NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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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.

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Sievers School

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

Schools in South Dakota

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: Northeast corner jct. 362nd Ave. and 170th St.

City or town: Rockham State: South Dakota County: Faulk

Not For Publication: [ ] Vicinity: [x]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** _**X**_**local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

_**X**_**A** ___**B** _**X**_**C** ___**D**

Jay D. Vogt 12-20-2013

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

SD SHPO

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register

___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

2.25.14
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	x
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	x
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: school

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
No style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: STONE
Walls: WOOD/clapboard
Roof: WOOD/shingle

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

Sievers School is a one-room schoolhouse, constructed in 1886, located in rural southeast Faulk County. It is situated, roughly, between Miranda and Rockham, SD. The school is located at the northeast corner of 362nd Avenue and 170th Street, surrounded by farm fields. There was once a barn on site for students' horses. This is non-extant. The ruins of the former outhouse are behind the school. A metal swing set frame remains just east of the school. Sievers School is a simple, rectangular, one-story, wood frame building with a stone and cement foundation, wood siding, and a restored wood shingle front gabled roof. A brick chimney is atop the north end of the roof ridge. The school has a small gabled entry vestibule on the east two-thirds of the front (south) façade. The roofline of the vestibule is slightly lower than that of the main schoolhouse. The main part of the schoolhouse is approximately 18 feet wide by 24 feet long, and the vestibule is 6 feet by 13 feet. On the side elevations (east and west), evenly spaced four-over-four wood sash windows allow light into the classroom. The schoolhouse has excellent integrity, retaining all of its significant original materials and features, and remaining in its original location in a rural setting.

Narrative Description

Exterior
The front façade faces south. Two wooden steps lead up to the gabled entry vestibule. The front door features four horizontal rectangular wood panels and is capped by a rectangular transom with three square lights. The gabled peaks of the main building and vestibule each feature a spherical metal finial.

The east elevation of the entry vestibule has a small square window opening that has been boarded up. On this same elevation, the main portion of the school has three evenly-spaced four-over-four wood windows.

The north or rear elevation has no openings.

The west elevation matches the east elevation with three evenly spaced four-over-four wood windows. The vestibule, however, is set back a few feet east and has no openings on this elevation.

Interior
The front entrance leads into the small vestibule with a wood floor. There is no plaster on the interior vestibule walls, just wood siding. At the east side of the vestibule is a small closet, likely once used to store wood or coal to heat the schoolhouse. Continuing north there is a wooden screen door and another paneled wood door (four long vertical rectangular panels over two shorter vertical rectangular panels) with simple cap molding that leads into the back of the classroom.

The classroom has an open rectangular plan, wood flooring, tongue-and-grove beaded wood wainscoting, and plaster walls. Original wood-framed black boards are located on all of the classroom walls. Built-in wood storage cupboards are at the southwest and southeast corners of the classroom. The original teacher's desk is situated at the northeast corner of the classroom with several original students' desks throughout the rest of the classroom. A c.1940s Siegler Oil Heater at the front (north end) of the classroom is piped to a flue protruding from the center of the north wall. The school likely had a wood stove before the oil heater.

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] 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.
- [x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] 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
(Enter categories from instructions.)
EDUCATION
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
1886 – 1960

Significant Dates
1886

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

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

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.)

Sievers School in Hillsdale Township, Faulk County, South Dakota is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C, as part of the multiple property submission, "Schools in South Dakota." The school is significant under Criterion A in the context of education, locally representing rural educational development and school establishment in South Dakota starting in the late nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth century. Sievers School is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture, as an excellent local representative of an early rural schoolhouse construction-type built in South Dakota in the mid-1880s. This one-room school, constructed in 1886, is the only remaining example of a rural one-room school in Hillsdale Township, and former Hope District No. 10, that retains its original location and materials.

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

Criterion A

Sievers School is locally significant under National Register Criterion A in the context of education. It is illustrative of rural educational development and school establishment in South Dakota starting in the late nineteenth century and continuing into the twentieth century.

According to Mark Elliot and Melissa Dirr, authors of the National Register Multiple Property Documentation, *Schools in South Dakota*, "public school buildings of the Plains have reflected the wealth and aspirations of the local community. These resources illustrate the progress of educational development in South Dakota and its role in the formation of communities on the Plains. As examples representative of school construction in the region, these schools are important to understanding the history of settlement."[1] Commonly, the simplicity in design and use of modest materials in construction of the school reflected the material limitations inherent in Plains settlement.

Early schoolhouses reflect the experiences, history and cultural background of the Plains settler. They are a symbol of efforts to settle the Plains, to achieve a sense of community in a sometimes forbidding environment. They represent the hopes early Plains settlers invested in their youth for an improved future and quality of life.

The earliest schools in South Dakota were supported individually through donation or subscription and formed the basis for local districts that remain the foundation of school

[1] Melissa Dirr and Mark Elliot, *Schools in South Dakota: National Register MPS*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1999), NRIS #64500587, pg. E 1. (Hereafter cited at *Schools in SD MPS*)

administration and funding throughout the state. Often, the rural school was the first public building constructed, and it sometimes represented the only common enterprise within communities in the late nineteenth century. As such, the schoolhouse served multiple purposes. Particularly in towns established prior to the arrival of the railroad, the school was used for church services, elections, and local government meetings.[2]

The schoolhouse existed as a symbol of communal identity and material sacrifice for the effort and expense involved in its formation. As an early historian of Faulk County commented, "the sod school house" was supplanted by "good, substantial frame buildings" which "as early as 1886 became landmarks even in remote parts of the county, by which the location of various pioneer settlers were described."[3] The pride in the shift to "substantial" frame school buildings coincided with the coming of the railroad in 1886 to the county and easier access to materials such as dimensional lumber, shingles, tongue-in-groove flooring, and siding as well as prefabricated architectural elements such as paneled doors.[4]

Early schoolhouses were also seen as venues to help rural youth Americanize, socialize, and eventually integrate "modernity and progress" into their rural homes. According to Elliot and Dirr, in 1900, sixty-one percent of settlers in South Dakota were foreign-born. The rural school "represented an important bridge between emigrants and immigrants arriving on unbroken land for the first time."[5] Local public schools, as ethnically neutral, secular public institutions, were used as a forum for acculturating immigrants and encouraging "Americanization."[6] The function of the school in assisting pupils' social development would eventually lead progressive reformers to turn a critical eye towards the rural schoolhouse. Isolation of rural schools challenged procurement of qualified teachers until teaching standards and improved state certification requirements were developed. But progressives of the late nineteenth century believed that the geographic isolation of the rural schools precluded the pupil from developing socially and diminished opportunities for rural pupils to form friendships. According to Elliot and Dirr, schools were also perceived as integral elements for introducing concepts of modernity and progress into the rural community. It was thought that by exposing the rural pupil to modern ideas, pupils would presumably then bring these lessons of modernity into the home. The rural school would then encourage a better standard of living for rural families. From modifying curricula, to the form of the schoolhouse itself, educational reformers' placement of the pupil at the center of efforts to address "rural issues" in general, would cause many changes, prompting the eventual demise of the one-room schoolhouse itself.

The Criterion A registration requirements for a one-room school to be included under the *"Schools in South Dakota"* MPS are as follows:

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[2] Ibid.

[3] Captain C. H. Ellis, *History of Faulk County South Dakota* (Faulkton, SD: Record Print, 1909; reprint, Aberdeen, SD: North Plains Press, 1973), 103 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[4] *Schools in SD MPS*, E 2.

[5] Melissa Dirr and Mark Elliot, *Schools in South Dakota: An Educational Development* (Pierre, SD: South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office, 1998), 1. (Hereafter cited as Dirr and Elliot, *An Educational Development*)

[6] Ibid.

> One-room schools [the earliest extant building type discussed in the MPS] are eligible under Criterion A, for their contribution to rural school establishment and development in South Dakota, if they retain their historic integrity and exhibit significance related to educational development within the context described. Integrity and evaluation standards for the one-room school require that the primary floor plan remain intact, with few if any additions. It is important that one-room schools retain their original location to illustrate the context within the township that it served. Historic materials must remain intact, and windows, if replaced must conform to the historic window size. One-room schools that have been altered or modernized during the historic period in conjunction with standardization efforts of the 1900s will be considered historic. Such one-room schools must retain a rural setting.[7]

Sievers School meets the Criterion A registration requirements for listing as part of the multiple property submission, *Schools in South Dakota*. The one-room school retains excellent integrity, features original materials, and remains in its original location in a rural setting.

According to the *History of Faulk County*, Hillsdale Township School District was originally part of Hope District No. 10 created in 1883 by the county commissioners. Hope District No. 10 included all of Township 117N, Range 67W (what would become Hillsdale Township); north of Hillsdale, Sections 25 to 36, inclusive, in Township 118N, Range 67W (part of what would become Centerville Township); east of Hillsdale, all of Township 117N, Range 66W (what would become Zell Township); and northeast of Hillsdale, Sections 25 to 36, inclusive, in Township 118N, Range 66W (what would become Pioneer Township).[8]

The county commissioners approved a voters' petition on September 6, 1904 to create the civil township in the name of Hillsdale. The county commissioners then met with the county superintendent, S.S. Strachan, to consider a petition to make Hillsdale a school township. Commissioners Thiede, Howe, Freitag, Clark and Ford approved the petition. Three schools were located in Hillsdale Township (Township 117N, Range 67W) by 1910: Rose School, in the northeast quarter of Section 26; the Metz-Hogeboom-Hammond or Prairie View School in the southeast quarter of Section 3; and Sievers School located in the southwest quarter of Section 20.[9]

Oral history passed along by descendants of students and teachers from Sievers School, along with published local histories, indicate Sievers School was built in 1886. It was erected on an acre of land donated by Frank and Minnie Grabinski, who had moved to Hillsdale Township in 1885. Remembered locally as Sievers School, the schoolhouse was known by several names over time. According to the *Redfield Press*, "It was originally known as the Grabinski School No. 10. The name would be later changed to the Von Ahn School, which translated means 'of or from descendent;' and finally the Sievers School. It is believed that the final name change was due to the fact that the Sievers family, who homesteaded in Hillsdale Township in 1884, boarded

[7] *Schools in SD MPS* E 14, E 15.

[8] Irene Huss Cordts, "Hope School District," School statistics compiled in 1977 from County Superintendent's Records, Auditor's Office, Faulk County Courthouse, (Photocopy), provided by Judy Grabinski, Rockham, SD.

[9] Faulk County Historical Society, *History of Faulk County, South Dakota, 1910-1982* (Faulkton, SD: Moritz Publishing Co., 1982), 552. Rose School was later moved to the south ½ of Section 23, Township 117, Range 67.

most of the teachers at their home."[10] Typical of most early schoolhouses and the first structures built within a community, church services and community gatherings were held at Sievers School in addition to classes.[11]

Early plat maps corroborate secondary information and oral history regarding land owners and names associated with the school. An early homestead township map for Hillsdale (T117N, R67W) shows Frank Grabinski as the owner of the southwest quarter of section 20. This is where Sievers School would be located. On this same map, Henry Sievers owned the land directly south of section 20 (west ½ of section 29).[12] A 1910 Atlas of Faulk County shows a map of Hillsdale Township with a schoolhouse marked on the southwest quarter of section 20 (land owned by Carl Kempe) and E.M. Sievers directly south on the west half of section 29.[13] Another undated plat book of Faulk County, estimated by the South Dakota State Archives to have been published c.1920, also shows a school on the southwest quarter of section 20 (land owned by Carl Kempe) and, directly south, Emma M. Sievers as owner of the northwest quarter of section 29.[14]

It is evident Sievers School was constructed around the same time as many others in the region. A local newspaper mentioned new schoolhouses being built in the Faulkton vicinity in the mid-1880s, but it is difficult to decipher their specific location. For example, the *Faulkton Times* from December 31, 1884, states, "Our school houses are finished and our schools in progress. Miss Kittinger is teaching in the 'Shaffer District.' Mrs. R.S. Wilson teaches in Mr. Brown's district."[15] On January 29th, 1885, the newspaper report from Hope Township (School District) mentions that "Mrs. Wilson's school" organized a literary society to meet on two Friday evenings in January at "schoolhouses No. 2 and No. 3". In July of the same year, Hope District reported "Our new school houses are finished, making six new buildings that would do credit to an eastern state, and there are bonds voted for the seventh in the township."[16] It is evident that these local schools were centers for social activity. The *Faulk County Times* on February 24, 1887 stated, "Dancing and carousing in the school houses is to be stopped; so says the school board, backed by nine tenths of the tax payers of Hope Township."[17]

County records indicate there were six schoolhouses in Hope School District as of January 1, 1887 and nine schoolhouses there by January 1, 1903.[18] The earliest atlas of Faulk County showing the location of schools is from 1910. It shows three schools in Hillsdale Township: One located in the southwest quarter of Section 20 (Sievers School), one in the southwest quarter

[10] "Family Legacy Restoring Sievers School," *Redfield Press* (Redfield, SD), 3 November 2010, pg. 1. (Hereafter cited as "Family Legacy").

[11] Ibid.

[12] "Hillsdale Township Homesteaders Map," c.1880-1890 settler plat map from Faulk County Courthouse Records, [digitized online]; available from http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~sdfaulk/fdb.htm ; Internet; accessed 5 November 2013.

[13] *Standard Atlas of Faulk County South Dakota* (Chicago: Geo. A. Ogle & Co., 1910), 27.

[14] *Plat Book: Faulk County, S.D.* (Pierre, SD: Dakota Map Company, c.1920), n.p.

[15] Cordts, n.p.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., 1.

of Section 3, and one in the northeast quarter of section 26.[19] Sievers School is the only one of these that remains.

Irene Huss Cordts transcribed available information from the Faulk County Superintendent's Records concerning school terms, teachers, and pupils for Sievers School between 1890 and 1906 (copied below; some of the ages may be approximations). This provides a glimpse into the school's early development (enumerated after the school listings).

Term: Sept. 1, 1890 – Nov. 21, 1890
Teacher (Salary): Almeda Breitenbach ($30.00/month)
3 Pupils (Age): Harold Sprague (7), Frank Lamphere (10), Alice Sievers (6).[20]

Term: May 7, 1894 – June 29, 1894
Teacher (Salary): S. Belle Jarvis ($30.00/month)
9 Pupils (Age): Harold Sprague (10), Arthur Grabinski (7), Minnie Grabinski (9), Ella Grabinski (6), Alma Grabinski (8), Alice Sievers (10), Lena Breitenbach (7), Herbert Sievers (12), Sadie Grabinski (5).[21]

Term: Sept. 30, 1895 – March 27, 1896
Teacher (Salary): Lydia Paul ($30.00/mo.)
22 Pupils (Age): Emma Findeis (16), Adam Findeis (18), Fred Findeis (17), Minnie Belau (16), Willie Belau (13), Lydia Belau (12), Herbert Sievers (14), Alice Sievers (12), Louis Sievers (9), Walter Sievers (6), Ora Grabinski (13), Minnie Grabinski (11), Arthur Grabinski (9), Elmer Grabinski (8), Ella Grabinski (8), Sadie Grabinski (6), Freda Rose (14), Willie Rose (11), Lena Breitenbach (9), Harold Sprague (12), Ernest Czarnetzki (14), Bruno Czarnetzki (11).[22]

Term: Nov. 9, 1896 – March 4, 1897
Teacher (Salary): E.M. Runnels ($30.00/mo.)
23 Pupils (Age): Ora Grabinski (14), Emma Findeis (17), Willie Belau (14), Arthur Grabinski (10), Elmer Grabinski (9), Ella Grabinski (9), Sadie Grabinski (7), Mabel Grabinski (5), Bessie Runnels (6), Lillie Grabinski (6), Herbert Sievers (15), Walter Sievers (7), Louis Sievers (10), Alice Sievers (12), Lydia Belau (12), Lena Breitenbach (9), Fred Metz (18), Willie Rose (12), Ernst Czarnetzki (16), Bruno Czarnetzki (10), Alma Grabinski (10), Freda Rose (15), Minnie Belau (16).[23]

Term: May 10, 1897 – July 9, 1897
Teacher (Salary): Tessie Sprague ($28.00/mo.)
14 Pupils (Age): Ora Grabinski (14), Alma Grabinski (11), Arthur Grabinski (11), Elmer Grabinski (9), Ella Grabinski (9), Sadie Grabinski (7), Lillie Grabinski (6), Mabel Grabinski (6),

[19] *Standard Atlas of Faulk County South Dakota* (1910), 7.
[20] Cordts, 2.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid., 3.
[23] Ibid., 5.

Bessie Runnels (6), Lena Breitenbach (10), Berne Breitenbach (5), Meyrl Fisher (7), Josie Kimball (8), Roy Kimball (10).[24]

Term: Oct. 17, 1898 – March 31, 1899
Teacher (Salary): Chas. Christianson ($30.00/mo.)
19 Pupils (Age): Lillie Grabinski (9), Essie Grabinski (6), Mabel Grabinski (7), Sadie Grabinski (9), Ella Grabinski (11), Arthur Grabinski (12), Elmer Grabinski (10), Bessie Runnels (8), Florence Runnels (6), Earl Sievers (6), Walter Sievers (9), William Rose (14), Alma Grabinski (12), Emma Findise (19), Alice Sievers (14), Louis Sievers (12), Herbert Sievers (18), Otto Christianson (8), Olga Christianson (14).[25]

Term: Oct. 31, 1899 – April 19, 1900
Teacher (Salary): Mae Race ($30.00/mo.)
18 Pupils (Age): Arthur Grabinski (13), Alice Seivers (15), Wm. Belau (17), Alma Grabinski (13), Bessie Runnels (9), Elmer Grabinski (11), Sadie Grabinski (10), Ella Grabinski (12), Lewis Seivers (13), William Rose (15), Walter Seivers (10), Lillie Grabinski (9), Mable Grabinski (8), Florence Runnels (7), Esther Grabinski (7), Earle Seivers (7), Edwin Rose (6), Lydia Belau (16).[26]

Term: Nov. 5, 1900 – June 14, 1901
Teacher (Salary): Nina Loomer ($30.00/mo.)
18 Pupils (Age): Willie Belau (18), Alma Grabinski (14), Arthur Grabinski (14), William Rose (16), Louis Sievers (14), Elmer Grabinski (12), Ella Grabinski (13), Sadie Grabinski (11), Bessie Runnels (10), Lillie Grabinski (10), Mable Grabinski (9), Walter Sievers (11), Esther Grabinski (8), Florence Runnels (8), Edwin Rose (6), Earl Sievers (8), Hazel Grabinski (5), Alice Sievers (16).[27]

Term: Dec. 2, 1901 – March 28, 1902
Teacher (Salary): E.M. Runnels ($35.00/mo.)
20 Pupils (Age): Arthur Grabinski (15), Elmer Grabinski (13), Lille Grabinski (11), Esther Grabinski (9), Sadie Grabinski (12), Ella Grabinski (14), Mabel Grabinski (10), Louis Sievers (15), Walter Sievers (12), Bessie Runnels (11), Florence Runnels (9), Alice Sievers (17), Hazel Grabinski (6), Christopher Kalmbach (11), John Kalmbach (12), Willie Kalmbach (10), Christian Kalmbach (7), Earle Sievers (9), Harry Hoffman (6), Leonard Sievers (6).[28]

Term: March 31, 1902 – June 6, 1902
Teacher (Salary): May Race ($35.00/mo)
15 Pupils (Age): Arthur Grabinski (15), Elmer Grabinski (14), Sadie Grabinski (12), Ella Grabinski (14), Bessie Runnels (11), Lillie Grabinski (11), Mabel Grabinski (10), Walter Seivers

[24] Ibid., 6.
[25] Ibid., 8.
[26] Ibid., 9.
[27] Ibid., 10.
[28] Ibid., 11.

(12), Florence Runnels (9), Essie Grabinski (10), Earle Seivers (9), Hazel Grabinski (7), Leonard Seivers (7), Harry Hoffman, Josie Kimball.[29]

Term: Oct. 12, 1903 – May 13, 1904
Teacher (Salary): H. J. Dorweiler ($42.00/mo)
19 Pupils (Age): Lillie Grabinski (13), Hazel Grabinski (8), Alvin Grabinski (6), Sadie Grabinski (14), Florence Runnels (10), Ester Grabinski (11), Bessie Runnels (13), Florence Seivers (6), Leonard Seivers (8), Ella Grabinski (16), Mabel Grabinski (12), Harry Hoffman (7), Edith Runnels (6), Edna Grabinski (4), Walter Seivers (14), Earl Seivers (11), Arthur Grabinski (17), Elmer Grabinski (14), Willie Hoffman (5).[30]

Term: Nov. 5, 1904 – June 8, 1905
Teacher (Salary): Ruth Swenson ($40.00/mo.)
20 Pupils (Age): Arthur Grabinski (18), Elmer Grabinski (17), Ella Grabinski (17), Sadie Grabinski (15), Lillie Grabinski (14), Bessie Runnels (14), Walter Seivers (15), Mable Grabinski (13), Esther Grabinski (12), Florence Runnels (12), Earl Seivers (12), Hazel Grabinski (9), Leonard Seivers (9), Edith Runnels (7), Alvin Grabinski (7), Florence Seivers (7), Harry Hoffman (9), Edna Grabinski (5), Willie Hoffman (7), Dewey Grabinski (7).[31]

By late-1905, the County Superintendent's records start to specify a township for the school district (i.e. Hope School District [Hillsdale]).

Term: Oct. 2, 1905 – April 20, 1906
Teacher (Salary): Louise Lighty ($45.00/mo)
24 Pupils (Age): Sadie Grabinski (16), Ella Grabinski (18), Mabel Grabinski (14), Lillie Grabinski (15), Bessie Runnels (15), Elmer Grabinski (17), Esther Grabinski (13), Lorence Runnels (13), Walter Sievers (16), Earl Sievers (13), Hazel Grabinski (10), Leonard Sievers (10), Edith Runnels (7), Alvin Grabinski (8), Florence Sievers (8), Harry Hoffman (9), Dewey Grabinski (7), Clarence Sievers (5), Awald Hoffman (5), Frank Settie (13), Lois Goeken (8), Winnie Goeken (6), Edna Grabinski (6), Willie Hoffman (7).[32]

Term: Sept. 6, 1910 – April 21, 1911
Teacher: Harriett Shaver ($50.00/mo)
20 Pupils: Edith Runnels, Margaret Runnels, Leonard Sievers, Florence Sievers, Clarence Sievers, Katherine Sievers, Earl Sievers, Amanda Kempe, Charley Kempe, Minnie Belau, Willie Hoffman, Harry Hoffman, Awald Hoffman, Albert Hoffman, Lottie Hoffman, Henry Stammer, Marcus VonAhn, Emma Fojt, Freddie Fojt, Lee Fojt.[33]

[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 12.
[31] Ibid., 14.
[32] Ibid., 15.
[33] Faulk County Historical Society, 471; *Rockham Community 1886-1986: Our First One Hundred Years* (Redfield, SD: Redfield Press, 1986), gives names of pupils but not age.

Term: c.1924-1925
Teacher: Mrs. Gavette
17 Pupils: Violet Grabinski, Inez Findeis, Barbara Stammer, Edna VonAhn, Doris Findeis, Arvilla Grabinski, Bernice Stammer, Clara VonAhn, Marlin Strasburg, LeRoy Stammer, Lester VonAhn, Glenn Stammer, Myrtis Strasburg, Edward Kempe, Mildred Stammer, Florence VonAhn, and Everett VonAhn.[34]

Term: 1949-1950
Teacher: Edna Irwin ($1,600.00/year)
5 Pupils: Josephine Schultz, Freddy Greiner, Judy Greiner, Mary Greiner, Zelda Yada.[35]

Term: 1959
8 Pupils: Quentin Yada, Ronnie Hagen, Chuck Strasburg, Bill Strasburg, Mike Kissner, Allan Kissner, Roger Kempe, and Bruce Hoffman.[36]

During its early years, Sievers School had a mix of school sessions. Longer sessions were held in the winter, usually four or five months starting in October or November. It appears summer sessions were also held occasionally, being shorter two- or three- month terms.[37]

For the size of the one-room schoolhouse, the size of the student population grew to be quite substantial in its early years. By the 1895-96 school year, the class size had grown to 22 pupils, their ages ranging from six to eighteen years old. True to the names historically attached to the school, four of the students were Sievers' and six were Grabinski's.[38] Former student, teacher, and caretaker of the schoolhouse, Arvilla (Grabinski) Schultz, copied the class schedule of 1896 teacher, Lydia Paul, to the chalkboard. Opening exercises began at the school at 9:00am and classes changed every 15 minutes to accommodate all of the students in various grades.[39] Records show class size staying more or less around 20 from the 1890s through at least the mid-1920s. By the mid-twentieth century, shortly before the school closed, there were far fewer pupils. For example, five known pupils attended the 1949-50 term and eight known in 1959.

Teachers' salaries held steady from 1890 to 1901 at $30.00 per month. It jumped to $35.00 per month in 1901 and 1902. The pay range was in the $40's per month for the rest of the first decade of the twentieth century, and up to $50 in 1910. The pay remained at the same level whether the teacher was male or female. Teacher turnover was high. Almost every term in the early history of the school, the students had a new teacher.[40]

Judy Grabinski has interviewed former students to collect recollections of Sievers School. As for modes of transportation to school, former student Zelda (Yada) Lutter, who attended the full

[34] Faulk County Historical Society, 523; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 37.
[35] Faulk County Historical Society, 474; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 37.
[36] *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 37.
[37] Cordts, 2-16.
[38] Ibid., 3.
[39] "Family Legacy," 5.
[40] Cordts, 2-16.

eight years there, recalls a horse barn once stood on the property. This accommodated some students who rode a horse to school every day.[41]

The rural schools in Hillsdale Township began closing in the mid-twentieth century. The Metz-Hogeboom-Hammond School had been discontinued by 1949. The building was purchased, moved to a farm, and used for storage.[42] Rose School held its last term from September 9, 1950 to May 19, 1951. At that time, the teacher, Viola Gorne, had only two pupils. After the school closed, the lumber was salvaged and used to build an addition to a house in Hartford.[43] Sievers School operated until 1960, when it closed and consolidated with Rockham and then Faulkton.[44] Sievers School is the only one-room schoolhouse in Hillsdale Township, and in former Hope District No. 10, that remains preserved in its original location.

After it closed, Arvilla (Grabinski) Schultz, a former student and teacher (1937) at Sievers School, and the granddaughter of the Grabinski's who originally donated the land for the schoolhouse, worked to preserve the schoolhouse and opened it to former students and area residents for tours. Mrs. Schultz's, niece and grandson, Judy Grabinski and Rob Sample, have continued that effort. They formed the non-profit Hillsdale Historic Society (incorporated in 2011), purchased the schoolhouse from the township, and saved it from demolition. Working with contractor Alan Hale (of Gentry, Arkansas), they have restored Sievers School and continue to interpret its history for the public.

Criterion C

Sievers School is also eligible for the National Register under Criterion C, as it is a significant local representative of early one-room schoolhouse construction. This one-room school, constructed in 1886, is the only remaining example of a rural one-room school in Hillsdale Township that retains its original location and materials.

According to David Erpestad and David Wood, historians of South Dakota architecture, establishment of schools was a priority for South Dakota's early settlers as they homesteaded and built townsites. Most early South Dakota schools were simple, vernacular buildings.[45]

School construction evolved with availability of materials and funding. As Elliot and Dirr explain in the Multiple Property Documentation, *Schools in South Dakota*, "First generation school buildings utilized available materials and employed the vernacular building techniques of homebuilding prevalent on the Plains. The dugout, sod, or log schoolhouse represented the

[41] "Sievers Schoolhouse Restoration in Progress," 2; "Family Legacy," 5.
[42] *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 37.
[43] Faulk County Historical Society, 522.
[44] "Sievers Schoolhouse Restoration in Progress," *Faulk County Record* (Faulkton, SD), 27 October 2010, pg. 1 .
[45] David Erpestad and David Wood, *Building South Dakota*: *A Historical Survey of the State's Architecture to 1945* (Pierre, SD: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 1997), 76.

earliest phase of habitation on the Plains, occurring in the 1860s and 1870s."[46] Most of these structures were not intended to be permanent and were abandoned when a framed schoolhouse could be erected in the 1880s and 1890s. The arrival of the railroad and access to building materials enabled the construction of frame school houses. By the late nineteenth century balloon framing displaced the early school construction methods. Balloon-frame construction depended on commercially manufactured materials, such as dimension lumber, shingles, tongue-and-groove flooring, and siding. Prefabricated architectural elements, such as panel doors, were also employed. For communities that formed after the arrival of the railroad, the framed schoolhouse usually represented their first effort at school-building.

Sievers School, built in 1886, was constructed during the era of the frame schoolhouse on the western Plains (1880s and 1890s).[47] According to Erpstad and Wood, "The typical rural schoolhouse design reflected a type that became popular in the Eastern United in about 1840."[48] It is thought that the form of the school was influenced by emigrants recalling the familiar gable roof form of the church. The school was viewed as a cultural symbol. In small communities the school building could also serve as a community center and place for holding religious services.[49]

Early rural South Dakota frame schools were austere. They were of "balloon frame construction, uninsulated, sided by clapboards or weatherboard on the exterior and wood siding, or wainscoting, on the interior."[50] Foundations were often temporary. They were typically one-room, rectangular, gable-roofed buildings with the entrance in the gable end, facing the teacher, and windows along the long or axial sides. Three windows on each of the long sides of the building were typical. Many rural schools lacked electricity well into the twentieth century. Generally one of the sides with windows faced south to allow for maximum sunlight and heat. The minimal square footage (as small as 16 by 24 feet) allowed for a single room, heated by a stove at the center or end, furnished with chairs or benches, or desks where afforded. Climate variation on the Plains prompted small changes from the "traditional" rural school form. Gable roofs with a steeper pitch shed snow more easily. Vestibules were not cut into the existing small square footage of the early rural school, but a vestibule could be located on the front exterior to conserve heat in the winter.[51]

According to Erpestad and Wood, "After 1900, rectangular schoolhouses gave way to a new type of rural school that was one or one-and-a half stories high and usually square in shape. Built from standard plans, these schools had a hipped roof that gave even rectangular-shaped buildings a square or cube-like appearance. The new schoolhouses usually had basements and were heated with either a jacketed stove or furnace."[52] In an attempt to remedy what were considered school deficiencies, such as poor ventilation and lack of sufficient windows, state and local government

[46] *Schools in SD MPS* E 2.
[47] Dirr and Elliot, *An Educational Development*, 4.
[48] Erpestad and Wood, 82.
[49] Dirr and Elliot, *An Educational Development*, 6; *Schools in SD MPS*, E 3; Erpestad and Wood, 82.
[50] Dirr and Elliot, *An Educational Development*, 7.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Erpestad and Wood, 82-83.

started to take an active role in school construction, requiring or offering financial incentives to build to certain standards. The early one-room rural school fell by the wayside. According to Elliot and Dirr, "The early one-room schoolhouse, characterized by three windows on each long wall, has almost disappeared from the Plains, either remodeled or replaced by newer one-room or consolidated schools. Over time, they have been lost to fire or sold at auction only to be pressed into service as farm buildings or storage sheds, in that role often altered beyond recognition."[53]

Sievers School remains an excellent local example of the type of early rural school construction commonly built in South Dakota during the late nineteenth century. Sievers School is the only remaining example of a rural one-room school in Hillsdale Township, and in former Hope District No. 10, that retains its original location and materials.[54] It has a rectangular plan, gabled roof, clapboard siding, entrance in the gable end, and three windows on each of the long sides of the building. It is a one-room school with a vestibule on the front. The open interior features wood flooring, wood wainscoting, plaster walls, original wood-framed black boards, and early built-in storage cupboards.

[53] *Schools in SD MPS*, E 4.

[54] This comparative information was obtained from study of the Rockham and Faulk County history publications and the 1910 Faulk County atlas, along with a windshield survey, by Jennifer Brosz, traveling old Hope District 10 in November 2013.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Educational Development and Rural School Establishment [55]

Public school buildings of the Plains reflect the aspirations of the local community. This resource illustrates the progress of educational development in South Dakota and its role in the formation of communities on the Plains. Representative examples of schoolhouse construction in the region are important to understanding the history of settlement.

Public schooling in South Dakota has its roots in the nineteenth century public schooling movement in America, which originated in colonial settlements along the Atlantic coast. English colonists brought with them from England methods of administration and schooling. They first established privately funded schools "subscribed" to on a per-family basis. As a universal right to education for all children came to be acknowledged as a benefit to society, a democratic movement was organized to provide children an education supported at public expense. These publicly funded "common" schools of the early 1800s were supported through the local sale of state lands reserved for education. This funding mechanism came about because the Northwest Ordinance of 1785 stipulated that each township (consisting of 36 sections) set aside section 16 as "school lands." The U.S. Congress, in 1820, then approved the sale of public school lands for school funding.

The establishment of the first organized public school in what would become South Dakota was located in the early-settled southeastern region in Bon Homme County. Settlement here was facilitated by the establishment of the Dakota Southern Railroad in 1873, originating in Sioux City and stretching to Yankton, then the Territorial capitol. According to Erpestad and Wood, the school was built in 1859 and was a fourteen by fifteen foot log structure; a crude, temporary building with a dirt floor and one window. Students sat on three-legged stools at desks built of lumber salvaged from a discarded wagon box.[56] Informal subscription schools of early plains settlement held irregular terms, and this school operated for only three months in 1860.

The Dakota Territory was created by an Act of Congress on March 2, 1861. In 1862, the first legislature of Dakota Territory enacted a school law, organizing formal school administration. According to Elliot and Dirr, "The legislation mandated that the local district function both as a means of administration and as a geographic unit of funding. The district was to be administered by three board officials and organized under county supervision, an intermediary point of administration between that of the district and the Territory."[57] The school district was considered organized when district board officers (a director, clerk, and treasurer) were elected by voters within the district at a district meeting. The 1862 legislation enabled the district to vote

[55] Information on educational development and rural school establishment is from: Melissa Dirr and Mark Elliot, *Schools in South Dakota: National Register MPS*, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1999), E 1 – E 2. Context from the Multiple Property Submission is recopied here so the reader may have pertinent context without cross-referencing the MPS. Additional sources are incorporated as needed for clarification.

[56] Erpestad and Wood, 81.

[57] Dirr and Elliot, *An Educational Development*, 3.

for a property tax of not more than one-fourth of one percent to pay for teachers' salaries. "The district could also vote a tax of not more than one-fourth of one percent to buy equipment for the school. It further had the right to fix the length of the school term."[58] The Legislature created the office of Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1864, giving the power to appoint the Superintendent to the Territorial Board of Education. James S. Foster served as the first Superintendent. Despite this legal framework, most early schools in the territory were supported by private tuition or "subscription."[59]

In 1864, soon after the first school law, the territory's first permanent schoolhouse, a sixteen-by-twenty-foot log building, was erected at Vermilion. A similar log schoolhouse was also constructed in Union County in 1864. The construction of early rural schoolhouses depended on the availability of materials. With the arrival of railroads in the Territory, early sod, log, and fieldstone schools were replaced by frame construction.

President Ulysses S. Grant appointed William Henry Harrison Beadle first surveyor-general of Dakota Territory in 1869. His travels throughout the territory as surveyor-general and frontier experience likely shaped his keen interest in securing public school funding for future generations. In 1879, he became the Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction. Beadle drafted the school lands provision at the South Dakota Constitutional Convention of 1885. As aforementioned, the Northwest Ordinance of 1785 stipulated that each township (consisting of 36 sections) set aside section 16 as "school lands." The U.S. Congress, in 1820, approved the sale of public school lands for school funding. Fearing that school lands opened for public sale would be sold to land speculators for a fraction of their value, Beadle established control over the sale of school lands, fixing their sale value at $10.00 per acre, insuring a fair return on the sale for support of the schools. Importantly, Beadle also added a second section (36) of reserved school land within each township to augment the previously set aside section 16. The two-section education land "set-aside" thereafter became the basis for reserved school lands for states entering the union.[60]

When he became territorial superintendent, Beadle also attempted to change the school district system to a township system.[61] The township system was, "the creation of a large, permanent school corporation, from six to nine miles square, called a school township, and the management of as many schools therein, through one election and by one board, as the people may need. In these, taxes, school privileges and choice of schools are equal to all."[62] Beadle was partially successful in implementing the township system. In 1883, the township plan was adopted and nearly all the counties came under its provisions. There were some so strongly attached to the old system that "they were excepted [*sic*] from the provisions of the law requiring the township

[58] Joseph Evington Colborn, "A History of School Finance in South Dakota" (M.A. thesis, Dept. of Education, University of South Dakota, 1925); reprint, Pierre, SD: Dept. of History, 1926), 348 (page citations are to the reprint edition).

[59] Ibid., 351.

[60] *Schools in SD MPS*, E 1.

[61] Colborn, 361.

[62] Gilbert L. Pinkham, *First Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1890, submitted to the Governor of South Dakota, December 15, 1890.* (Pierre, SD: Pierre Journal. Printers and Binders., 1890), 52.

to be the unit of school affairs."[63] Beadle did not remain in office long enough to make the change to a township system complete. A. Sheridan Jones succeeded Beadle in 1885 and was not in favor of the township system. Thus, the territory gradually reverted back to the district system.[64] As stated in the first SD School Superintendent's report, "In 1887, the law was materially modified and the tendency of this law was toward the district system, but yet retaining the township organization."[65]

The pattern of settlement in what would become South Dakota was not ideal for the local district system, particularly in the vast, sparsely populated western region of the state. Often school lands were not sold but served as the site of the rural school. The local district based on the two-section set-aside placed a school within a couple of miles from every homesteaded claim. Difficulties were encountered in maintaining enrollment and financial support in the western reaches of the state. "Despite the low enrollment in the typical rural school, 4,102 schoolhouses populated the Territory by 1887."[66]

Education and the "Rural Problem" [67]

Inequitable funding, inadequate teacher qualifications, and limited opportunities for socialization comprised a condition which critics referred to as the "general problem of the rural school." At its foundation, rural education suffered from a disparity in opportunity between rural and urban regions. The scarcity of teacher availability throughout rural communities has, historically, resulted in depressed qualification requirements for instructors in rural schools. The challenge of homesteading on the Plains required intense labor. The inability of men to devote their time to teaching created an opportunity for women to teach in the schools. While men were viewed as more capable teachers and better able to discipline the troublesome pupil, women were perceived as well-suited to administering instruction in comportment and moral rectitude--in addition to teaching reading, writing and arithmetic. Often, these teachers were young and inexperienced themselves.

As teaching standards improved with state certification requirements, perhaps the most widely cited problem in rural schooling perceived by educational reformers in the nineteenth century was the "socialization" problem. They believed that the geographic isolation of the rural schools precluded the pupil from developing socially. Such diminished opportunities for forming friendships within the limited rural schooling community were thought to be integral to the "rural problem." Schools were perceived as integral elements for introducing the concepts of modernity and progress into the rural community. It was thought that by exposing the rural pupil to modern ideas, pupils would presumably then bring these lessons of modernity into the home. The rural school would then encourage a better standard of living for rural families. Thus, reformers placed the pupil at the center of efforts to address the rural problem in general, and the school

[63] Ibid., 51.
[64] Colborn, 361.
[65] Pinkham, 51.
[66] Dirr and Elliot, An *Educational Development*, 3.
[67] This section contains excerpts from *Schools in SD MPS*, E 4.

served as the avenue of introduction of new ideas into the community. An evolution in the role of education in shaping children took place under the influence of progressive reformers. Socializing the rural pupil was thus encouraged through public education.

Progressive curricula reforms were implemented at the state level, through state curricula standards. The reformers' efforts in implementing progressive changes to curricula have determined to a great extent the development of education in South Dakota, and with such reforms the schoolhouse evolved as well. Renewed attention was directed to the school building and its perceived impact on learning. The rural school, bereft of teaching aids and comforts, was thought to be a major limitation on the educational achievement of the rural pupil. The vernacular schoolhouses which reflected the earliest efforts in school establishment on the Plains were thus identified as a root cause of the problems in rural education. Indeed, educational reformers complained about crowded conditions and inadequate lighting, as well as poor heating and poor ventilation--thus the opportunity for contagion.

School Standardization in South Dakota [68]

The principles advanced by Progressive reformers had a fundamental impact upon education in the rural schools. By first formulating recommended improvements to the curriculum and to the school itself, and then widely applying those improvements through policy at the state level, it was thought that the general standards for rural education could be elevated. This movement, known as "school standardization," was widely embraced by educational reformers in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. As prescribed by educational reformers, the modern village or town school building would be equipped with amenities such as industrial shops, kitchen laboratories, library, auditorium, gymnasium, and nature study rooms which would facilitate learning.

South Dakota's statewide standardization efforts received official sponsorship through legislation that accorded the State Superintendent of Public Instruction power of approval over new school construction plans. The legislature, in 1907, adopted specific standards for schoolhouse construction. This represented the first statewide effort to address rural school inadequacy through improvements in school building design and construction. Particularly, it was believed by the scientific community that window light originating from two different directions caused eye strain in pupils. It was suggested that windows be located only along one wall to provide uniform illumination from the left of the pupil only, so that a shadow would not be cast across the pupil's paper should he or she be writing with the right hand. As a result, state superintendents of education, acting on the advice of reformers, adopted specific window arrangements and formulas that addressed illumination in schoolhouses. Regarding illumination, the Biennial Report stipulated a formula of one square foot of glass per every five square feet of floor space.

[68] *Schools in SD MPS*, E 5 – E 6.

Indeed, South Dakota closely regulated the specifics of school construction. By 1915, such regulations extended to classroom doors, window-to-floor area formulae, artificial lighting, windows, chimneys, fire drills and escapes, ventilation and water fountains. Subsequently, a South Dakota financial incentive program, passed in 1919 under Governor Norbeck, offered $150 to each rural school that complied with suggested state schoolhouse designs. As a result, older rural schoolhouses were renovated to come into compliance with "modern" school building designs as outlined in the state guidelines. For one-room schools, this often involved removing the windows from one wall entirely while expanding fenestration on the opposing wall. This transformed the outmoded vernacular rural schoolhouses of the 1910s and 1920s. However, in mandating a consistent school building design, standardized plans served to supplant the uniqueness that characterized the vernacular rural school.

The 1919 standardization legislation further influenced the design of the public school through the provision of financial incentives for new schools constructed according to state guidelines. These incentives mandated a building based on the state superintendent's suggested four plans for standard school buildings. These guidelines prescribed a square footprint and a hipped roof design for the one-room schools constructed throughout the state in the 1920s and 1930s. Variations on the four plans included accessory rooms to serve the community. An auditorium, for example, was incorporated into all but the smallest rural school.

The influence of standardization on the evolution of the school building can be seen in the larger schools of the early 1900s as well. Prior to standardization, the four- or eight-room rural schools of the 1900s-1910s often exhibited architectural formality through symmetrical design and ornamentation, often influenced by a movement or high style such as Richardson Romanesque. For example, the three story brick school erected in the Queen Anne style in Brookings in 1888 (razed) was known locally as the Red Castle. The exterior of such schools of this era belied the simplicity of their interior arrangements. They were often as spare as the one-room schools with regard to amenities and lacked the gymnasiums or auditoriums prescribed later in standardization guidelines.

The changes in school design in the 1910s and 1920s, such as the addition of auditoriums and gymnasiums, reflected on the rural school as an institution dedicated to serving the community through a multiplicity of uses. Town meetings and election-day voting were held in school assembly rooms; athletic competitions were held in the gymnasium, which became a central element of the community school. During recess, the gymnasium served as an important forum for socializing for the rural pupil through association with other students. The gymnasium was typically housed at the basement level, with the main corridor functioning as an overlook for spectators during athletic events.

Clearly the smaller rural school, with its small enrollment and limited financial resources, had to be creative in adopting amenities such as auditoriums, gymnasiums, and manual training classrooms that were available in city schools. For smaller schools, plans were devised that arrived at a compromise between space and function. For example, flexible partitions were recommended to subdivide the assembly room into classroom space. For the larger rural schools, guidelines recommended the combination auditorium and gymnasium, frequently

evidenced in smaller community schools erected throughout the state. In this design, a stage was placed either at one end of the gymnasium or along the long wall; bleachers, retractable or fixed, provided seating. Science classrooms were recommended to combine both laboratory and lecture hall into one room. Such amenities were implemented in schools large and small throughout South Dakota during the 1920s, and changed the school experience, especially for the rural pupil.

School Consolidation in South Dakota [69]

Progressives at the turn of the century had argued for reforms in rural education to address the apparent rural problem in education. The limited sociability afforded by the small rural school was thought to be an integral aspect of the disparity between the rural and urban schools. Changing modes of production both on the farm and in the factories encouraged farm consolidation; families then moved from the rural regions to the towns and cities. This economic migration, together with the widespread implementation of telephone and radio communication between rural and urban regions, served to highlight the disparities between the urban and rural schools. These changes constituted an effective enlargement of the rural community; in order to serve its changing demographics and geography, the educational service area had to expand as well. The enlarged rural village service area provided the rationale for school consolidation, which was viewed as the most effective means of achieving some parity between the rural and urban schools.

But consolidation was slow to become widely established in rural South Dakota. The United States Bureau of Education called for increased efforts nationwide to encourage consolidation, including direct state aid as an incentive to consolidate. Following the United States Bureau of Education recommendations, in 1919 the South Dakota legislature authorized direct state aid for consolidation, stipulating three classes of consolidated schools eligible for assistance: the two-room, two-teacher school ($250 in aid provided); the four-teacher school ($400 in aid provided); and the consolidated high school of at least four grade teachers, three high school teachers, four rooms, offering training in agriculture, home economics, and manual training ($600 in aid provided). Specifically, the legislation stipulated that aid should support only approved rural schools.

Advocates for consolidation heralded its benefits to the community. Experienced instructors could offer specialized instruction in subjects as such as science and business, bringing improved teaching methods into the classroom. An improved school building dedicated to the specifics of an improved curriculum--including science laboratories, the industrial arts facilities, and business training classrooms--could bring to the rural pupil educational opportunity formerly available only to the pupils of the larger, better funded, urban schools.

As transportation was recognized as key to the consolidation effort, subsequent state legislation in 1923 addressed the need for transportation funding to enable rural consolidation. The

[69] *Schools in SD MPS*, E 6 – E 7.

legislation stipulated the provision of transportation for all pupils more than two and a half miles from the consolidated district school. With state aid for transportation considered a legitimate educational expense, motorized buses offered subsidized transportation to pupils. A "Better School Campaign" was waged across the state to praise the benefits of consolidation, publicizing the availability of state financial aid for the effort. The financial incentives encouraged smaller communities to vote to consolidate their districts. The campaign was successful, as by 1923 state assistance flowed to 71 approved consolidated schools, mostly located in villages. In 1929 that number had risen to 99 schools. Consolidation augured the closure of the small rural school.

The Decline of the Rural One-Room School [70]

In bringing the modern school to small communities, New Deal-era relief programs carried the state through the post-depression 1930s and the war years of the early 1940s. It was not until after World War II, during the administration of George T. Mickelson, that the state legislature committed substantial resources to the building of schools, authorizing $8,500,000 for a long-range construction and maintenance program, as well as providing increases in salary for school personnel. By the time of the 1940s school building effort, however, the priority had shifted from improving the rural school to constructing only urban and village consolidated schools.

Efficiencies realized through consolidation precipitated a steady decline in the number of operating small rural schools, which dropped in number from 4,731 in the 1931-1932 school year to 2,775 during the 1953-1954 school year. Consolidation, which often resulted in the closure of a school which had, in earlier years, served as the focus of the rural community, closely paralleled the farm consolidation movement. In this sense, both school and farm consolidation signaled a profound change in the rural social community. Although one-teacher schools continue to operate on the Plains, the consolidated school is today's rural school. In size and centralization, these schools are memorials to efficiency and conservation of resources among rural communities. Declining rural populations continue to undermine the necessity of even the village consolidated school. Even village consolidated schools have been closed due to increased centralization of school construction.

Historical Background for the Development of Faulk County

Sievers School is located in Faulk County, which was organized in 1883 and named after the third Governor of Dakota Territory, Andrew J. Faulk. Comprised of 28 townships, the county is approximately 24 miles north to south and 42 miles east to west, consisting of about 1,010 square miles.

The earliest pioneers in the County arrived in 1881 and 1882. Hiram Rose trapped and hunted at Scatterwood Lake in the fall of 1881, but was not a permanent settler. According to Faulk County historian C.H. Ellis, “In the spring of 1882 the tide of emigration set strongly toward

[70] *Schools in SD MPS*, E 13.

Dakota Territory."[71] In April of 1882, a party of home-seekers from Missouri, Alexander LaFoon, D.S. Smith and T.H. McMullen, traveled the Chicago and Northwestern rail as far as Redfield, and then set out westerly on a three-day exploration. To this point, existing reports gave no encouragement for settling the Faulk County area, calling it a barren waste scattered with cactus. However, these men "beheld a beautiful, slightly rolling prairie covered with luxuriant grasses and the clear waters of the Nixon."[72] They returned with a report of good land. By the evening of April 6, 1882, they decided to locate on the banks of the Nixon or Snake River and set aside forty acres for the townsite of LaFoon in the Northwest ¼ of Section 15, Township 118 N Range 68 W.[73] They planned to start a large "Missouri Colony," but the arrival of other settlers altered this plan.[74]

According to Ellis, "The first party of immigrants located permanently upon the ground in June 1882, and among them was T.H. McMullen, Booth, Russell, and Whitehead."[75] About the same time, a group of home-seekers from Charles City, Iowa settled on the Snake or Nixon about five miles west of the LaFoon Colony, in Range 67 W. They named their town Faulkton in honor of Governor Faulk. Both LaFoon and Faulkton were platted in 1882 and both competed to become the county seat.[76]

The earliest schools in Faulk County were conducted in private sod houses, with the earliest recorded classes in the 1860s.[77] An 1898 report of "pioneer education work" in Faulk County stated that in "June 1883, the first school building in the County was erected at LaFoon by individual subscription."[78] The report also stated that someone by the last name McAlhern taught a "select school" in the fall of 1883 at Faulkton. The specifics of the school buildings are unknown. In general, the first formal schools were built with the organization of the county.[79]

Controversy surrounded county organization and selection of the county seat. Ellis asserted, "[Dakota Territory's] Governor Ordway, through his son, George L. Ordway, and one Tibbits, who had been a business partner of George L. Ordway in Denver, Colorado, had put up county organization, including the county seat, to the highest bidder. A den of thieves were [*sic*] in control and must be recognized."[80] LaFoon offered half the town site, a section of adjoining land and $3,000 to Tibbits as incentive to make LaFoon the county seat.[81]

Governor Ordway appointed the Faulk County Commissioners and the County Board organized on November 5th, 1883. Two days later, on November 7th, the County Board met at LaFoon and

[71] Ellis, 46.
[72] Ibid., 24. What is locally known as the Nixon Creek or River is officially the South Fork of the Snake Creek also referred to as the Snake River.
[73] The Government survey had not been made at that time. Government surveyors arrived in October 1882.
[74] Ellis, 24.
[75] Ibid., 25.
[76] Ibid., 25.
[77] *Centennial Atlas of Faulk County South Dakota* (Watertown, SD: The Sentinel Fund, 1989), 5.
[78] Faulk County Historical Society, 465.
[79] *Centennial Atlas of Faulk County*, 5.
[80] Ellis, 25-26.
[81] Ibid., 26-27.

voted to make LaFoon county seat. Among the many county officers selected that day, Miss Angie Harrington was chosen as the county's first superintendent of schools.[82] In July of 1884 the County set her annual salary at $50.00.

Soon after the County Board was organized, it created what they called "school townships". (Civil townships did not yet exist in Faulk County, and the school townships could really be considered small school districts.) At the meeting of the Board of County Commissioners at LaFoon on November 14, 1883, the commissioners voted that Ranges 66 and 67 be divided into three school townships to be 12 miles east-west and 8 miles north-south. Reconvening on the 15th, the commissioners resolved that the remaining portion of the county be divided into ten more school townships, making 13 total.[83] Significant to the context of Sievers School, later built in Township 117 N Range 67 W (Sec. 20), school township or district No. 10 included all of Township 117 N Range 67 W (what would later become Hillsdale Township). District 10 also included all of Township 117, Range 66, directly east (what would later become Zell Township), and sections 25-36 in Township 118 Range 67, to the north (what would become the south two tiers of Centerville Township), and sections 25-36 in Township 118, Range 66, to the northeast (what would become the south two tiers of Pioneer Township).[84] At the same November 15th meeting, the Commissioners voted to use the same divisions as road districts. Similarly, on July 7, 1884, they voted to also use the same divisions as election precincts.[85]

It is apparent that the 13 school townships were not organized when they were created by the county in 1883. A newspaper article in the *Faulkton Times*, June 5, 1884, stated that the "township school boards of the county" were called to a meeting at LaFoon on Friday, May 23rd to "consider uniformity of text books." "Five of the eight organized townships were represented."[86] The *Faulkton Times* reporting on the September 17-18, 1885 meeting of the County Commissioners, stated, "The organization of school township No. 5 was petitioned and provided for – the election of the school officers being called at the same time of annual election and judges appointed for the same. This completes the organization of all the school townships in the county, thirteen in number."[87]

The first organized election in Faulk County took place in 1884. The county convention for the election of county officers was held Sept. 18, 1884 at LaFoon. At the convention, nominees were submitted for county offices and these candidates were put to a vote at the November 1884 election. Mrs. Angie Rose (formerly Angie Harrington) [88] was elected to continue as county

[82] Ibid., 27.
[83] The 10 school districts created on November 15th were No.'s 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13. The commissioners then went back and amended the ones created on November 14th, numbering them 1, 9, and 10.
[84] Faulk County Historical Society, 461-463.
[85] Ibid., 463.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid.
[88] She married A.P. Rose at the now nonexistent town of Harrington, Dakota on May 27, 1884.

superintendent of schools.[89] She served in that position until 1887.[90] The population in the County grew to 3,120 by 1885, and a schoolhouse was built at Faulkton in the fall of 1885.[91]

Faulk County changed rapidly in 1886 when the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad arrived, "and further opened the new area to development and provided much-needed transportation to markets of the East."[92] Shortly thereafter, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul built a branch line from Aberdeen to Faulkton and Orient.[93] Primarily due to its proximity to the railroad, Faulkton was declared the county seat in 1886. The economy in Faulk County was mainly agricultural, with the richest soil located in the east and central regions of the county. "The main crops in the late 1880s were wheat, corn, oats, and barley with livestock also being a major cash business.[94]

Ellis, in 1909, described Faulk County in 1886 as follows: "Altogether, 1886 was an eventful year in the history of Faulk County. Possibly more real homes were established by the arrival of wives and children to occupy the humble but substantial houses that had been erected by the enterprising and self-sacrificing husbands and fathers that with high hopes of better conditions had preceded them, than in any other one year in its history."[95] The arrival of families in the county in 1886 would have certainly created a need for schools, and the newly arrived railroad would have made building materials accessible. School statistics for 1886 indicate there were 13 organized townships (school districts), 922 schoolchildren, and 36 schoolhouses, twelve of which were built in 1886. The average monthly pay for male teachers was $29.84 and for female teachers $28.11.[96] County historian C.H. Ellis states that the sod school house was supplanted by "good, substantial frame buildings" which "as early as 1886 became landmarks even in remote parts of the county, by which the location of various pioneer settlers were described."[97] Despite greater access to materials, at the end of the 1800s County Superintendent Mrs. B. F. McCoy lamented the condition of the schools. In her 1898 report, she states, "We believe the persons who may resurrect these records will find in place of the present unsightly and isolated buildings in which our children are taught, a modern edifice worthy of our town and people."[98]

General W.H.H. Beadle, former Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, conducted the first Teachers' Institute in Faulk County, a weeklong institute, in late October to early November 1887. Forty-five teachers enrolled for the session. The teachers enjoyed an address by General Beadle on the "Evolution of Liberty," as well as an address by Reverend O.E. Murray, of Woonsocket, who "spoke on local option, making many telling points for the cause of home and society against the saloon."[99]

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[89] Ellis, 31.
[90] Faulk County Historical Society, 463.
[91] Donald Dean Parker, *History of Our County and State: Faulk County* (Brookings, South Dakota State College, 1961), 4F; Faulk County Historical Society, 465-466.
[92] *Centennial Atlas of Faulk County*, 5.
[93] Ellis, 28.
[94] *Centennial Atlas of Faulk County*, 5.
[95] Ellis, 106.
[96] Parker, 3F.
[97] Ellis, 103.
[98] Faulk County Historical Society, 466.
[99] Ibid., 464.

Civil Townships began to organize in Faulk County as early as 1887, the county eventually being comprised of twenty-eight townships. Gradually the original 13 school districts changed into township districts. The townships then took over responsibilities from the county commissioners. The county superintendent still supervised all of the schools. Orient Township led the way, becoming a civil township (Township 117 Range 69) on September 5, 1887. Their petition for the same to become a school township was approved on October 24, 1887. Hillsdale Township (Township 117 Range 67), where Sievers School is located, became a civil township on September 6th, 1904 and was approved on the same date as a school township.[100] It appears at times the school township was created before the civil township. Records indicate Arcade petitioned as a school township in 1887 and as a Civil Township in 1908. Another example, Ellisville petitioned as a school township in 1883 and as a Civil Township in 1921.[101]

The county superintendent's report for 1907, by Mrs. I.M. Alden, reveals the general school statistics for the county at about the time the Hillsdale civil and school township was created. "There are 1,631 pupils enrolled in the county and there are 82 school houses, valued at $56,000. There were 78 teachers employed, to whom $21,694 were paid for monthly wages. Each district contains a school library. The total expenditures for district schools for the year A.D. 1907 was $53,976.82."[102]

Most civil and school townships had formed by the end of the 1920s, just before Faulk County faced the Great Depression. In 1934, County Superintendent of Schools, Ruth Milligan Cermak, reported "our school system has grown from two or three rural schools in 1883 to fifty rural schools in 1934, all but three having a nine month term. We have eight independent school districts, five of which maintain four-year accredited high schools. There are also twenty-four common school districts."[103] Despite general growth, teachers' salaries were at an all-time low (an average of $52.83 per month), having gradually declined from a peak in 1921 ($110.75 per month). Cermak ventured it would take ten or fifteen years, perhaps longer, for salaries to reach that peak again. Through the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, Cermak added, many Adult Education Projects such as Band, Orchestra, Commercial and Homemaking classes had been started throughout the state. The county superintendent summarized, "Much has been accomplished in the past thirty-six years but we are still pioneers in the field of Education.[104]

There is evidence that many rural schools in Faulk County were shutting down by the mid-twentieth century. On a 1949-1950 list of Faulk County schools, seventeen schools were reported as "discontinued."[105]

The early 1960s was a time of aggressive school reorganization in Faulk County. According to the 1982 history of Faulk County, "The legislature of South Dakota made it the duty of the

[100] Ibid., 466, 470.
[101] Ibid., 470.
[102] Ellis, 104-105.
[103] Faulk County Historical Society, 472.
[104] Ibid., 473.
[105] Ibid., 473-474.

county board of Faulk County and every other county in the state to file, before January 1st 1962, a Master Plan including all of the area in Faulk County excepting that which has already been annexed to bordering counties in school districts, with assessed valuations large enough and high school students enough to maintain a school which includes grades 1-12 inclusive."[106]

To fulfill this duty, a County Board of Education was selected on November 8, 1960 and organized July 11, 1961. Hearings were held at Wecota, Onaka, Seneca, Rockham, and Faulkton between November 13th and December 18th, 1961. The County Board of Education approved a tentative Master Plan on December 21, 1961 and submitted this "Proposed Master Plan for the organization of School Districts of Faulk County" to the State Superintendent on December 29, 1961. The Master Plan recommended the reorganization of school districts into two large administrative units, a Cresbard Independent School District, and a Faulkton Independent School District.[107] In selecting a two-district boundary, the Board considered "trade and social center areas" noting, "it should be remembered that political boundaries such as existing school districts, township or county lines, do not necessarily determine the 'community area'" due to modern methods of communication and transportation.[108]

The County Board of Education reasoned that creating these administrative units would allow for a comprehensive program of educational services no matter where a child lived, and it would expand opportunity. Further, they assert that the small-district system common to South Dakota began in New England when "transportation and communication facilities were poor" and people lived in small isolated settlements. However, many changes had occurred since the adoption of the small-district system that necessitated school reorganization: "Means of communication and transportation have vastly changed, development has occurred in agriculture and industry, the school curriculum has greatly changed, and 12 years of formal education has become the accepted minimum."[109]

The County Board believed that school district reorganization would bring about educational and financial/administrative advantages. In educational advantages, larger school districts would make possible larger schools where teachers were specialized in instructing a particular grade level and subject; the schools could offer more comprehensive programs of study and more activities; better administrative and supervisory services would provide better instructional materials; there would be better articulation between elementary and secondary education with both included in the same large district. The financial advantage, they asserted, "lies in the fact that better returns for the school tax dollar can result from proper reorganization." For example, the pupil-teacher ratio could be increased when combining small schools because larger groups of pupils had the same needs. This would lead to lower per-pupil costs or reallocation of those monies to improve aspects of the educational program. The larger districts could reduce waste in the use of school plants and also bring about more efficient management of transportation. Bus routes could be more flexible and duplication of services by competing districts would be eliminated. Finally, larger districts would create more equal school support. Financial support

[106] Ibid., 476.
[107] Ibid., 475.
[108] Ibid., 477.
[109] Ibid., 476.

for schools would become comparatively equitable, and school finance plans would be simplified. With small districts, the financial ability for each to support their district varied.[110]

The Faulk County Board approved the Master Plan on January 5, 1962. However, under law, none of the smaller "common districts" could be annexed into the proposed large districts "until each of the said common districts vote to do so."[111]

Select Biographies of Families Associated with Sievers School

Several family names are repeatedly associated with Sievers School over the years. Extracting select biographies for these families gives a sense of the cultural and occupational background of the families who lived in the area and attended the school. The **bold text** denotes a known **teacher or student at Sievers School**.

GRABINSKI

This name is associated with the school in several ways. Frank Grabinski donated the land and assisted with the schoolhouse construction in 1886. The school was reportedly known as Grabinski School early in its history. This was perhaps due to the schoolhouse's origin, or because so many members of the extended Grabinski family lived in Hillsdale Township and many Grabinski children attended there in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century.

Michael and Augusta Grabinski
Michael Grabinski lived in Poland as a youth, but left in his teens. Sometime in the mid-nineteenth century, he married Augusta Corduan. They had two sons who would settle in what would become Hillsdale Township. Their son Herman Grabinski was born in Sorendorf, Germany on February 20, 1854 and Frank in 1861. In 1866, Michael and Augusta came to America with Herman and Frank, locating at Lowell, Wisconsin. Sometime after their sons came out to Dakota Territory (1882), Michael and Augusta also relocated.[112]

Herman and Rosa Grabinski
As aforementioned, Herman Grabinski came to America in 1866 when he was twelve and located at Lowell, WI. There he married Amelia Buzzewitz. In 1882, he relocated to Dakota Territory and homesteaded near Orient, then later moved to Miller and operated a hotel for several years. During this time, Amelia passed away. Herman and Amelia had seven children: **Alma**, Mayme, **Ora**, **Mabel**, **Sadie**, **Ella**, and Frank.

In 1896, Herman married Rosa Belau. Herman had filed on a tree claim three miles south of Miranda, the NE ¼ of section 19 in Hillsdale Township next to his brother, Frank, and built a farm site there. Herman next moved to the town of Miranda, where he operated a hardware store

[110] Ibid., 476-477.
[111] Ibid., 477.
[112] Faulk County Historical Society, 76-77; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 74.

and sold agricultural implements for about six years. Around 1916, Herman and Rosa moved to Hillsdale Township, purchasing the south half of section 17. Herman "built up" the land and farmed it with the help of his son, Frank, until 1926. Local history states that Herman also "ran a steam threshing rig, sometimes hiring gypsies in addition to hobos for bundle haulers."[113] With failing health, Herman gave up farming and the family moved to Redfield. Herman passed away January 1, 1929 and Rosa in 1943. Herman and Rosa had the following children: Reuben, **Alvin**, Lila, **Edna**, **Violet**.[114]

Frank and Minnie Grabinski family

After locating in Lowell, WI with his family in 1866, Frank later moved to Beaver Dam, WI. In 1882, Frank and his brother Herman came to Dakota Territory. Frank took up a homestead in Park Township in Hand County. In 1884, Frank married Minnie C. Belau at Crandon, Dakota Territory. Minnie was born in Juneau, Wisconsin in 1859. They came to Faulk County and in January 1885 filed on the SW ¼ of Section 20 in Hillsdale Township.[115] A digitized homestead map for Hillsdale Township shows Frank owning land in the southwest quarter of section 20 and the northeast quarter of section 28 (117N, 67W). [It shows Michael as the owner of the northeast quarter of section 19 and the southwest quarter of section 17 (117N, 67W).][116]

Present caretaker of the school, Judy Grabinski, received information from former student and teacher at Sievers School, **Arvilla (Grabinski) Schultz**, that the school was constructed in 1886. Local histories state that in 1886 Frank Grabinski and some neighbors erected the rural school, now known as Sievers School. Frank donated an acre of land from the SW corner of his first claim (Section 20 in Hillsdale Township).[117] Early settlers used the school not only for classes, but also for church services.[118]

Over time, Frank and Minnie owned land in several sections of Hillsdale Township. Frank and Minnie built their home on section 19 in 1885. Minnie Grabinski had a tree claim on the NE ¼ of Section 29, which she sold to her brother, Julius Belau. (In the 1980s, Francis Grabinski owned Section 29).[119] Local history states that in 1893 Frank acquired the SE ¼ of Section 19 from his parents.[120] Between 1902 and 1906, "Frank bought the SE ¼ of Section 21, the NE ¼ of Section 28, the NW ¼ of Section 28, the SW ¼ of Section 21 and some years later bought the NW ¼ of Section 22."[121]

Frank and Minnie withstood challenging times as new settlers in this area. One year when Nebraska farmers heard of the drought suffered in the area, they aided settlers by shipping over sacks of grain and flour. When fruit did not grow, they found reddish-brown berries, about the

[113] Faulk County Historical Society, 77.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Faulk County Historical Society, 76-77; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 75.
[116] "Hillsdale Township Homesteaders Map," c.1880-1890.
[117] Faulk County Historical Society, 76; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 75.
[118] Faulk County Historical Society, 76.
[119] Faulk County Historical Society, 77; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 75.
[120] *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 77.
[121] Ibid., 75.

size of large olives, which grew in a plant near the ground. They burned twisted hay, straw, buffalo and cow chips for fuel. Frank took up farming, and initially used oxen and a walking plow. The Grabinski's took wheat to the Redfield Mill, a two- or three-day trip on foot, to be ground into flour.[122] Some of their neighbors became nervous during the Ghost Dance movement (1890) learning of Sioux on the land of the hills west of Orient and decided to leave their homesteads. Among those who left, were Frank's brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Sette. They packed their belongings in a wagon and journeyed back to Wisconsin.[123]

Frank was an avid coyote hunter, sometimes traveling as far as North Dakota to hunt with his four or five hounds. In his absence, Art and Elmer handled the field work.[124]

In 1906 or 1907, Minnie and Frank sold their farm to Carl Kempe from Iowa, and they moved into Rockham. There, they built a well-appointed home. Frank engaged in the land office business and served as Mayor. Frank and Minnie joined the Methodist Church.[125]

Frank purchased a steam engine and "ten bottom breaking plow" in 1909 and his sons **Art** and **Elmer** took it to Kennebec, SD and broke land for the farmers there for a year or two. When the Grabinski's returned to the farm in Hillsdale Township, they added a separator and cook-car to the steam engine and Art and Elmer then enjoyed threshing grain "around the country."[126]

In 1912, Frank and Minnie sold their Rockham residence and built another farmstead in Hillsdale Township, on the southeast quarter of section 21. The 1910 Plat map shows Frank owned the entire south half of section 21 as well as the north half of section 28. M.A. (likely his father, Michael) Grabinski owned the south half of section 17. Frank supervised the building of miles of roads in the township. In 1916, Frank "worked in a number of counties for the re-adoption of Prohibition which became a law in 1917."[127] Frank and Minnie lived on the farm in Hillsdale Township until Frank's death in 1921. Minnie died in 1934.

Children of Frank and Minnie were **Arthur** and **Elmer** (well-known local baseball players), **Lillie** (died in 1918 from Spanish flu complications), **Esther** (Grabinski) McKee, who eventually moved to Sioux Falls; **Hazel** (Grabinski) McKenna who moved to Aberdeen; and **Dewey**, who located in Wessington Springs. All of their children attended Sievers School, as did many of their grandchildren.

Arthur and Ella Grabinski

The first child of Frank and Minnie Grabinski, **Arthur (or Art)**, was born on a farm south of Miranda June 13, 1886. Arthur attended Sievers School, and baseball was a favorite game at school. After completing eighth grade, Arthur, his brother **Elmer**, and **Louis Sievers** all joined

[122] Faulk County Historical Society, 76.
[123] Faulk County Historical Society, 76-77.
[124] *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 75.
[125] Ibid.; Faulk County Historical Society, 77.
[126] *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 75.
[127] Ibid.

the Miranda baseball team. Because each school term only lasted a few months each year, the boys were about 18 when they graduated.[128]

Arthur met Ella Dukerschein in the summer of 1911 while he was touring a cigar factory in Junaeu, Wisconsin. Ella, born in Junaeu in 1888, was one of the workers at the factory. Arthur and Ella married on Thanksgiving Day in 1911. They were members of the Rockham German Methodist Church, the Workman Lodge and the Farmers Union.[129]

Arthur and his brother **Elmer** lived on and farmed the NE ¼ of Section 28 in Hillsdale Township as well as other land their father owned. In 1917, Arthur began building a new farmstead on the SE ¼ of Section 20, ½ mile west of his brother, Elmer's. Carpenters for this new farmstead were Lawrence Dukerschein from Wisconsin, and local men Lloyd Seeman and **Walter Sievers**. (Walter Sievers had attended Sievers School. He was about 3 years younger than Arthur, and class rosters show they attended together.) Arthur's family moved into the new farmstead in 1918. By 1920, he lit the major buildings with a Delco 32-volt light plant. Rainwater from the house roof went to a cistern that provided laundry and bath water, while the well provided drinking water.

The brothers farmed together. The first round of grain threshing for Arthur and Elmer began in August and sometimes lasted into September. Mae Walker prepared the meals in the cook car for the threshing crew and Ella Grabinski baked bread for the crew. Later they sold the "steam threshing outfit" purchasing a grain separator to thresh for the three brothers (**Arthur, Elmer,** and **Dewey**) and a few neighbors. By the late 1920s, Arthur also had dairy cows. For a few years, during the fall and winter months he earned $100/month from selling cream. Arthur also served two terms on the township board, one as clerk, and one on the board of supervisors.[130]

Children of Arthur and Ella were: **Arvilla** (November 19, 1914), Virginia (February 15, 1922), and **Francis** (April 8, 1928). **Arvilla** (Grabinski) Schultz attended Sievers School as a youth, and went on to teach there as well. She preserved it after it closed in 1960. The 1989 plat map shows Arvilla owned the west ½ of the northwest ¼ of Section 21 in Hillsdale Township.

Elmer and Lillian Grabinski

The second child of Frank and Minnie Grabinski was Elmer E. Grabinski, born south of Miranda March 22, 1888. Elmer attended Sievers School, played baseball, and farmed with his family. He married Lillian Tile in 1919. Lillian was born in Arthur, Iowa in 1891 but moved to Rockham and worked as a clerk in the Carl Offerdahl store. They lived on the NE ¼ of Section 28 in Hillsdale Township. Lillian died in 1965, Elmer in 1974.

Dewey Grabinski

Dewey was the youngest of Frank and Minnie's six children, born April 1, 1898. He attended Sievers School, farmed with his father and brothers, and "operated the movie projector on

[128] Ibid., 76.
[129] Ibid., 77.
[130] Ibid.

Saturday nights in the hall above Parson's Hardware."[131] He married Marian M. Miller September 10, 1925 and they lived on the family farm until 1937 when they moved with their daughter, Laurie, to Huron for Dewey's job. Dewey and Marian had four children: Laurie, Sharon, Sara, and Thomas. Dewey died January 12, 1982.

SIEVERS

Henry and Emma Sievers

Born in Hanover, Germany in 1851, Henry Amiel Sievers came to United States at age 14 (about 1865) to live with relatives in Iowa. Emma Mary Rinder was born in 1862 in Dane, Wisconsin. When she was eight years old, she moved with her parents to Iowa, locating on Flood Creek. Henry and Emma were married on March 27, 1879 at Rockford, Iowa. They lived there until 1884, when they moved to their farm in Hillsdale Township.[132] The Hillsdale Township Homestead Map shows Henry Sievers located on the west ½ of Section 29. Henry died at his farm home in Hillsdale Township in November 1932. Emma died October 31, 1937 at Faulkton.[133]

Henry and Emma had 10 children: Lillian Agnes Sievers (born 1879, married Clarence Elmer Runnels); **Herbert William Sievers** (b.1881, m. Esther Zellene Paige); **Alice Pearl Sievers** (b.1884, m. William Harrison Ritter); **Louis John Sievers** (b.1886, m. Luella Ann Harmon); **Walter Lester Sievers** (b.1889, died 1918 while in the Army at Camp Crook, NE); **Leonard Arnold Sievers** (b.1895, m. Harriet Norma Thorn); **Florence May Sievers** (b.1897, m. Lewis Berton Russell, later Edward Thomas Barnet); **Clarence Lee Sievers** (b.1900, m. Grace Annabelle Stoddard); **Katherine Antoinette Sievers** (b.1904, m. James Alvin Spencer).[134]

We know some additional detail about the Sievers children who attended Sievers School. **Louis** J. Sievers was an "active and ardent baseball player, and was once offered a contract to play professional ball with the Kansas City team, but declined, for health reasons."[135] After his local education, Louis went on to attend Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell for three years, as well as a photographer school in Tennessee. He returned to South Dakota, and worked in several businesses in Miranda, including operating a hardware store there with his brother **Walter.** Louis held many local offices. He was elected to county office prior to WWI, where and served until he entered the war. After completing his army duty, he continued his career in various county offices, including register of deeds, auditor, treasurer, and sheriff, for more than 20 years. Louis married Luella Harmon of Redfield at Webster on June 30, 1943. Louis actively began farming in 1950 at his farm west of Miranda where he lived until his death. At the time of his

[131] Ibid., 76.
[132] Faulk County Historical Society, 212-213.
[133] "Hillsdale Township Homesteaders Map," c.1880-1890.
[134] Faulk County Historical Society, 213.
[135] Ibid.

death (June 6, 1959), he was a director of Faulk County State Bank and of the Federal Land Bank Association.[136]

As a boy, **Leonard** Sievers lost both feet in a mower accident. A neighbor, **Edwin M. Runnels**, who taught for a time at Sievers School, provided emergency treatment. Runnels actually taught Leonard at Sievers School during the 1901-02 term when Leonard was six years old.[137] Leonard, "due to a lot of courage, led a normal life and became very efficient in spite of his loss."[138]

Clarence Sievers spent his early youth on the farm. In 1921, he went to Fort Pierre where he spent a year learning the baker's trade. He married Grace Stoddard of Faulkton on December 31, 1922. They owned and operated the City Bakery in Faulkton for 22 years. It closed in 1944, but they also operated a café for about a decade between 1942 and 1952. Grace died in 1961 and Clarence in 1970.[139]

EDWIN M. RUNNELS

Edwin M. Runnels taught at Sievers School during the 1896-1897 and 1901-1902 school terms. Born in 1867 in Montgomery County, Iowa, Edwin came to Dakota Territory in 1883 and settled in Hillsdale Township.[140] He homesteaded the northeast ¼ of section 30, directly southwest of the land Frank Grabinski donated for building Sievers School. In 1889, Edwin married Margaret ("Maggie") Robertson, who was born in Scotland and came to the United States in 1872.[141] Edwin farmed and had some livestock. He had brothers who were doctors and, apparently, he "had an inclination to care for sickness and injuries" such as setting broken limbs for neighbors.[142] Edwin and Maggie retired to Redfield in 1921 and Edwin died in 1942.

Edwin and Maggie had four daughters: **Bessie**, **Florence**, **Edith**, and **Margaret.** When Edwin taught at Sievers School in 1896-1897, his daughter Bessie, age six, attended. For the 1901-1902 year he taught both Bessie (11) and Florence (9).[143]

Of note, **Bessie** married Ferdinand W. Strasburg in 1912. They had two children, **Marlin** and **Myrtis**, both who attended Sievers School. Generations stayed on the land in Hillsdale township. We know **Marlin**, grandson of Edwin, owned and operated a farm in section 30 as late as the 1980s.[144]

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[136] Ibid.
[137] Cordts, 11.
[138] Faulk County Historical Society, 200.
[139] Ibid., 212.
[140] Ibid., 200.
[141] *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 114.
[142] Faulk County Historical Society, 200.
[143] Cordts, 5, 11.
[144] *Centennial Atlas of Faulk County*, 35; Faulk County Historical Society, 200.

KEMPE

In 1906 Frank Grabinski sold his farm to Carl Kempe from Iowa and moved into the town of Rockham.[145] The 1910 *Standard Atlas of Faulk County, SD* does show Carl Kempe as the owner of land in Hillsdale Township formerly owned by Frank Grabinski. This is the southwest ¼ of section 20 where Sievers School is located. Carl also owned the adjacent southeast ¼ of section 19.[146]

Born in 1864 in Kleinerada, Henterpomern, Germany to William and Johanna Kempe, Carl Kempe came to the United States at age 18. In 1885 he married Rieke Lemke Mowry. She was born in 1860 in Piepenhagen, Pomerania, Prussia and came to the United States in the spring of 1876.[147]

It seems Kempe purchased the Grabinski land a few years before he and his family came to settle in Hillsdale Township. According to the *History of Faulk County*, "The Kempe's farmed Casey, Iowa until 1909, when they loaded their belongings, including their household furniture, machinery and horses, in a box car and moved to the Miranda area."[148] They left by freight car from Casey to Council Bluffs, Omaha and Sioux City, a trip which took almost a week. Will, Ed, and a son-in-law came with the freight car and took care of the horses during the trip. The rest of the family started a few days later on the passenger train and caught up with the freight car in Redfield. Since there was no passenger train going west of Redfield, on that day, the family rode in the caboose of the freight train to Miranda, arriving there December 18, 1909. Carl and Rieke lived on their Hillsdale Township farm until 1920, when they built a house in Miranda, and moved there. "Mrs. Kempe boarded the teachers and cooked for the railroad men as they passed through town. They also boarded Bill Zarneke, the banker, and Marvin Iverson, who worked in the Blauert Store."[149]

Carl and Rieke's children were: John Kempe, Clara Kempe Chase, Edward Kempe, Emma Kempe McLachlan, **Charles Kempe** and **Amanda Kempe Stammer**. Rieke Kempe had two sons from a previous marriage, William and Reuben Mowry.[150]

STAMMER

The Stammer family shows up on plat maps in Hillsdale Township about the same time as the Kempe family and owns land directly adjacent to Sievers School. Several Stammer children attended Sievers School. The second generation also ties into the Von Ahn family, another name given Sievers School. There is not much information available on the history of the Von Ahn's.

[145] Faulk County Historical Society, 77.
[146] *Standard Atlas of Faulk County South Dakota* (1910), 27, 93.
[147] Faulk County Historical Society, 126.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid., 126-127.
[150] Ibid., 127.

But, in the 1920s, many of Anna (Stammer) and Henry Von Ahn's children attended the school, and that may have been the reason for its referral by that name for a while.[151]

Marcus and Augusta Stammer

Marcus "Mark" Stammer was born in 1859 in Hamburg, Germany. He married Augusta Kading, who was born in 1869 in Duepsan, Pomern, Germany. Mark, Augusta and family lived on a farm near Casey, Iowa. (Note this is the same location the Kempe's lived prior to their arrival in Hillsdale Township.) The Stammers came to South Dakota in 1907. The *History of Faulk County* asserts, "They loaded their household goods, horses and machinery in a box car and came by freight in the spring of that year [1907]."[152] They bought a farm 3.5 miles southeast of Miranda from Herman Grabinski. It is unclear exactly where this is. But the 1910 *Standard Atlas of Faulk County* shows an August Stammer (probably Augusta, the spouse of Marcus) owning the north ½ of Section 20 (directly north of Sievers School) and the northeast ¼ of section 19 (directly southeast of Sievers School). Augusta Stammer died in 1917. The c.1920 plat map of the township shows Marcus Stammer as the owner of that same land. Mark later relocated to Miranda where he owned a pool hall and grocery store. Mark and Augusta Stammer had eight children John, Anna, Amanda, Mary, Emma, Fred, **Henry**, Ed.

John Stammer, born to Mark and Augusta at Casey, Iowa in 1883, came to Hillsdale Township with his parents in 1907. John married Jennie Michels in 1910. Jennie's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Matt Michels homesteaded in Hillsdale Township in 1883.[153] They rented a farm in Hillsdale Township from Lars Jacobson and later purchased it. They had four children, **Leroy, Glenn, Barbara, and Bernice**. "All children went to the Sievers School in Hillsdale Township where they got their eighth grade diplomas. Then they went to Rockham High School and graduated from there."[154] John and Jennie moved to Arcade Township in the 1930s. After military service, **Glenn** continued to farm until 1980.[155]

Anna Stammer, daughter of Mark and Augusta Stammer, married Henry **Von Ahn** and they had nine children: **Marcus Von Ahn**, Marie, Carrie, **Lester**, **Everett**, **Edna**, **Florence**, **Clara**, and Ralph. Several of the Von Ahn children are recorded at Sievers School along with their Stammer cousins in the 1920s.[156]

Fred Stammer married **Amanda Kempe**, who was born in Iowa in 1895, daughter of Carl and Rieke Kempe. Fred and Amanda were married on February 24, 1915 at Carl and Rieke's home. Fred and Amanda had three children: **Mildred**, Wayne, and Marlin. Fred died in 1947 as the result of a farming accident. Amanda continued to live on the farm until 1974 when she moved to Redfield.[157]

[151] Faulk County Historical Society, 523; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 37.
[152] Faulk County Historical Society, 218.
[153] Ibid., 217.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid., 218.
[156] Faulk County Historical Society, 218, 523; *Rockham Community 1886-1986*, 37.
[157] Faulk County Historical Society, 217.

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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:
__X__ State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
____ Local government
____ University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): FK00000079_[SD SHPO ID #]_____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property __less than one_____

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

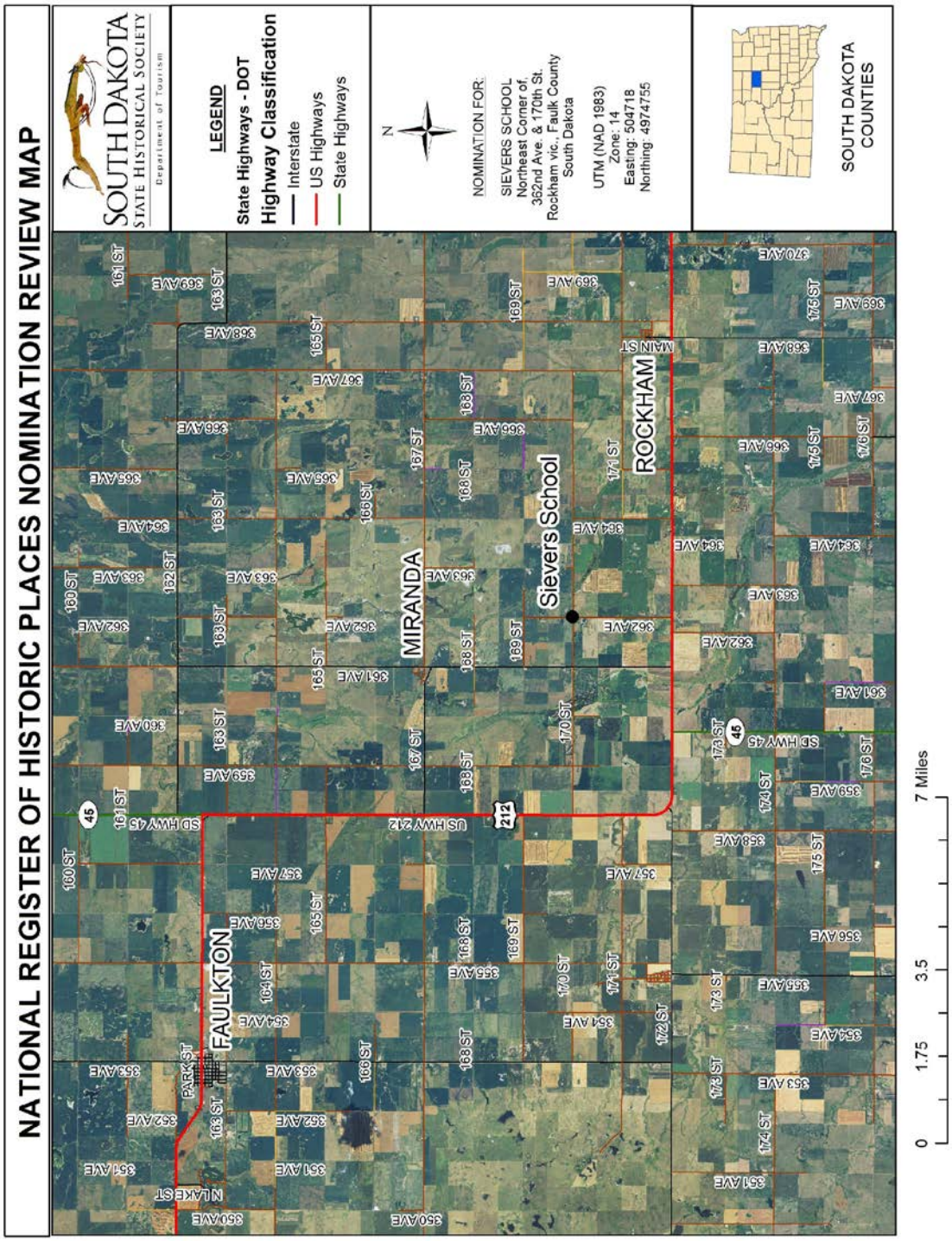
[ ] NAD 1927 or [X] NAD 1983

1. Zone: 14 Easting: 504718 Northing: 4974755
2. Zone: Easting: Northing:
3. Zone: Easting: Northing:
4. Zone: Easting : Northing:

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)
10 rods square, SW corner of the SW ¼ of Section 20, Township 117N, Range 67 W of the 5th p.m.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
The boundary encompasses the area historically associated with Sievers School, now owned by the Hillsdale Historic Society, Inc. who formed to save the historic schoolhouse.

Section 10_Figure 1: Sievers School map: location in proximity to surrounding towns. Produced in ArcMap 10.1 by Jennifer Brosz, 19 December 2013.



Section 10_Figure 2: Sievers School map: Close-up view, northeast corner of 362nd Ave. and 170th St. Produced in ArcMap 10.1 by Jennifer Brosz, 19 December 2013.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jennifer R. Brosz/ Historic Preservation Specialist
organization: South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office
street & number: 900 Governors Drive
city or town: Pierre state: SD zip code: 57501
e-mail shpo@state.sd.us
telephone: 605-773-3458
date: October 15, 2013

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 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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: Sievers School
City or Vicinity: Rockham vicinity
County: Faulk State: SD
Photographer: Jennifer Brosz
Date Photographed: November 19, 2013

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

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0001
Site view, camera facing northeast.

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0002
View of façade and east elevation, camera facing northwest.

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0003
View of east and north (rear) elevations, camera facing southwest.

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0004
View of north and west elevations, camera facing southeast.

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0005
View of west elevation and (south) façade, camera facing northeast.

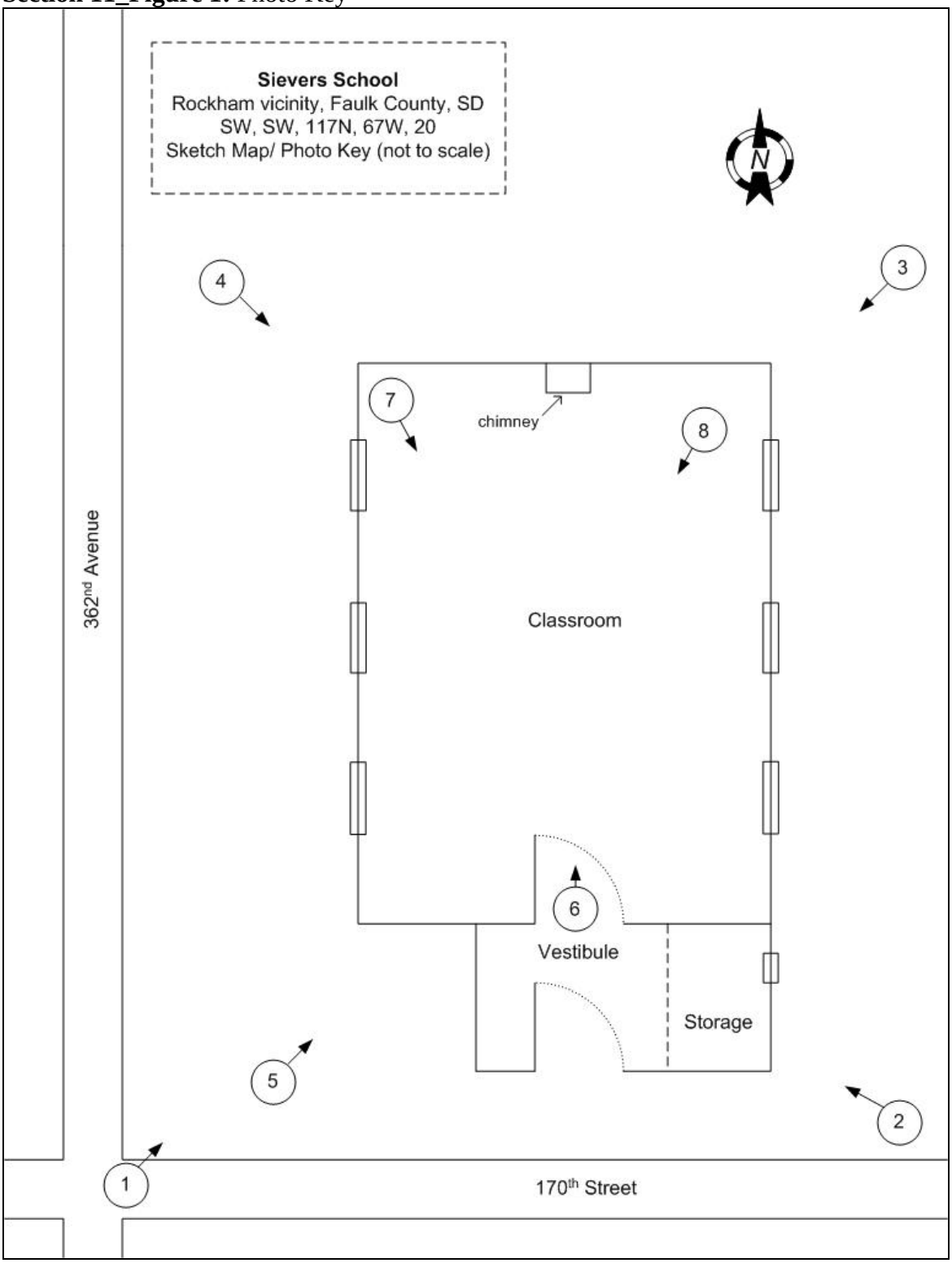
SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0006
Interior view of classroom, camera facing north.

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0007
Interior view of classroom, camera facing southeast.

SD_Faulk County_Sievers School_0008
Interior view of classroom, camera facing southwest.

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.

Section 11_Figure 1: Photo Key



Jack and Jill I see Jack
I see Jill I see
Jack I see Jill
I see Mother Goose.
Jack and Jill
Good morning, Mother Goose.
Good morning to you,
Mother Goose
Here is Jack and here is Jill.
Good morning
to Mother Goose
I see
Good bye, little desk at school,
Good bye.
We're off to the fields and
the open sky.
Visitors - Please sign
guest book
Come again when
we are finished
Thank you.

March 27, 1896
Lydia Paul, Teacher

Vanessa
Judi
Victor
Eind
Jo