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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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

### 1. Name of Property

historic name LaGRANGE DISTRICT SCHOOL NO. 3

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 2 Doctor Fink Road

city or town Freedom Plains (Town of LaGrange)

state New York code NY county Dutchess code 027 zip code 12540

<input type="checkbox"/>	not for publication
<input type="checkbox"/>	vicinity

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.  
In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national         statewide     X local

Ruth Perpart DSHPO     4/1/13  
Signature of certifying official/Title     Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official     Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title     State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register     \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register     \_\_\_ removed from the National Register

    other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Joe Edson H. Beall     5.28.13  
Signature of the Keeper     Date of Action

**LaGRANGE DISTRICT SCHOOL NO. 3**

Name of Property

**DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK**

County and State

**5. Classification**

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

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

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	2	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION & CULTURE: museum

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD

roof: ASPHALT

other: GLASS, METAL

LaGRANGE DISTRICT SCHOOL NO. 3

Name of Property

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County and State

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**Narrative Description**

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**Summary Paragraph**

LaGrange District School No. 3 is situated north of Doctor Fink Road and east of Freedom Road (County Route 47) in the Freedom Plains area of the Town of LaGrange, Dutchess County, New York. Form-wise it is of characteristic conception for a mid-nineteenth century rural schoolhouse, being one story in height with a rectangular-shaped footprint. The building displays self-contained massing and is covered by a medium-pitched gable roof oriented with its ridge parallel to the longer east and west flank elevations. The clapboard-covered wood frame walls which constitute the exterior envelope were erected above a foundation of uncoursed local stone; a deteriorated concrete entrance platform aligns the façade, which is oriented to face roughly southward, towards Doctor Fink Road. Exterior detailing is austere, as the building largely lacks references to the prevailing architectural styles of the period in which it was erected. The interior exhibits both original and subsequent historic-period finishes, along with some more modern features. It was used as school until 1942 and functioned briefly as a branch library in the 1970s; it was acquired by the present owner, the LaGrange Historical Society, in 1962. The interior is largely given over to the classroom area, with the balance of the plan consisting of a narrow entrance vestibule originally accessed via the paired doorways, one of which has since been closed off. Interior finishes included bead-board wainscoting and plaster; plaster wall and ceiling surfaces in the classroom have been succeeded by sheetrock. Medium-width tongue-and-grooved boards, aligned horizontally and laid on subflooring, constitute the floor surface in the classroom. The property additionally includes a non-historic frame privy which, along with a portable toilet (the nominated building lacks interior plumbing), counts as a non-contributing feature; these are located to the north of the building. It should also be noted that the adjacent property to the east includes a small frame barn, which by some accounts functioned previously as the area schoolhouse, before the present building was erected.

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**Narrative Description**

The nominated building sits on a raised podium of land within a roughly triangular-shaped parcel consisting of approximately one-half acre. The associated land, which is uneven in grade and slopes away from the building on all four sides, is largely planted with grass; deciduous woods frame the property to the east. The elevated position of the building lends it a visual prominence when viewed from the adjacent roadways. A short distance from the nominated building, to the southeast on an adjacent parcel of land, is a smaller frame building, now disposed as a barn, which some sources indicate was the previous schoolhouse. If so, it was moved to that location at the time the nominated school was erected, ca. 1862; nothing is presently known of interior conditions and whether physical evidence sustains this claim.

District School No. 3 was oriented with its principal elevation facing southwards, tending slightly to the southwest, its roof ridge aligned on a roughly north to south axis. Fenestration consists of two windows and a door on the façade, symmetrically placed, with the window situated between the two doors; three windows apiece on the east and west elevations; and two windows on the rear, or north, elevation. An exterior brick chimney is present on the north elevation, between the two window openings, and rises upwards and through the wood cornice. A flagpole is present on the façade, and is affixed to the building near the gable apex; historic images indicate it was moved to this position by the early twentieth century, from an earlier freestanding position.

The two entrances on the south-facing façade are fitted with six-panel wood doors trimmed with plain wood casings. Between these apertures is a window, hung with six-over-six wood sash and fitted with storm windows, as all the building's windows are. Historic images indicate the presence, originally, of shutters.

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Above this window, and centered within the gable field, is an ogee-arched panel within which is set a panel with black lettering on a white background reading "1959 LaGRANGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY," which replaced an earlier district school sign. Unmoulded boards are present at the corners and an unmoulded fascia board follows the roof rake; from it extend small trimmers to which sections of simple wood moulding are affixed. The wood clapboard is painted red, as are the corner boards and raking boards, while the window and door trim, sash, and door panels are painted white. Early carved graffiti survives on some of the clapboards, including the simple inscription "Frank."

The east and west elevations exhibit the same simplicity of design as employed for the façade. Each is punctuated by three evenly spaced but asymmetrically placed windows—they are arranged so as to be closer to the south wall than the north wall—the openings being fitted with six-over-six wood sash, which, like the other apertures, have plain wood casings. A stone retaining wall aligns the west elevation and a portion of the rear elevation. The rear elevation has two symmetrically placed windows with six-over-six sash, the apertures separated by the brick chimney.

The school's interior is given over to the classroom and the original entrance vestibule, which appears to have included closet space between the paired doors. The classroom has sheetrock wall finish above bead-board wainscot and a sheet rock-clad ceiling to which are affixed fluorescent lighting fixtures. The depth of the sheetrock walls in relation to the window casings suggest that areas of lath and plaster may remain, though this has not been confirmed. A large blackboard is present on the south wall, centered between the two door openings that led into the vestibule, with a moulded chair rail and wainscoting below; a blackboard is also present on the east wall. Of the two doors on the south wall that led into the vestibule, the westernmost one now leads into a small room, the corresponding exterior door now covered up on the interior. In the northwest corner of the classroom are glazed wall cabinets which likely date to the building's use as a branch library. A large cast-iron potbelly stove is located in a central position near the north wall, relative to a thimble on the wall and the exterior chimney.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

**ARCHITECTURE**

**EDUCATION**

**Period of Significance**

ca. 1862- 1942

**Significant Dates**

ca. 1862, 1942

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The cited period of significance, ca. 1862-1942, is initiated with the construction of the building and terminates with its closure as a school facility, in 1942.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The former LaGrange District School No. 3 is an architecturally and historically significant resource located in the Freedom Plains vicinity of Dutchess County, New York. Historically the building relates to the implementation of a district school system by the Town of LaGrange in the nineteenth century; the nominated building, which replaced an earlier building on site that survives a short distance to the east, served the educational needs of students from the Freedom Plains area from the 1860s into the early 1940s, at which time the town's district school system was abandoned in favor of a consolidated school model. Of the 13 nineteenth-century district schools that served the town's educational needs in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the nominated building remains the last extant example not privately owned or renovated to serve as a domicile. In architectural terms School No. 3 is of characteristic form and plan for this distinctive building type, although it should be noted that the dual entrance arrangement is atypical. Both the interior and exterior are largely devoid of references to prevailing architectural fashions. LaGrange District School No. 3 is being nominated for designation at the local significance level, in association with Criterion A, for its relationship with the development of a system of public education in the Town of LaGrange, and additionally under Criterion C, as a modest yet interpretable example of mid-nineteenth century rural schoolhouse architecture. It remains among the more prominent architectural landmarks in the Freedom Plains area of LaGrange and an important link to education in the town prior to the centralization of area schools in the mid-twentieth century.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Town of LaGrange, established in 1821, was formed from lands previously contained within the town boundaries of Fishkill and Beekman. It originally bore the name Freedom, which it did but briefly, before assuming the name LaGrange in 1829. That name was adopted in honor of the country estate of the Marquis de Lafayette, who had toured the region and spoke favorably of its landscape. A portion of the town's lands were taken in 1827, along with those of other towns, when the adjacent town of Union Vale was raised. Settlement of the LaGrange area first occurred in the pre-Revolutionary period, mostly by Dutch, German and New England families; the lands within it were largely associated with the Rombout and Beekman patents, granted in 1685 and 1697, respectively. Agriculture was the principal occupation of residents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; industry was limited, and characterized by saw, grist, and fulling mill enterprises. Freedom Plains, the hamlet with which the school is associated, was one of a number of settlement clusters which developed within the town at significant crossroad locations, in this instance on the overland route westward to Poughkeepsie markets and the Hudson River. It soon assumed a position as a principal population center within the town. By the 1820s the hamlet boasted its own post office, in addition to a tavern, a general store, and a number of dwellings. Among those who helped shape the character of LaGrange at an early date were the Quakers, who settled the eastern and northeastern sections of Dutchess County at an earlier date and were the first organized religious group in LaGrange. Enoch Dorland, a Quaker preacher, was responsible for the original naming of the town as Freedom.<sup>1</sup>

The nominated building shares historic associations with trends in education at both the local and state level. In 1812 New York State enacted a law which established a school district system and the Common School Fund, from which interest was distributed, thereby implementing a framework for education state-wide. Local officials were directed to lay out districts, and voters within each district elected trustees to operate the local school. State aid was distributed to those districts holding school at least three months a year, while local revenue was used to match the state appropriation. Although the 1812 act authorized local authorities to establish common school districts, an 1814 amendment required them to do so. After 1814, if the cost of

<sup>1</sup> Frank Hasbrouck, *The History of Dutchess County, New York, vol. 1* (Poughkeepsie: S.A. Matthieu, 1909), 363-64; T.F. Gordon, *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (Philadelphia: 1836), 429.

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instruction exceeded the total of state aid plus local tax, the difference was covered by charging tuition. By the mid-point of the nineteenth century New York State contained over 10,000 common school districts. The typical district had a one or two-room schoolhouse where students were educated in reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and geography. The 1812 common school act shaped the future of public education in New York by establishing that common schools were a state function under state control, that funding was a joint state-local responsibility, and that the school district—not the county or town—formed the primary administrative unit for public education.<sup>2</sup>

Tuition, or rates, kept schooling out of reach for many poor children, a matter of concern for teachers and parents, who lobbied for free common schools. An 1849 statute provided for a combination of state and local funding for tuition-free common schools, if the voters approved. Although voters endorsed the free school law in two successive statewide referenda, the Court of Appeals declared the referenda to be illegal. In 1851 the Legislature repealed the free school law but instituted a statewide property tax for schools to augment revenues from rate bills, the Common School Fund, and local property tax levies. Superintendent of Public Instruction, Victor M. Rice, continued to advocate for free schools, a circumstance finally achieved in 1867. The guarantee of a free primary and secondary education was articulated in the state constitution in 1894, which stated “The Legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free common schools, wherein all the children of this State may be educated.”<sup>3</sup>

The nominated property was the site of a school for Freedom Plains as early as the 1820s. The town’s first school commissioners, Ezekiel Velie, John B. Brown, and John G. Dunkin, were elected in April 1821, at the first meeting of the new town, which was conducted at the house of William Wolven.<sup>4</sup> A small parcel of land, measuring 1,000 square feet, was deeded for the purpose of a school by Wolven. On the adjacent property is the previous schoolhouse, which was moved at the time the existing building was erected and later reconfigured as a barn. The boundaries of LaGrange’s 13 common school districts, and the position of the buildings themselves, are depicted on the maps of LaGrange included in the Dutchess County atlases published in 1867 and 1876. The building continued in use as a school facility until 1941, at which time the Arlington Central School District was established and the common school system abandoned; prior to its acquisition by the LaGrange Historical Society, in 1962 from the school district, it functioned as the LaGrange branch of the Adriance Memorial Library.

District School No. 3 was built after the publication of Henry Barnard’s *School Architecture, or Contributions to the Improvement of School-houses in the United States*, the second edition of which was offered in 1848. In his book Barnard (1811-1900), an educator who had previously studied law and served as Rhode Island’s first commissioner of education, addressed subjects pertinent to school architecture such as schoolhouse design, interior layout, furniture, and setting. His work was influential on school design in the antebellum era, though by this time the one-room building had become a well-established type in New York State. The plan of the Freedom Plains edifice was characteristic of the rural one-room educational building of this era, consisting as it did of a school room augmented with a small entrance vestibule. Heating in winter was accomplished by virtue of a wood-burning stove, while natural lighting was provided for by windows along the side and rear walls. Among the unusual features of the building is the arrangement of paired doors on the façade, as a central door is more characteristic; some have inferred Quaker influence in this layout. While the building has received some measure of alteration since it ceased functioning as a school, it nevertheless retains important character-

<sup>2</sup> Overview of the New York State common school system as articulated in “School District Organization and State Aid: The Free Common School System,” New York State Education Department.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Hasbrouck, *Dutchess*, 363.

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defining aspects of this building type, as expressed in its simple, self-contained form and the interior plan, which is largely given over to the classroom space.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

N/A

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

Gordon, T.F. *Gazetteer of the State of New York*. Philadelphia: 1836.

Hasbrouck, Frank. *The History of Dutchess County, New York, vol. 1*. Poughkeepsie: S.A. Matthieu, 1909.

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

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** .59 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>599412</u>	<u>4614267</u>	3	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	4	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary is shown on the enclosed site maps, both of which are entitled "LaGrange District School No. 3, LaGrangeville, Duchess Co., NY." The maps show the boundary at a scale of 1:24,000 and 1: 3,000.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary has been drawn to coincide with the current tax parcel for the nominated property; all of this land is historically associated with the school during the cited period of significance, ca. 1862- 1942.

LaGRANGE DISTRICT SCHOOL NO. 3

Name of Property

DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title William E. Krattinger

organization NYS Division for Historic Preservation

date December 2012

street & number Peebles Island State Park

telephone (518) 237-8643, ext. 3265

city or town Waterford

state NY

zip code 12188

e-mail William.Krattinger@parks.ny.gov

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

**Photographs:**

Photographs by William E. Krattinger, July 2012, TIFF format

0001 Exterior, view looking north, showing west and south elevations

0002 Exterior, view looking south, showing north and west elevations

0003 Exterior, detail view showing early carved graffiti

0004 Interior, classroom interior, view looking south showing blackboard and paired doors to original vestibule

**Property Owner:**

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

name LaGrange Historical Society, c/o Robert D'Amato

street & number PO Box 112

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town LaGrangeville

state NY

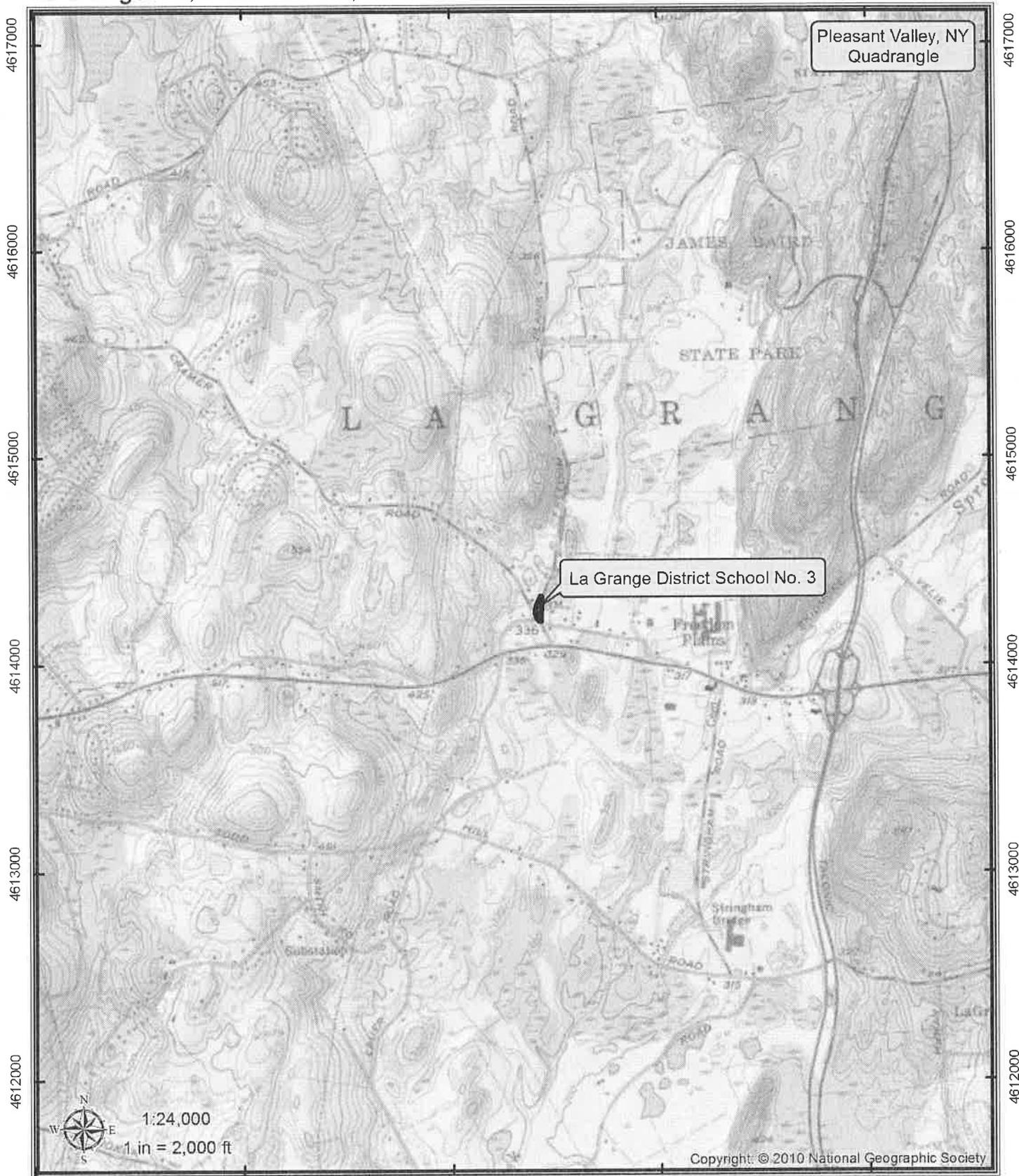
zip code 12540

**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 18 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.

La Grange District School No. 3  
La Grangeville, Dutchess Co., NY

2 Doctor Fink Rd.  
Freedom Plains, NY 12540



597000

598000

599000

600000

601000

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



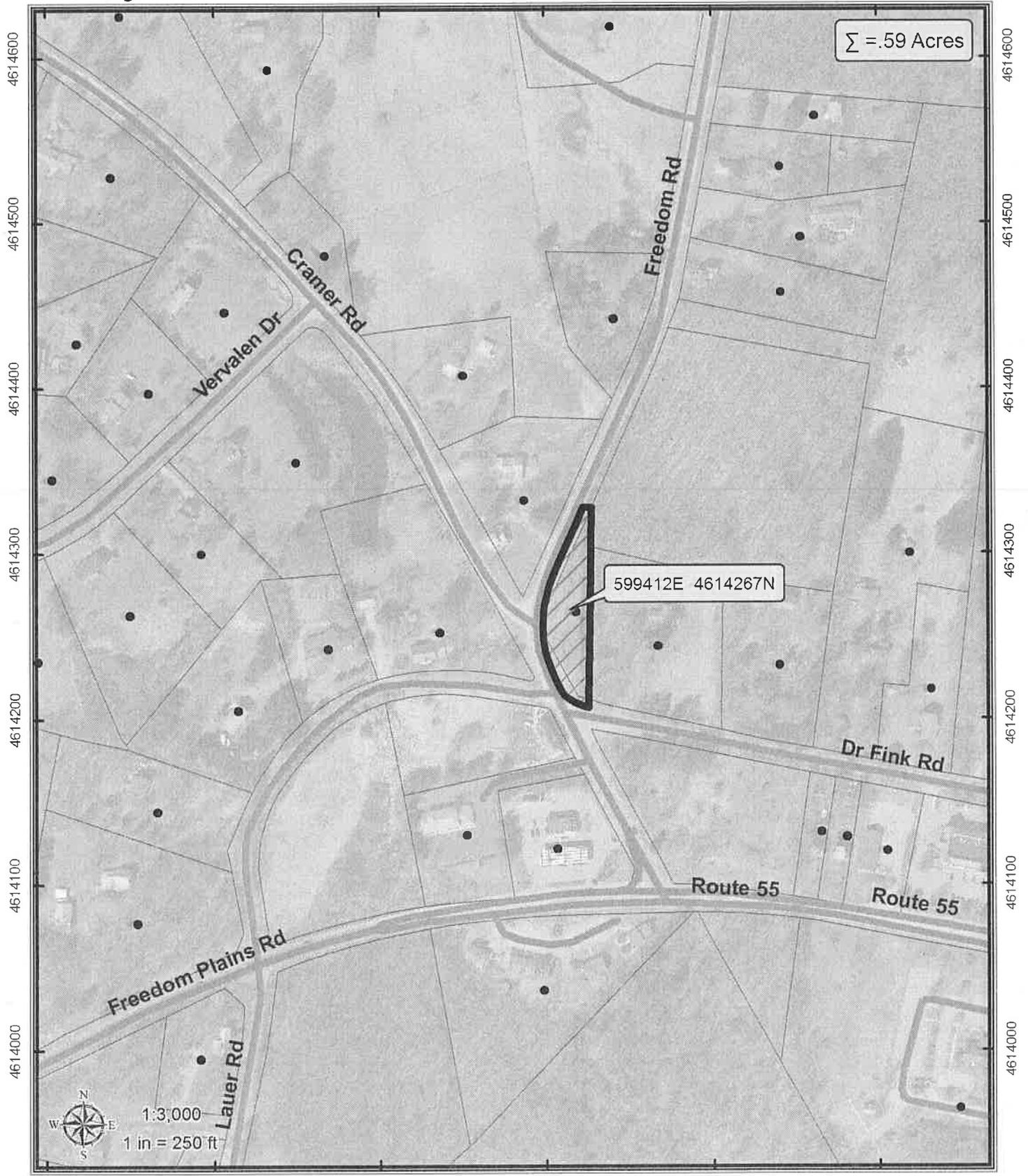
 District School No. 3

Tax Parcel Data:  
Dutchess Co. RPS  
[www.co.dutchess.ny.us](http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us)



La Grange District School No. 3  
La Grangeville, Dutchess Co., NY

2 Doctor Fink Rd.  
Freedom Plains, NY 12540



$\Sigma = .59$  Acres

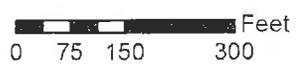
599412E 4614267N



1:3,000  
1 in = 250 ft

599100      599200      599300      599400      599500      599600

Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N  
Projection: Transverse Mercator  
Datum: North American 1983  
Units: Meter



 District School No. 3

Tax Parcel Data:  
Dutchess Co. RPS  
[www.co.dutchess.ny.us](http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us)





1906  
LA GRANGE  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY



FRANK



WELCOME

