *The Town Talk* (Alexandria, Louisiana) September 7, 1962, 4.
 <sup>37</sup> "School Enrollment Up in Natchitoches," *The Town Talk* (Alexandria, Louisiana), September 10, 1962, 2.

http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/spanish-colonial-revival.html, accessed January 28, 2021.

http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/architecture/styles/spanish-colonial-revival.html, accessed January 28, 2021; Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Second Edition (Knopf: New York, 2013 520-526. <sup>45</sup> Louisiana Division of Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places Database,

https://www.crt.state.la.us/dataprojectsVS/NRHP/PublicForms/PublicSearchResult, accessed January 27, 2021; Cubit, Louisiana Cities by Population, https://www.louisiana-demographics.com/cities\_by\_population, accessed January 27, 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup> The Texas & Pacific Railroad Depot is identified as Spanish Colonial Revival style in the NPS Cane River Heritage itinerary but as Italian Renaissance. National Register of Historic Places, Texas & Pacific Railroad Depot, Natchitoches, Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, NRHP No. 8700732; Louisiana Division of Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places Database, <u>https://www.crt.state.la.us/dataprojectsVS/NRHP/PublicForms/PublicSearchResult</u>, accessed January 27, 2021; NPS, "Texas and Pacific Railroad Depot," <u>https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/caneriver/tex.htm</u>, accessed January 28, 2021.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup> See previous note.

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aesthetic. The building also is notable as a rural, rather than urban, example of the style in Natchitoches Parish. Of the buildings recorded in the parish, it is one of only two located outside the city of Natchitoches and yet the second largest in the parish (behind the Texas & Pacific Railroad Depot).

Currently, the firm of J.W. Smith & Associates of Monroe, the architects responsible for the 1931 remodel of the former Kisatchie School, is not recognized as a master craftsman. Such analysis is beyond the scope of this nomination. However, to date, at least seven buildings in Louisiana designed by the firm of J.W. Smith & Associates have been listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Of these, five have been nominated under Criterion C: *Architecture* for their expression of popular architectural styles. Reflecting the economies of their times and likely the aesthetic preferences of their clients, the buildings are less grandiose expressions of the styles rather than the higher, more ornate examples found in cities like New Orleans.

### Developmental History/Additional historic context information

See above.

### 9. Major Bibliographical Resources

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

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https://www.crt.state.la.us/dataprojectsVS/NRHP/PublicForms/PublicSearchResult.

# 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:

- X\_State Historic Preservation Office
- \_\_\_\_ Other State agency
- \_\_\_\_\_ Federal agency
- \_\_\_\_ Local government

Natchitoches Parish, LA County and State

X University Other

Name of repository: <u>Cammie G. Henry Research Center, Northwestern Louisiana State</u> University, Natchitoches, Louisiana

### **Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** <u>35-00297</u>

### 10. Geographical Data

### Acreage of Property: less than one acre

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates Datum if other than WGS84:\_\_\_\_\_ (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places) 1. Latitude: 31.415613 Longitude: -93.175419

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

The Kisatchie School is located in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, Township 5 North, Range 8 West, Section 15. This boundary includes the entirety of property of the former Kisatchie School, minus the land donated to the Kisatchie Baptist Church on the southeastern boundary. The southern boundary is LA Highway 118. On the southeast corner, the Kisatchie Baptist Church has been carved out, but the eastern boundary otherwise extends to LA Highway 117. The west boundary runs north approximately 226' from point B to point C on the Boundary Map, while the eastern boundary is largely the same as it was during the period of significance. The clearing to the north of the buildings were used as play yards during the period of significance.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This nomination includes the property that was transferred to the Kisatchie Community Center, and encompasses the entirety of the school grounds that were located north of LA Highway 118, excepting the land that was transferred to the Kisatchie Baptist Church. The boundaries include the intact portion of the school property from the period of significance.

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Katy Coyle, Partner organization: Row 10 Historic Preservatio street & number: 8215 Sycamore Place	on Solutions, LLC	
city or town: New Orleans	state: LA	zip code: 70118
e-mail: general@row10hps.com telephone: 504-266-2098		
date: April 12, 2022		

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# Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- Maps: A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

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

# Photo Log

Name of Property: Kisatchie School City or Vicinity: Provencal Parish: Natchitoches State: Louisiana Name of Photographer: Katy Coyle Date of Photographs: October 7, 2021

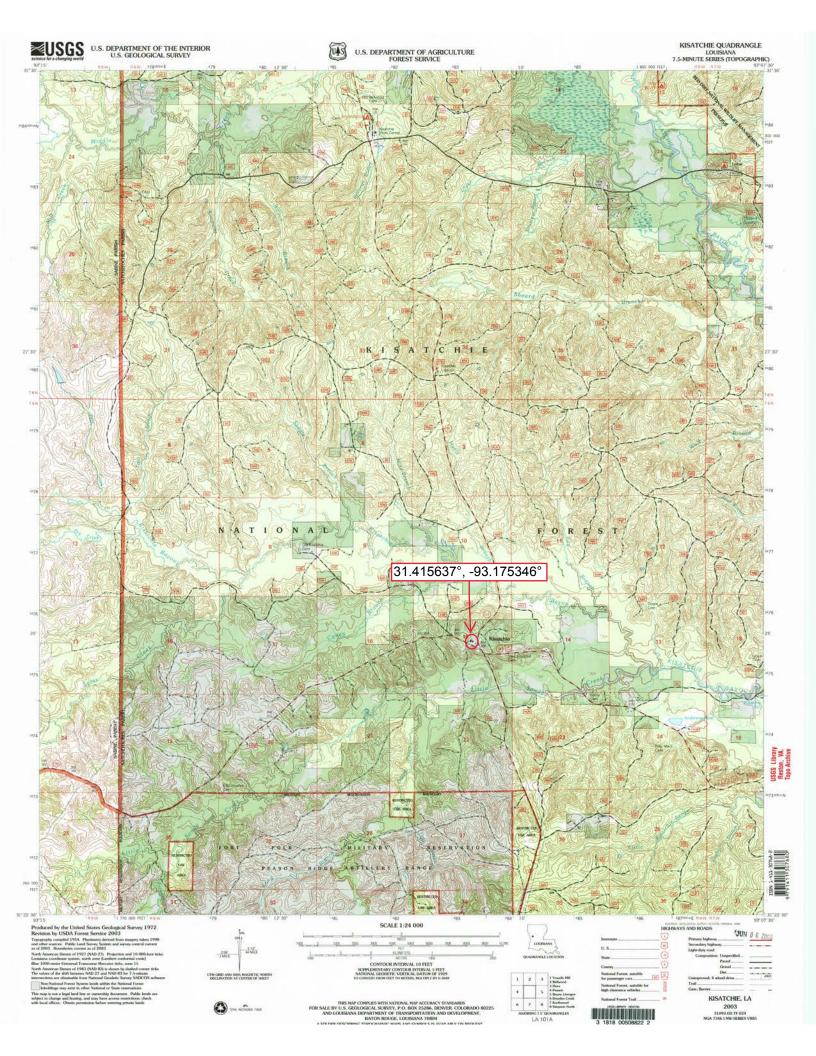
- 1 of 37: Front oblique overview, camera facing north
- 2 of 37: Oblique view of the primary (south) façade, camera facing northwest
- 3 of 37: Exterior façade art boards on western wing of original school, camera facing north
- 4 of 37: Front (south) façade with bas relief (camera facing north)
- 5 of 37: Close up of bas relief on south façade, looking north
- 6 of 37: Western elevation oblique, camera facing northeast
- 7 of 37: Eastern elevation, camera facing south
- 8 of 37: Rear elevation showing the eastern wing addition, camera facing west
- 9 of 37: Side entrance of western wing addition, camera facing east
- 10 of 37: Eastern elevation full oblique, camera facing southwest
- 11 of 37: Music room overview looking facing northeast; nb the drawing incorrectly identifies no windows on this wall
- 12 of 37: Music room windows on northern exterior, camera facing north
- 13 of 37: Closet/Hallway between music room and art room, camera facing west
- 14 of 37: From the music room looking through the hallway and into the art room, camera facing south
- 15 of 37: Exterior porch on the western wing addition, looking south at Principal's office exterior entrance
- 16 of 37: Exterior porch on the western wing addition, looking north at boiler house

**Kisatchie School** Natchitoches Parish, LA Name of Property County and State 17 of 37: Exterior of eastern wing addition on the interior of the U, looking at door to the interior, camera facing east Art room overview looking south with fire damage and doorway added to 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade 18 of 37: classroom 19 of 37: Art room looking southwest toward hallway and music room 20 of 37: Fifth-sixth grade classroom overview, original doorway to the entrance lobby on the left, camera looking south 21 of 37: Fifth-sixth grade east wall detail, camera facing east 22 of 37: Hallway immediately to the west of the principal's office looking toward the porch on the western wing addition, camera facing north Library overview, camera facing south 23 of 37: 24 of 37: Looking at principal's office from entranceway, camera facing north 25 of 37: Principal's office overview, view facing north Front door from inside, camera facing south 26 of 37: 27 of 37: Overview of stairs, camera facing southeast 28 of 37: Study hall overview, camera facing south Science room overview, camera facing southwest 29 of 37: 30 of 37: Science room second view, camera facing north 31 of 37: Business room looking east; note interior windows on the left of the picture 32 of 37: Typing room facing east; nb windows on both walls 33 of 37: History room overview, camera facing east; nb the drawing incorrectly identifies five windows 34 of 37: History room front façade wall, camera facing east 35 of 37: First-second grade overview, photograph taken from the exterior, camera facing southeast First-second grade detail shot of western wall, camera facing south 36 of 37:

37 of 37: Boiler room in exterior boiler house north of the school, camera facing northwest

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

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



# **Boundary Map**

B

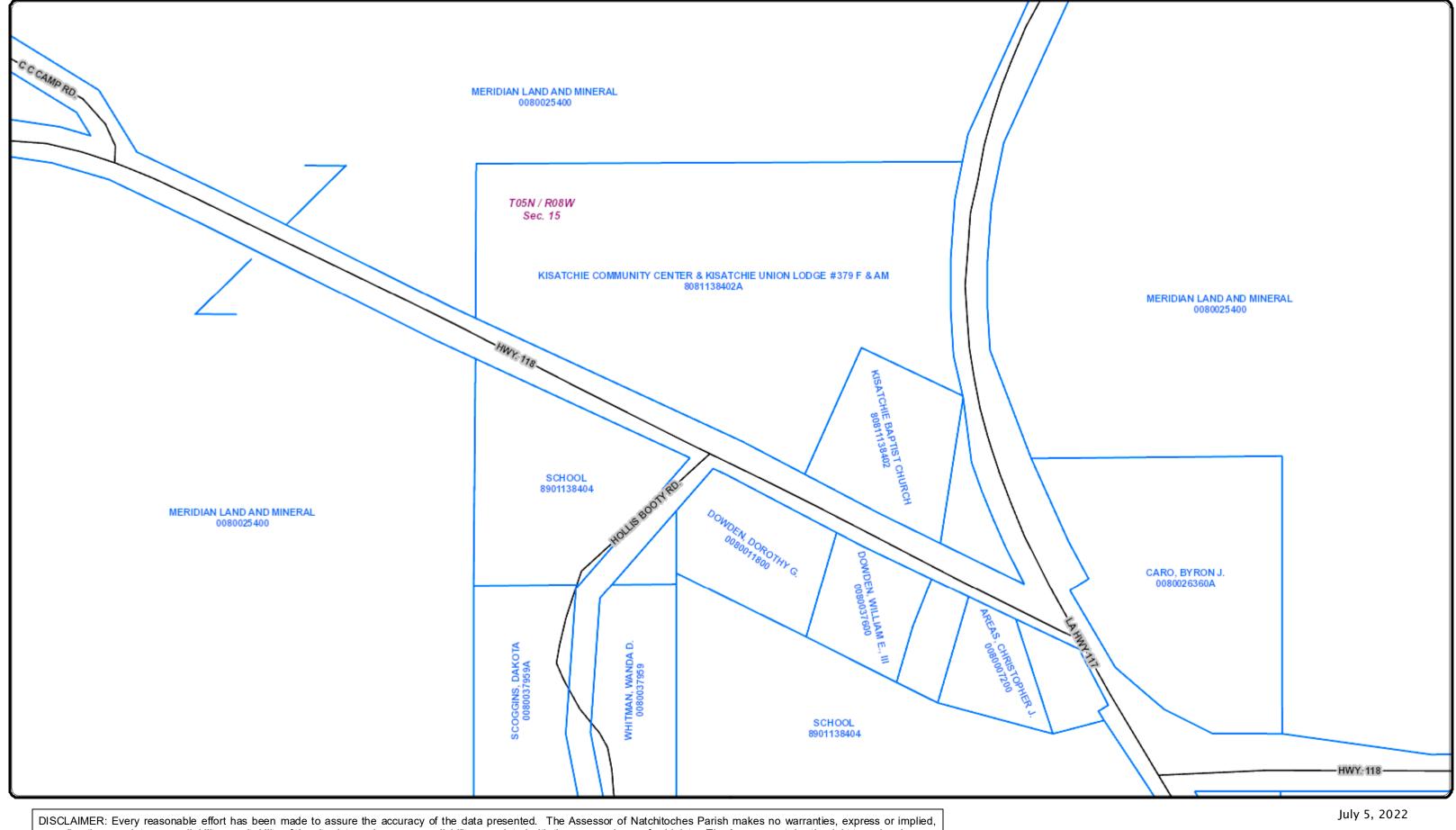
С

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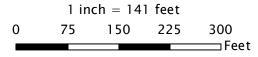
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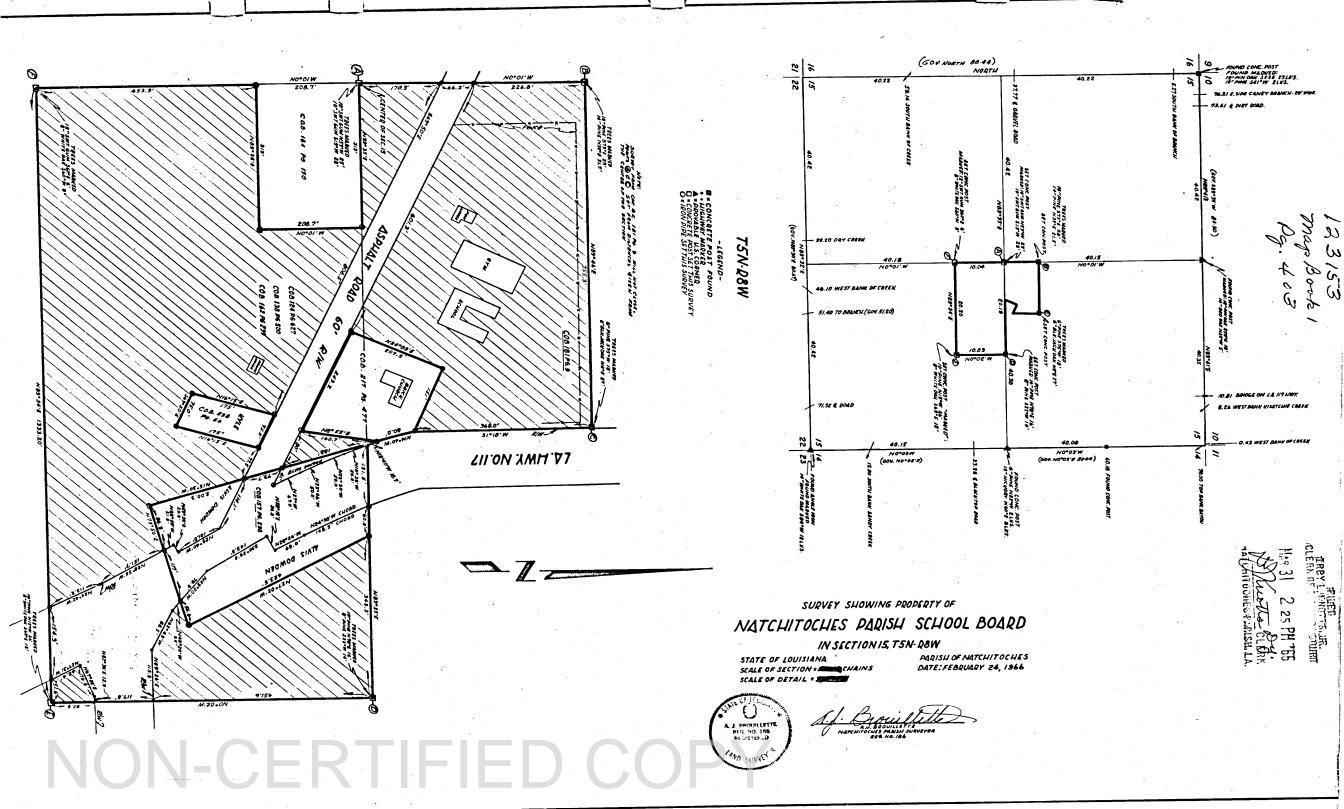
Google Earth

**Assessor Map** 

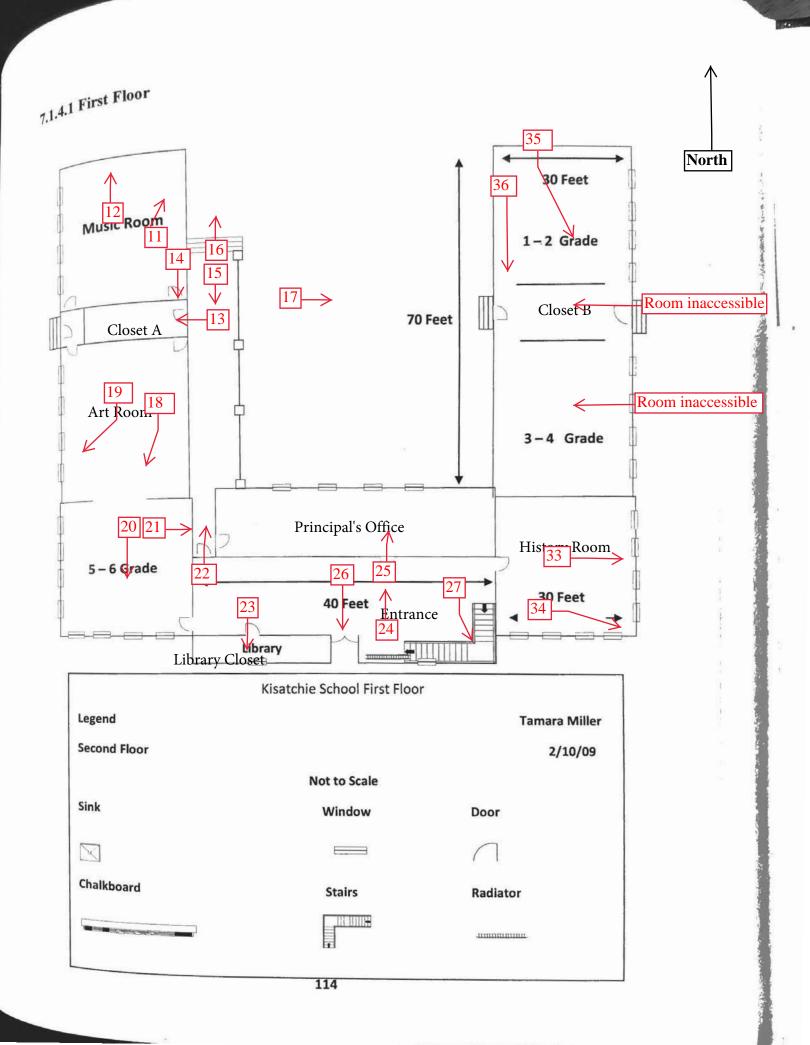


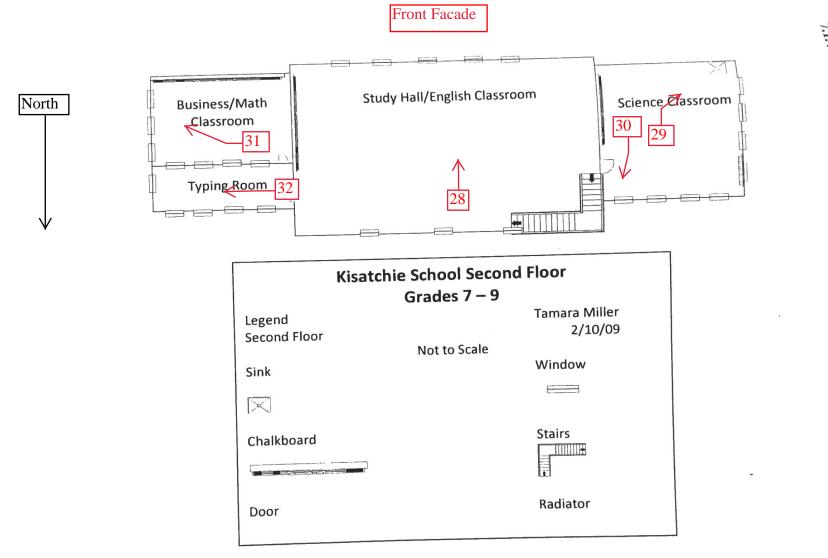
DISCLAIMER: Every reasonable effort has been made to assure the accuracy of the data presented. The Assessor of Natchitoches Parish makes no warranties, express or implied, regarding the completeness, reliability or suitability of the site data and assumes no liability associated with the use or misuse of said data. The Assessor retains the right to make changes and update data on this site at anytime, without notification. The parcel data on the base map is used to locate, identify and inventory parcels of land in Natchitoches Parish for assessment purposes only and is not to be used or interpreted as a legal survey or legal document. Additional data layers not originating in the Assessors Offices are also presented for informational purposes only. Before proceeding in any legal matter, all data should be verified by contacting the appropriate county or municipal office.











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