

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: LeGrande Elementary School

Other names/site number: HT 1354

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Public Schools of Kentucky

## 2. Location

Street & number: 70 LeGrande School Rd

City or town: Horse Cave

State: Kentucky

County: Hart

Not For Publication:  NA

Vicinity:  X

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following

level(s) of significance: \_\_\_national \_\_\_statewide Xlocal  
Applicable National Register Criteria: XA \_\_\_B \_\_\_C \_\_\_D

<hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;">Signature of certifying official/Title: <b>Craig Potts/SHPO</b> <span style="float: right;">Date</span></p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em; text-align: center;"><b>Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office</b></p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>
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<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p><b>Signature of commenting official:</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Date</b></span></p> <hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p><b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>
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LeGrande Elementary School (Historic Public Schools of Kentucky MPS)  
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

EDUCATION/School

**Current Functions**

EDUCATION/School

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

MODERN MOVEMENT

**Materials:**

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Foundation: CONCRETE

Exterior Walls: BRICK, CONCRETE, METAL/Steel

Fenestration: METAL/Aluminum, METAL/Steel

Roof: SYNTHETICS

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## Narrative Description

### Summary Paragraph

LeGrande Elementary School (HT 1354) is a sprawling consolidated school constructed in 1960 and located at 70 LeGrande School Rd. (Kentucky Route 218), in Horse Cave, Kentucky (Figure 1). While LeGrande Elementary School's address asserts that it is in Horse Cave, the school is actually situated roughly 6-7 miles east of the center of downtown Horse Cave, along KY 218. The school is situated on the west side of KY 218, just north of the intersection of KY 218 and Chris Wilson Rd. The property is approximately 7 acres, consisting of the entire parcel that has historically and presently been associated with the school and related activities. The Period of Significance stretches from 1960, the year the building was constructed, through 1975, the last year included in the Multiple Property Listing *Historic Public Schools in Kentucky*. The building is in good condition and retains sufficient integrity for listing.

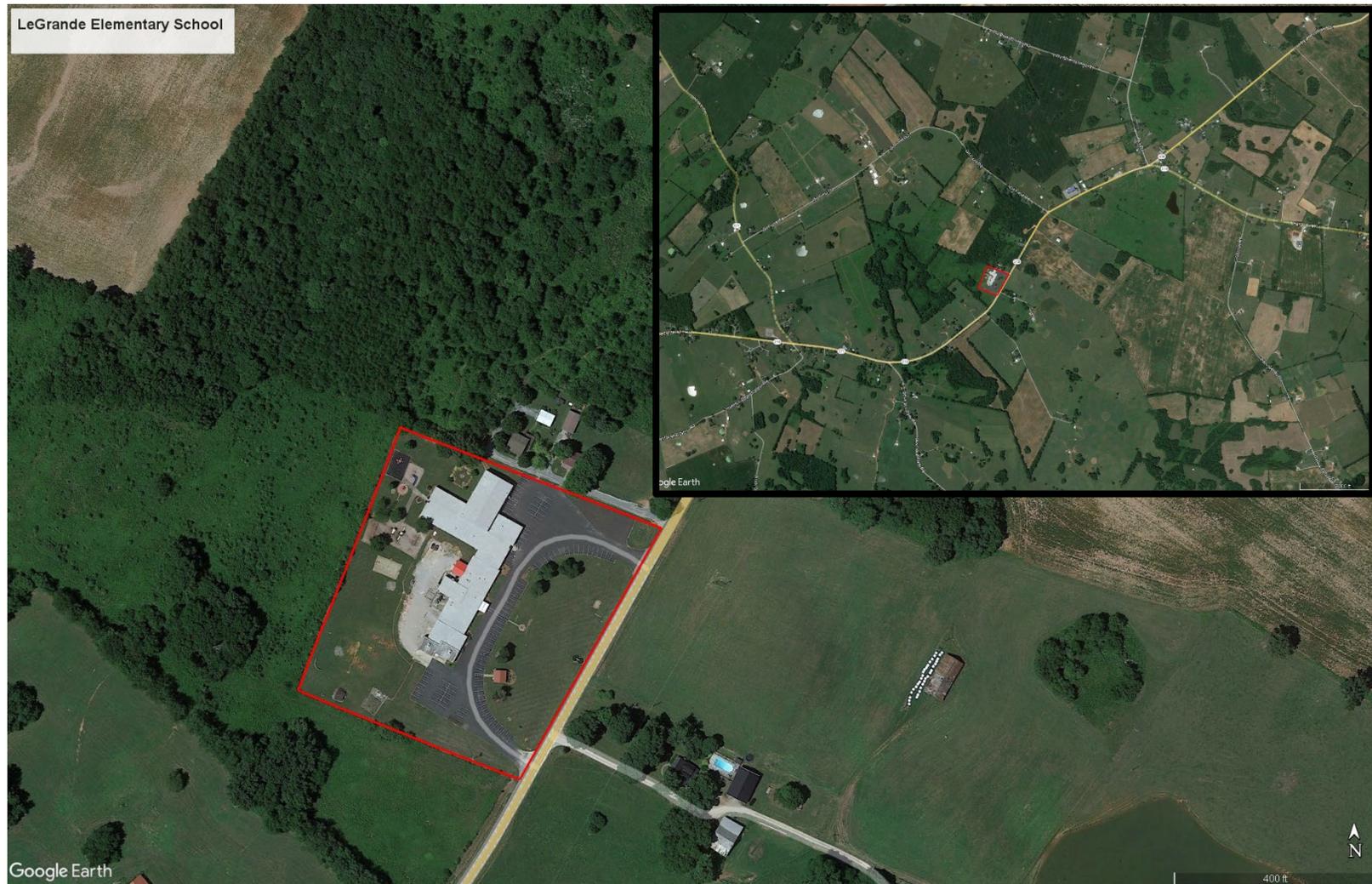
### Character of Site

LeGrande Elementary School is surrounded on all sides by a combination of dense vegetation and rural farmland. There are a smattering of single-family residential buildings along KY 218 and a few of the smaller roads that branch off. The eastern half of the lot is dominated by a large parking lot that spans the length of the school and extends slightly further to the north and south. The eastern portion of the parking lot is a semi-circular drive with parking along the inner curve and entry and exit points leading to KY 218 on the northeast and southeast corners of the lot. In the rear of the school, situated in the building's ell, there is a large gravel lot that leads to rear secondary entryways for deliveries and garbage pickup.

In the northwest portion of the lot, behind the school, there are a number of educational and recreational areas for the children to utilize. There is a concrete basketball court, two enclosed areas with playground equipment and a paved walkway connecting them, picnic benches scattered throughout, swing sets, small temporary/ancillary storage sheds presumably for play equipment, and a garden, complete with benches and decorative shrubberies, located just west of the gym addition in the north end of the lot. The presence of such recreational and educational spaces on the grounds are important aspects to these school buildings, as the modern school ideologies associated with the consolidation movement emphasized the importance of recreational activities to the students' physical health. Moreover, the ability for the school grounds to facilitate the construction of these spaces and the installation of this equipment was paramount, thus large lots were chosen not only for the ability for the schools themselves to expand overtime, but also for the grounds to be extensively utilized for extracurricular activities.

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*Figure 1. Boundaries of LeGrande Elementary School, as shown on an aerial map (Google Earth). Location relative to the surrounding area in the insert corner callout*

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LeGrande Elementary School has had several additions since its construction, expanding its footprint and ability to effectively provide the necessary education and space for the school children. The earliest addition to the property was in 1972 when the gym was constructed, just off the northwest corner of the school building. A gym was something that the school had been lacking, something that schools of that time were supposed to have and, in the case of LaGrande, it resulted in some Hart County students being rerouted to other county schools when Northtown Elementary closed in 1970-1971.<sup>1</sup> The gym is a south-facing, front-gabled building that faced the school. Less than 10 years later, in 1979, one small addition was constructed for additional classroom space off the south end of the building, likely to accommodate the school's inclusion of kindergarten students just a year or two before. This addition compliments the original facility plan, as it is a small extension of the central hallway flanked with one classroom on either side.

The gymnasium was originally accessible via a walkway off the north end of the school building, until, in 1999, a large addition was added off the south end of the gym, giving the school complex its notable ell shape. This addition's design was similar to that of the main school building, in that it has a central hallway with classrooms on the south side with the gym and new restrooms and a music room and media center on the north side. Then, in 2015, there was a final round of alterations, which connected the body of the main school to the gym and its classroom addition, with small rooms on either side of the connecting hallway, a small extension off the south end adding two new classrooms and extending the central hallway, and a small addition off the kitchen to accommodate the much-needed walk-in refrigerator and freezer.

## **Description of Resource**

### *Exterior*

LeGrande Elementary School is a one-story, sprawling Modern building with a concrete foundation, exterior walls clad in brick veneer and a flat roof. The school is separated into two main portions, the central north/south block that is flanked on the north by an east/west ell. The ell has a taller, gymnasium addition that runs parallel to the main block and is set back significantly. There have been several additions over the years, most of which were sympathetic to the original style and design of the building, with the most notable outlier being the larger gymnasium that is clad in metal siding and has a metal-clad gable roof. The east (main) façade is broken up into six portions, demonstrating the building's evolution over the years. The central portion of the east façade consists of the original school building, defined by its protruding eaves and the primary entryway that is slightly recessed in the middle of the façade with a V-shaped roof supported by decorative steel columns set into concrete footers (Photo 1). Fenestration on the central portion of the east façade consists of bands of three one-over-one fixed windows with small transoms and concrete sills, where the glass on the inner window of each band and all transoms have been infilled with panels, but leaving the rails and mullions in place, maintaining the visual separation.

To the north of the original school building are three portions representing three different periods of construction (Photo 2). Just north of the main block is a small addition that was constructed in ca. 2015 to fully connect the main school to the gym and the 1999 addition, where previously only a hallway or breezeway existed. The east façade of this portion features a pair of one-over-one

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<sup>1</sup> "Board changes district boundaries; Northtown students to attend LeGrande" In *Hart County News*, July 18, 1985.

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windows designed to mirror the appearance of the original block without the transom, with concrete sills and lintels. Just north of this is the 1999 addition that was constructed around the gymnasium. The east façade of this addition features four sets of two one-over-one windows with concrete sills and a recessed entryway situated in the middle. The northernmost portion is the severely recessed east façade of the gym addition that has louvered vents and multi-light windows in the clerestory and a single secondary entryway with a small shed-roof cover.



**Photo 1. Main Entryway**



**Photo 2. North End of East Facade**

The southernmost portion of the east façade is one of the 2015 additions and consists of a pair of one-over-one windows, designed to mirror the appearance of the original block, with concrete sills and lintels. Just north of this addition is the 1979 addition with a ribbon of three sets of two fixed windows complete with a concrete surround and the metal lettering above that reads “Le Grande Elementary.” These two southern additions extend farther out than the original school building (Photo 3).



**Photo 3. South End of East Facade**

The secondary facades are consistent with the style of the building, the design of the primary façade, and the utility of a mid-twentieth century school. There are a number of small projections, secondary entryways, and bands of windows that match those on the east façade (Photos 4 and 5).

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There are two notable exceptions. One is on the north façade of the building where there is a secondary multi-light entryway with a large three-by-four wall of windows and signage with changeable lettering. The other is the 2015 addition of a gable-front projection off the west façade that houses the walk-in refrigerator and freezer. This projection has walls that are clad in standing seam metal siding, as opposed to the brick veneer on the rest of the school building. Otherwise, the additions to the school do a fantastic job of matching the style of the original building and its earliest additions.



**Photo 4. North Facade**



**Photo 5. South Facade**

### *Interior*

The school is divided into different rooms in various sections serving different functions. In total, the school has 12 classrooms, two music rooms, a media center, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, four resource rooms, a reception area along with various bathrooms and storage spaces. The school is laid out with a central corridor in the main block of the building that connects to a central corridor in the connected ell. The classrooms and other associated rooms connect off this main hallway that makes an L shape. The main entryway is in the center of the main block and is flanked by the reception and office spaces for the principal and upper school staff.



**Photo 6. Hallway**



**Photo 7. Vestibule**

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The main makeup of the building's interior includes vinyl tile flooring, concrete block walls with a dropped tile ceiling (Photo 6). The main entrance to the school has a holding area between the school's interior with an entrance to the reception area (Photo 7). The classrooms and associated rooms also have vinyl tile flooring, concrete block walls, and a dropped tile ceiling (Photo 8). The layout and use of materials has remained constant throughout each alteration and addition to the building, including the most recent 2015 classroom additions (Photos 9 and 10). Many of the concrete block walls are painted with different pictures and scenes, including a large one in the cafeteria along two walls (Photo 11). Restrooms in the building are constructed with speckled vinyl tile flooring, concrete block walls, and a dropped tile ceiling (Photo 12). The gym is a large open structure with a polished wood floor typical of a school gymnasium, steel walls and an exposed ceiling with steel beams and an open-air mechanical equipment (Photo 13). The school is in good condition and continues to serve as a place of education.



**Photo 8. Original Classroom**



**Photo 9. 1979 Classroom**



**Photo 10. 2015 Classroom**



**Photo 11. Cafeteria**



**Photo 12. Bathroom**



**Photo 13. Gym**

The interior of the school is an expression of continuity, both in the design and layout of the original school and its additions as well as in its use of materials. Uniform in its circulation patterns, both the original building and the northern additions situated in the ell are laid out with a central hallway that is flanked on either side by rooms that are, for the most part, only one deep, with the only exceptions being the gym and the cafeteria that are, by necessity, larger in size and require auxiliary rooms. Similarly, the communal rooms throughout the school have ample lighting supplied by the bands of windows, something that is representative of the Post-War Property Type. Lastly, all of the interior spaces use similar materials, regardless of which era of the school's evolution they are from. Vinyl flooring, painted concrete block walls, and drop acoustic ceilings are constant, as is the notable lack of ornamentation and superfluous add-ons.

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The building retains integrity of location, material, design, setting, feeling, and association as it has been used continuously as a school for the surrounding community. The use of different materials and renovations completed on the school over the course of its history enforces these aspects to ensure its continued use. Moreover, the additions were done with the overall style and design in mind, thus the sympathetic changes over the years both blend with the original building while reinforcing the intentional nature of this style to accommodate additions.

### **Changes to the Property since the Period of Significance**

LeGrande Elementary School was originally constructed in 1960 and has undergone additions and changes to the interior. Some of the interior changes include classroom door hardware replacement, access control, video intercom system installations, lighting renovation, realignment of classrooms, the installation and consistent upgrades of a phone system, and other alterations.<sup>2</sup> While these changes have sought to modernize the school building, they have all embraced the original architectural style of the school and reinforced rather than diminished its original construction methods and design intent. The original corridors, classrooms, restrooms, and larger assembly spaces all remain intact. The manner in which students, faculty, and staff move through the school remains unchanged from how it was in 1975, reinforcing the integrity of the design and association. The materials of the additions and renovation also match the original construction materials. The painted concrete block walls, synthetic square floor tiles, and acoustic ceiling tiles all reinforce the building's integrity of materials and craftsmanship.

#### *1972 Gym Addition*

The construction of the gymnasium north of the original building is notably different in style and material from the rest of the building, but the requirements of such a construction are inherently antithetical to the design of the rest of the building, one of a low, sprawling school. Gyms are, by definition, vastly different than the other interior spaces of educational facilities, thus they are held to a different standard than the rest of the building. Gyms require a larger footprint, larger massing, fewer windows and doors and, typically, a vaulted roof. The utilization of metal siding on the construction of the gym makes sense, especially when considering affordability of a rural public school that was hastily building a gym to rectify the lack of such amenities that resulted in several students being sent to other district schools. A gym normally is obvious on a modern Post-War school, thus, this construction aligns with the expectations for the design of the era.

#### *1979 Addition*

There was a small addition off the south end of the school that added two classrooms, something that likely coincided with the addition of kindergarten to the school's offerings. This addition essentially acts as a small extension of the original layout and footprint, seeming to resemble a last phase of the original construction instead of an intentional later addition. The only notable difference to these two classrooms is in the much smaller band of windows as opposed to the larger one-over-one design. However, despite this change in the outward appearance, it, in itself, is reminiscent of the modern style utilized in other schools of the time. Moreover, the materials used matched those in the rest of the building making for an unbroken layout and interior flow.

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<sup>2</sup> Kentucky Department of Education, Office of Finance and Operations, Division of District Support, District Facilities Branch, *Pulaski County School District Facility Plan*. June 2020.

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*1999 Addition*

In 1999, a large-scale addition was constructed around the gymnasium to provide additional classroom space and to connect it physically to the main school building. This construction project added to the opportunities offered to the students by expanding classrooms space, adding preschool classes, and by allowing for the inclusion of specialized rooms such as a science classroom, complete with additional cabinetry and utilities to facilitate science experiments, a media center with an attached AV room, and an expanded music room. Despite being constructed nearly four decades after the rest of the school, all of the classrooms in the 1999 addition feature materials similar to the rest of the school with painted concrete block walls, acoustic tile ceilings, and vinyl tiles on the floor, except for the media center which is carpeted, however that is appropriate for a quieter space such as a media center or a library.

The 1999 addition changed the overall layout of the school, albeit in an appropriate and stylistically supportive way. Up until this point, the gymnasium stood apart from the rest of the school, something that while not unheard of, was not ideal for an elementary school. This addition served to connect the gymnasium to the rest of the school building. In doing so, it changed the footprint from the sprawling linear resource to a sprawling linear resource with a large-scale ell. This is not uncommon, however, for Post-war schools. Rear additions to such schools were frequent, which often gave the schools ells or finger-like extensions, changing how the school is spaced. With LeGrande, the 1999 addition, while altering the shape, it served to reinforce and improve the interior flow of the school. Included with this addition was a covered hyphen-like corridor that extended the central corridor from the main school building into the ell. The main corridor then turned north, still centrally located in the building, flanked on either side by classrooms. By building a hyphen that connected the original school to the addition, this project allowed for a continuous movement throughout the expanded building, instead of having to walk outside to get from the school to the gym, which emphasizes the connectivity and inclusivity preferred in the modern educational facilities.

*2015 Addition*

The 2015 addition included another expansion off the south end of the building and the addition of addition of resource rooms on either side of the enclosed hyphen corridor connecting the school to the 1999 addition. Similar to the previous additions, these new spaces mirrored those of the rest of the school in material and design. Both of these larger aspects of the construction projects were in line with the practices of the time, first by expanding off the sides/ends of the buildings by extending the corridor and constructing new rooms just past where the school previously ended, and by utilizing all extra space for school-related requirements, such as storage, as seen in the addition of two small resource rooms on either side of the hyphen. The enclosure of the hyphen also served to accentuate the cohesion of the façade, by removing the break in appearance that was previously there. The only noticeable difference in the newly added spaces is that the interior walls of the resource centers are painted brick veneer, as the interior walls were previously the exterior walls of the original school building and the 1999 addition, instead of concrete block. Otherwise, the additions match the previous design and style in material, functionality, and flow.

The overall impact of the additions and renovations on the pre-1975 building are minimal to understanding the building within its context of public education in Kentucky. The classrooms were still individualized by grade and teacher. The materials, both the original and the newer

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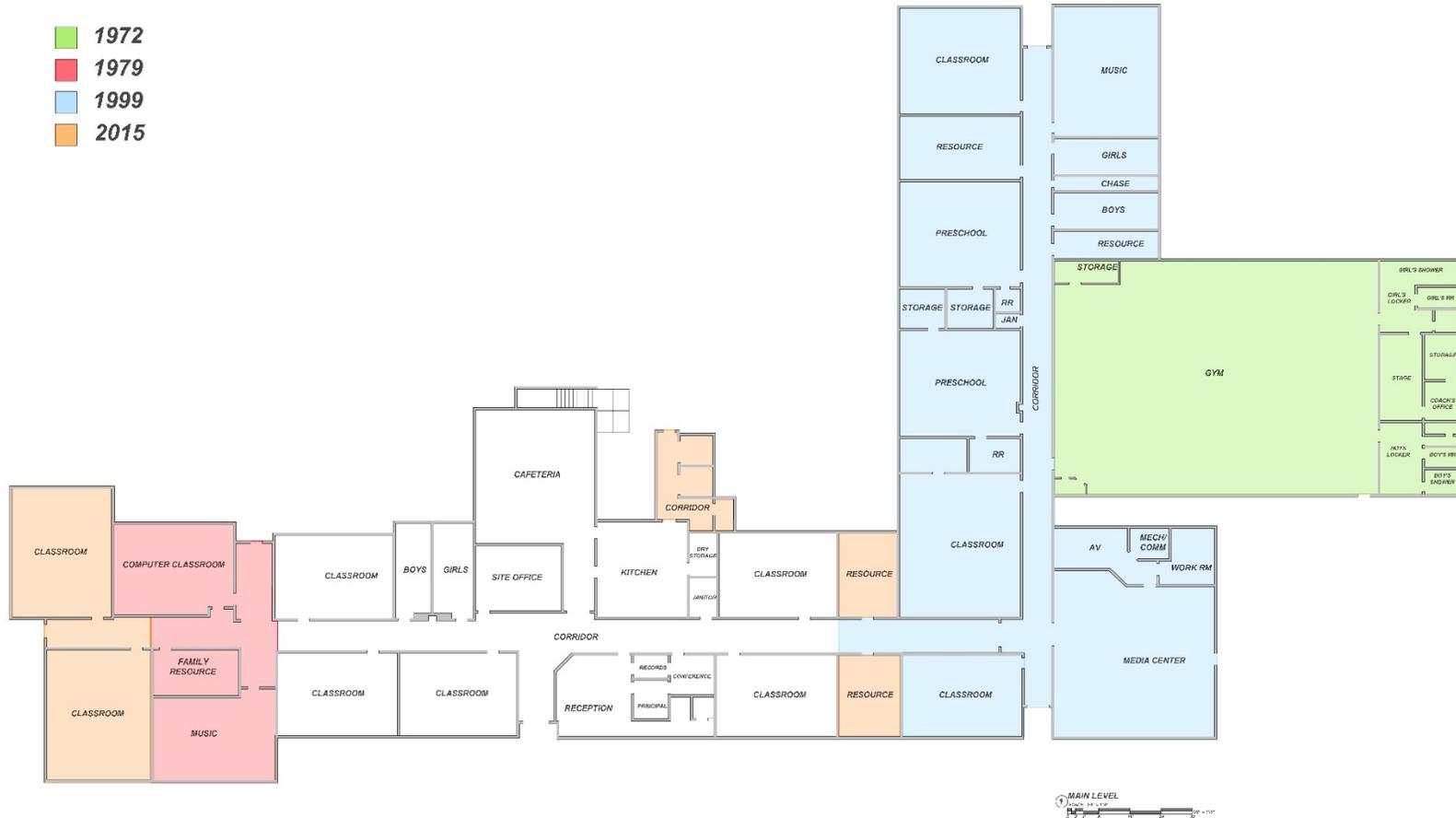
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replacement materials, retained the same utilitarian nature of the original 1960 building. By keeping additions primarily to the sides and rear of the building and creating an ell, the building is able to retain the overall general layout of the school interior, with a central hallway flanked by classrooms, one-room deep. These sympathetic additions allow for the cohesive feel of the interior, creating a seamless fit visually and allowing for the overall flow of the building, something that was intentional to the original design, to remain intact.

The school retains integrity as a functioning school building that has been used as a school over the course of its history. The various additions and renovations done to the school ensure that its history and function as such can continue. The original portion of the building's exterior is still visible on much of the east façade, with nothing covered or lost by later additions. The additions off the north and south match the original construction in material, style, and design, done in the Modern style. Although the newer windows differ slightly, the overall feel and design is unharmed. These Modern, Post-war schools were intended to grow, in enrollment, educational offerings, and in physical footprint and size, something that was done in an appropriate way at LaGrande. The gymnasium stands out slightly, but was constructed during the Period of Significance and aligns with accepted construction practices of the time, choosing materials and design that were practical yet affordable, and the later addition of classroom space connecting the gym to the main building aids in bringing cohesion to the entire building. Despite the material changes to the building, the building still retains sufficient integrity and meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the Historic Public Schools of Kentucky MPS

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*Site Plan and Evolution of LeGrande Elementary School.*

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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

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

**Areas of Significance**  
EDUCATION

**Significant Person**  
NA

**Period of Significance**  
1960-1975

**Cultural Affiliation**  
NA

**Significant Dates**  
1960

**Architect/Builder**  
Unknown

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## Statement of Significance

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The LeGrande Elementary School (HT 1354) is locally significant within the historic context, Public Schools in Kentucky 1800-1975, as outlined in the Historic Public Schools of Kentucky MPD, and is a significant early instance of the property type Post-War School Buildings. The school's significance is rooted in the ongoing consolidation movement, which resulted in the construction of modern educational facilities throughout Kentucky to cater to a wider geographic region and provide better educational accommodations for the schoolchildren, and how that movement positively impacted rural communities. Schools, such as LeGrande Elementary School, were essential for Kentucky's rural and suburban areas, as they provided adequate educational facilities, established with progressive ideologies best suited for learning, that could grow and evolve as needs arose. LeGrande Elementary School was a later example of this Property Type, being fifteen years after the end of WWII, but its implementation and success is characteristic of the overall consolidation movement.

LeGrande Elementary School meets the Registration Requirements set forth in the Multiple Property Listing. The Post-War School Buildings Property Type includes buildings that were a part of the ongoing consolidation movement of the mid-20th century. These buildings are characterized by the prevalent architectural and educational ideologies of the time, those that were designed to best foster learning for Kentucky's schoolchildren. These buildings' ability to evolve and grow in order to accommodate ongoing needs was paramount. As such, buildings, such as LeGrande Elementary School, were frequently altered and additions were added. These additions and alterations that occur after 1975 are weighed against the significance of the building, to determine whether the building's significant identity survives in material form. The important question an eligible property must answer in the affirmative is whether the building's physical status today continues to reinforce the significance of local historical educational efforts.

Similar to other rural counties in Kentucky, the educational landscape following World War II drastically changed. This was in large part due to the changing demographics of the area with the return of veterans and the subsequent baby boomer population, as well as the constant improvement of the Commonwealth's infrastructure, coupled with the increasing availability of automobiles for Americans. Of the five elementary schools currently serving Hart County, which in this case refers to public schools offering preschool through eighth grade classes, four were constructed within the Period of Significance of the Multiple Property Listing Historic Public Schools of Kentucky. These elementary schools were built between 1943-1960, with the earliest of these schools being one of the rare examples of a public school being constructed during the war. The fifth active public elementary school in Hart County was constructed in 2007.

In Hart County, the post-war years brought about a new era in public education. In 1945, there were 67 one-room schools within the county, but in less than a decade, all of them had been closed.<sup>3</sup> During those nine years, there was an intentional effort to consolidate schools. As such, between 1943 and 1948, three consolidated elementary schools were constructed. Over the next

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<sup>3</sup> The Historic Marker Database, "Hart County One-Room Schools 1945-1946," Electronic Document, <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=174340>, accessed October 2024.

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couple of decades, most schools in Hart County remained segregated, despite the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954. By 1965, however, all segregated schools in Hart County were demolished. It was around this time that LeGrande Elementary was constructed. At this point, there were four consolidated elementary schools in Hart County, geographically placed to accommodate all school-aged students in the county, thus fully realizing the consolidation school model and eliminating the necessity of local rural schools in the area. It is an interesting point that all “elementary” schools in Hart County offer preschool through eighth grade courses, essentially eliminating the need for separate middle schools in the county. While this is not unheard of, it is somewhat unique for an entire county to adopt this approach.

### **History of Nominated Property**

LeGrande Elementary School was constructed in 1960. While LeGrande is technically in Horse Cave, it is a part of the Hart County School District as opposed to the Caverna Independent School District that most of Horse Cave proper falls within. In the years following WWII, Kentucky was rectifying the vast disparities between its city schools and the county schools in the more rural regions. The school consolidation movement began around the turn of the century, but in many of Kentucky’s counties, it was not until after WWII that diligent efforts were made to implement the changes both in physical school construction and ideological evolution of the curriculums and the importance placed on new offerings. Despite the passing of the 1934 School Code, it was not until 1943, which only occurred because of a devastating fire the year before, that Hart County made moves to consolidate its school buildings. Of the five schools that still serve Hart County, Memorial Elementary School, built in 1943, was the first in the region and likely served both high school and elementary school, but it was closely followed by Bonnierville and Cub Run in 1948, and LeGrande, in 1960. Originally, the four schools served the County in each of the four cardinal directions; east, north, west, and south, respectively, with Munfordville having its own elementary school. Following the construction and consolidation efforts that resulted in the aforementioned four schools, other schools that had been serving Hart County residents were closed, including Northtown, an elementary school that closed in 1970-1971, and Carter-Dowling, which was a consolidated elementary school for African American students that lost most of its student population after the Hart County School District desegregated their schools in 1965, closed in 1968-1969.<sup>4</sup> In 2007, the new Munfordville was constructed, replacing the one there before, being the last of the five that currently serve the Hart County School District. Horse Cave, the largest city in the County, is served by the Caverna Independent School District instead of Hart County.

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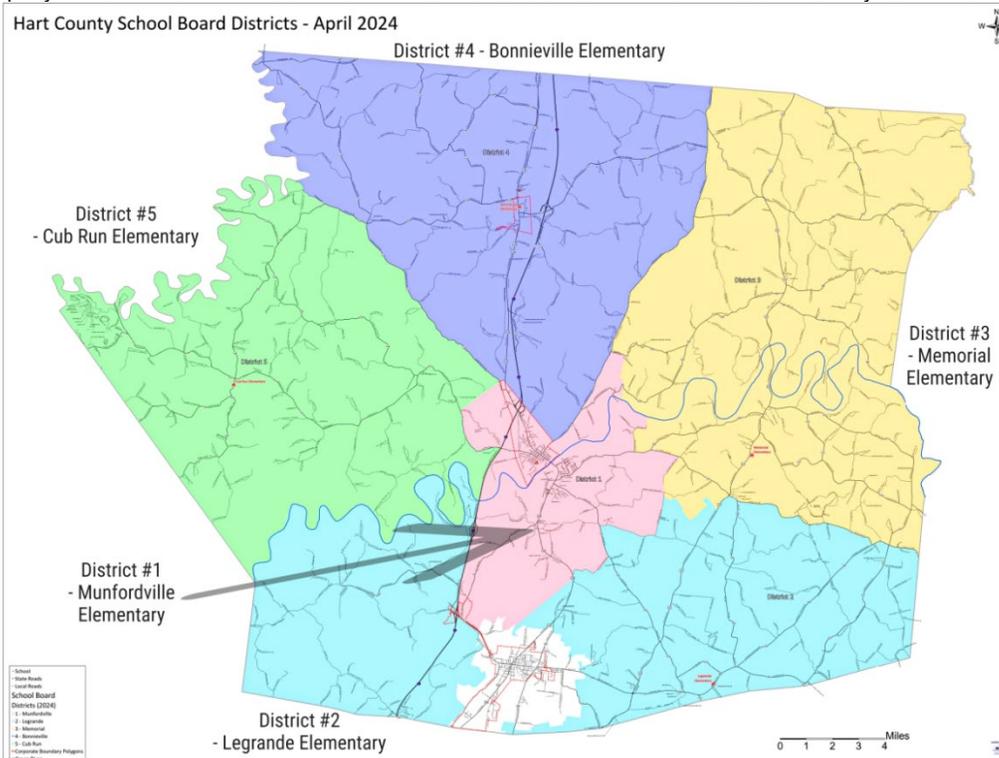
<sup>4</sup> “Board changes district boundaries; Northtown students to attend LeGrande.” In *Hart County News*, July 18, 1985; “1951-1969 Carter-Dowling School.” Electronic document, <https://www.hartcountymuseum.org/historical-highlights.html>, accessed April 2025.

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When LeGrande Elementary School was built, it was a relatively small facility, though designed with the contemporary education-focused architectural ideologies in mind. The original school was a simple one-story, rectangular building with bands of windows, allowing for adequate lighting, and most importantly, designed in a way to allow for ease of growth as needs arose. In 1972, after the lack of a gym caused LaGrande to be passed over for new students when nearby Northtown Elementary closed in 1970-1971, a gym was constructed just north of the school building. The gym was deemed a necessary aspect of these consolidated schools, so the construction of this piece of LeGrande was integral to the school's continued growth and success. Outdoor recreational space was available to students of LeGrande almost immediately after its opening, however, over the years, these have been replaced out of necessity to modernize outdoor play and to make things safer for the children. In 1979, a small addition occurred off the south end of the school, adding two classrooms. This likely occurred as a result of the addition of kindergarten classes to the school's offerings, something that occurred in 1977-1978.<sup>5</sup>

This pattern, of a series of additions to the original school plant, is emblematic of the significance of the new county consolidated schools, as they were designed with that precise purpose in mind. As opposed to the larger schools of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that focused on grandeur and portraying a sense of high-style academia, the new schools recognized that the largest downfall to those earlier schoolhouses was their inability to adapt to the growing and often unpredictable needs of local education. The new school designs sought to remedy that by utilizing simple forms, simple materials, and consistent designs on a sprawling building that allowed for additions to be easily added onto the outer wings and, less commonly, the rear of the building.

<sup>5</sup> "Enrollment declines in Hart schools." In *Hart County News*. September 14, 1978.

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In the mid-1980s, the Hart County school district redrew their boundaries to both properly distribute the school-aged population among the five elementary schools and to more adequately provide transportation for the children. When Northtown Elementary School closed in 1970-1971, those students were supposed to be sent to LeGrande but the lack of certain facilities and amenities, such as limited classroom space and no gym, led to the district sending them to Munfordville. However, Munfordville was overcrowded by the 1980s, thus the realignment was necessary. This realignment resulted in dozens of children being assigned to LeGrande in the 1985-1986 schoolyear, many of whom should have been sent there to begin with.<sup>6</sup>

The influx in school children associated with the district's realignment, the addition of preschool offerings, and the ongoing technological and educational needs led to the large-scale addition that began in 1999. In addition to the creation of more much-needed elementary classroom space, this addition also added space for preschool classes, a media center, and a music room.

LeGrande's ability to expand, per the modern educational ideologies, is embodied in both the physical expansion of the building's footprint, but also in the educational and recreational offerings. As LeGrande entered into the twenty-first century, the school began to offer additional educational classes, such as technology classes in newly created computer labs, but also began expanding its recreational offerings by building newer, bigger, and safer outdoor playgrounds. The most recent alteration to the physical footprint of LeGrande occurred in 2015, when the small hyphen connecting the main body of the school and the east/west addition south of the gym was completely finished, creating two new resource rooms, a small addition was constructed off the south façade of the school, adding two new classrooms, and the rear, front-gabled extension was built to add walk-in fridge and freezer space. Other site additions in the twenty-first century include ancillary buildings to the rear of the school and a shelter off the curved parking lot. There is also a small plot of land in the southwest corner with a small structure and a fenced-off area that appears to house utility pipes, likely leased and monitored by the county.

Throughout its existence, LeGrande Elementary School has been designed and constructed architecturally to meet the contemporary requirements of public education and has grown to accommodate growing populations and increased needs. It has remained a valuable resource in Kentucky public school education and a testament to the mid-twentieth century ideologies ensuring that the design of schools could adapt with growing needs, provide an ideal learning environment for students, and be easily accessible by all students in the surrounding district.

Over the years since the building was constructed, LeGrande Elementary School has hosted events for the local community in addition to its service as an elementary school for a large region in southern Hart County. While some of the events held on site benefit the school and its educational and extracurricular activities, there were countless others that utilized the space. Despite the purpose of the events, they all served as important channels for community cohesion and involvement in the local school. Examples of the kinds of events held at LeGrande include the school's annual Fall Festival and chili supper, girl scout ceremonies, concerts, fundraising benefits

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<sup>6</sup> "Board changes district boundaries; Northtown students to attend LeGrande." In *Hart County News*, July 18, 1985

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for various charities, and tractor pulls, to name a few.<sup>7</sup> Such activities were intentional and indicative of the Post-War Property Type that sought to have the school buildings serve as community centers, especially in rural areas.

Enrollment at LeGrande has steadily increased over the last sixty years as the overall population of Hart County has grown, offerings have increased to include kindergarten and then preschool, and the school district has realigned its boundaries, rerouting students to LeGrande from other, more overcrowded, schools. In 1963, just three years after construction, LeGrande had 178 students from first to eighth grade.<sup>8</sup> In 1978, a year that saw all of Hart County schools' enrollment declining, with LeGrande being the only elementary school exception, the total was 196 and in 1980 that number jumped to just 202.<sup>9</sup> That total enrollment number at LeGrande was up to 256 in 1989, however, by the turn of the twentieth century, the number dropped by nearly 40 students and did not reach back above 250 again until 2014.<sup>10</sup> Today, enrollment hovers around the 300-student mark, which is significantly higher than the capacity for the school, stated in the 2020 District Facility Plan, signifying that while the completion of additions address the building's physical limitations and shortcomings, they are necessary to continue to provide to an ever-growing student population.

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<sup>7</sup> "Tractor Pulling at LeGrande" In *Hart County News*, May 14, 1970; "Gospel Notes by Donna Stanton" In *Hart County News*, May 31, 1973; "Cancer Crusade Benefit Sing on April 27" in *Hart County News*, April 25, 1974; "LeGrande Girls Scout investiture service held" in *Hart County News*. December 18, 1980; "LeGrande School Fall Festival scheduled for Friday night" in *Hart County News*, November 5, 1987.

<sup>8</sup> "Hart County Facilities Survey Made by State Dept. of Education." In *Hart County News*, July 11, 1963.

<sup>9</sup> "Enrollment declines in Hart schools." In *Hart County News*. September 14, 1978; "Hart Schools enrollment down slightly." In *Hart County News*, August 28, 1980.

<sup>10</sup> "Hart enrollment figures down from last year." In *Hart County News*, August 24, 1989; "LeGrande Elementary School" Electronic document, <https://www.schooldigger.com/go/KY/schools/0264000565/school.aspx?t=tbStudents&st=tbSTR#aDetail>, accessed April 2025.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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1973, May 31. “Gospel Notes by Donna Stanton”

1974, April 25. “Cancer Crusade Benefit Sing on April 27”

1978, September 14. “Enrollment declines in Hart schools.”

1980, August 28. “Hart Schools enrollment down slightly.”

1980, December 18. “LeGrande Girls Scout investiture service held”

1985, July 18. “Board changes district boundaries; Northtown students to attend  
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1987, November 5. “LeGrande School Fall Festival scheduled for Friday Night”

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** HT 1354

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 7 acres

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

1. Latitude: 37.171174                      Longitude: -85.795161

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the LeGrande Elementary School includes the entire legal parcel on which the school is located. The property is roughly bounded by LeGrande Hwy. to the east, undeveloped land to the south and west, and two neighboring residences to the north.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the entirety of the property historically and currently associated with LeGrande Elementary School.

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*Parcel Map Courtesy of Hart County, KY Property Valuation Administrator*

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**Property Owner:**

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

name Hart County School District Finance Corp  
street & number PO Box 68 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Munfordville state Kentucky zip code 42765

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Wes Cunningham, MA, Sr. Principal Investigator History/Architecture, Director of National Register Nominations & Research  
organization: Pinion Advisors  
street & number: 1131 Logan Street  
city or town: Louisville state: Kentucky zip code: 40204  
e-mail: wcunningham@pinionadvisors.com  
telephone: 502-807-0575  
date: April 2025

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**Photographs**

**Photo Log**

Name of Property: LeGrande Elementary School  
City or Vicinity: Horse Cave  
County: Hart County  
State: Kentucky  
Photographer: Jonna Mabelitini  
Date Photographed: December 2024

- 1 of 13: View of the Legrande Elementary School entryway, camera facing north.
- 2 of 13: View of LeGrande Elementary School, camera facing southwest.
- 3 of 13: View of LeGrande Elementary School, camera facing north.
- 4 of 13: View of LeGrande Elementary School, camera facing southwest.
- 5 of 13: View of LeGrande Elementary School, camera facing northeast.
- 6 of 13: View of interior corridor, camera facing south.
- 7 of 13: View of vestibule, camera facing west.
- 8 of 13: View of interior classroom, camera facing southeast.
- 9 of 13: View of music room, camera facing south.
- 10 of 13: View of interior classroom, camera facing west.
- 11 of 13: View of the cafeteria, camera facing west.
- 12 of 13: View of the restroom, camera facing north.
- 13 of 13: View of the gymnasium, camera facing north.

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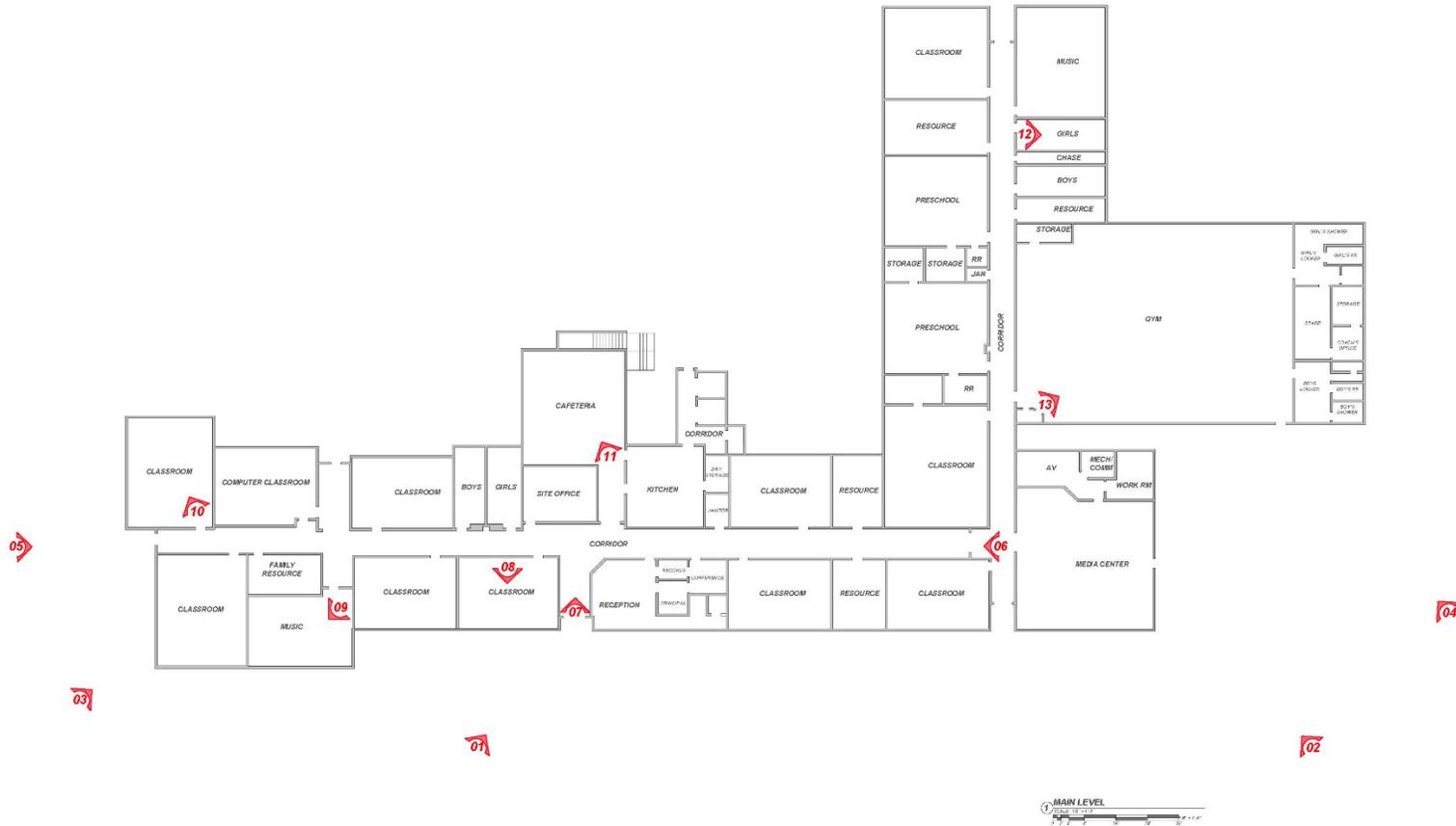
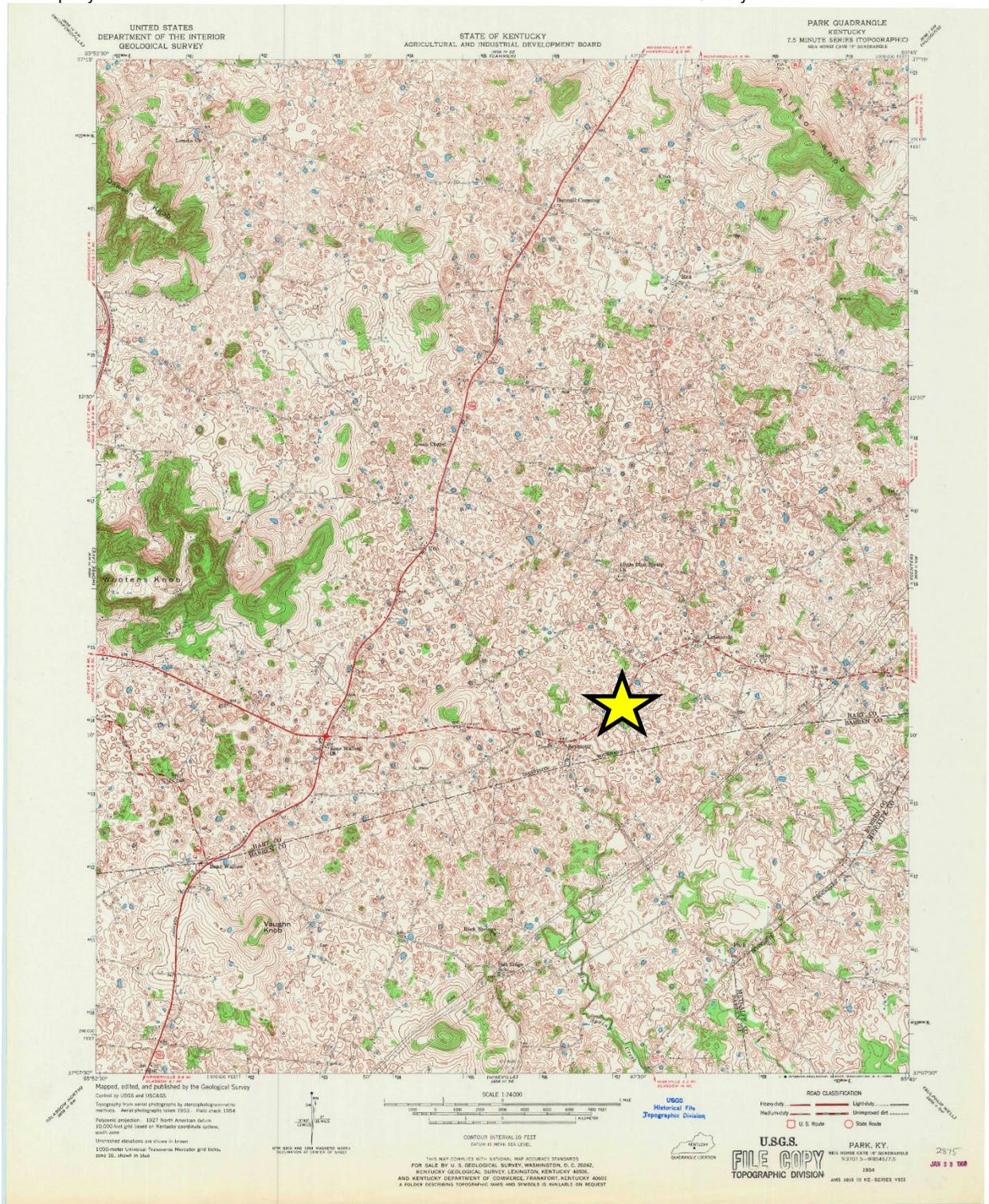


Photo Key

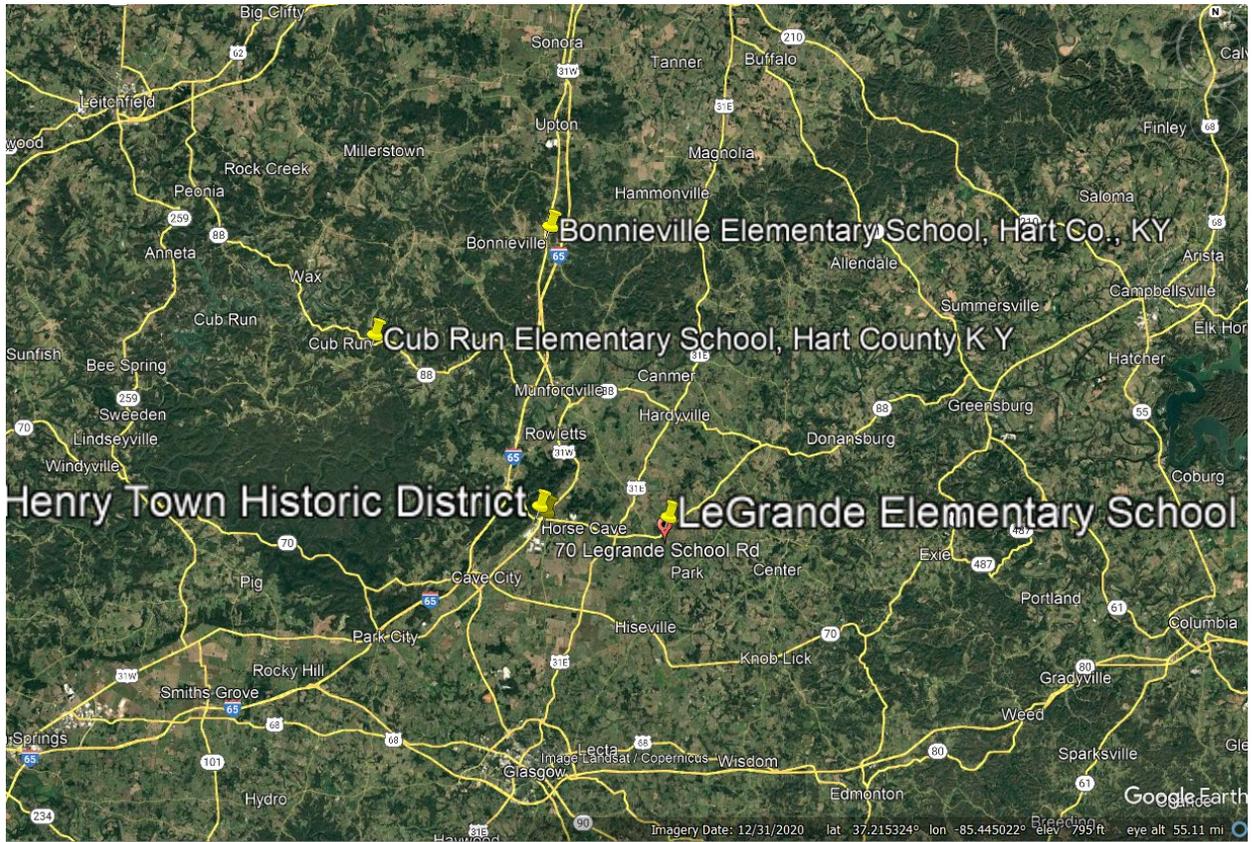
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**LeGrande Elementary School, Hart County, KY, area map**