

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

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Concord School
Other name/site number: Concord Rosenwald School
Name of related multiple property listing: Historic and Architectural Resources Associated with the Rosenwald School Building Program

2. Location

Street & number: 19447 FM 95 S
City or town: Mount Enterprise State: Texas County: Rusk
Not for publication: NA Vicinity: [checked]

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ([checked] 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 ([checked] meets [] does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:
[] national [] statewide [checked] local

Applicable National Register Criteria: [checked] A [] B [] C [] D

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer
Signature of certifying official / Title Date 7/30/24
Texas Historical Commission
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
Signature of commenting or other official Date
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
[] entered in the National Register
[] determined eligible for the National Register
[] determined not eligible for the National Register
[] removed from the National Register
[] other, explain: _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

5. Classification

Ownership of Property Private

Category of Property Building

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	3	structures
0	0	objects
1	4	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: Education: School

Current Functions: Work In Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements: Bungalow/Craftsman

Principal Exterior Materials: Wood

Narrative Description (see continuation sheets 7-10)

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations: NA

Areas of Significance: Education; Ethnic Heritage/Black (*local level*)

Period of Significance: 1925-1971

Significant Dates: 1925, 1971

Significant Person (only if criterion b is marked): NA

Cultural Affiliation (only if criterion d is marked): NA

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance (see continuation sheets 11-16)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography (see continuation sheet 17)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. Part 1 approved on (date)
- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: East Texas Research Center, Nacogdoches; Rusk County Historical Commission, Henderson

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): NA

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 3.61 acres

Coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. Latitude: 31.937398 Longitude: -94.6023939

Verbal Boundary Description: The Concord Rosenwald School located on parcel 29258 is bounded on the south by parcel 6398, on the east by parcel 29226, on the north by parcel 63987, and on the west by parcel 29256 and Farm to Market Road 95.

Boundary Justification: The legal parcel boundary contains all built resources historically associated with the school.

11. Form Prepared By

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Date: October 2023

Additional Documentation

Maps (see continuation sheets 18-23)

Additional items (see continuation sheets 24-27)

Photographs (see continuation sheets 28-56)

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.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photograph Log

Concord Rosenwald School
Mount Enterprise, Rusk County, Texas
Photographed by Jordan Coleman, March 2024

Photo 1

South elevation, camera facing north. Main entrance of the original 1925 building.

Photo 2

South elevation, camera facing north. Gable porch, main entrance doors and side doors.

Photo 3

Southwest elevation, camera facing northeast. Chimney and difference in 1925 siding and 1930s addition siding.

Photo 4

South elevation, camera facing north. 1930s addition.

Photo 5

Southeast elevation, camera facing northwest.

Photo 6

East elevation, camera facing west.

Photo 7

Northeast elevation, camera facing southwest.

Photo 8

North elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 9

Northeast elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 10

Northwest elevation, camera facing southeast.

Photo 11

Northwest elevation, camera facing east.

Photo 12

North elevation, camera facing south.

Photo 13

Northwest elevation, camera facing southeast.

Photo 14

West elevation, camera facing east.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 15

Southwest elevation, camera facing northeast.

Photo 16

West elevation, camera facing east. Original desk in the auditorium, 1930s edition.

Photo 17

South elevation, camera facing north. Original cabinetry in the 1925 building.

Photo 18

North elevation, camera facing south. Original cabinetry in the 1925 building.

Photo 19

South elevation, camera facing north. Example of the paint difference of where a chalkboard was hung.

Photo 20

West elevation, camera facing east. Example of original windows and condition.

Photo 21

South elevation, camera facing north. Example of original windows and condition.

Photo 22

North elevation, camera facing south. Concord High School Alumni Association Community Center.

Photo 23

South elevation, camera facing north. Blue and white Concord High School Alumni Association Community Center sign and white vinyl fencing.

Photo 24

West elevation, camera facing east. Concord High School Alumni Association monument.

Photo 25

Northeast elevation, camera facing southwest. Example of water damage to the ceiling, walls, and flooring.

Photo 26

Northwest elevation, camera facing southeast. Example of water damage to the ceiling, walls, and flooring, and temporary structural boards holding the wall in place.

Photo 27

North elevation, camera facing south. Example of water damage and deterioration to ceiling, walls, and flooring, located in the hallway of the 1925 original building.

Photo 28

South elevation, camera facing north. 1930s west wing addition to the left; main entrance of the original 1925 building to the right.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Description

The 1925 Concord School is in a wooded rural setting on FM 95 (Farm-to-Market Road 95) approximately five miles east of Mount Enterprise in southeast Rusk County, Texas. The building is a one-story five-room school with a cross gable roof and was partially funded as part of the Rosenwald school building program. The design follows Rosenwald plan "Nashville Plan No. 3-B" as a three-teacher community school, with an addition on the west side built in the 1930s. The building is on a three and a half acre parcel owned by the Concord High School Alumni Association. The site consists of the school building, woods, cleared land, and a non-contributing community center. The western section traditionally functioned as an auditorium while the eastern section consisted of classrooms. Although the building has deteriorated, it still maintains a high degree of integrity because the exterior retains its original form, materials, and architectural features. The form is mostly unaltered by additions or alterations since the west addition, and a non-original porch built on the north side of the building has been removed without destroying the original building materials. The fenestration pattern remains unchanged, with the doors and windows maintaining their original size and location. The building's materials are for the most part unaltered with the original brick piers, wood-framed windows, and heavy wooden doors still in place. The building's distinguishing architectural features include wide roof overhangs, exposed rafter tails, and the numerous windows with 9-over-9 and 6-over-6 lite configurations. The building's condition has suffered due to water infiltration but it retains good degree of integrity.

Site and Setting

Located in a rural setting, the Concord Rosenwald School is surrounded by deciduous and coniferous woods, farm and grazing land, a gravel road that encompasses the school, and a few neighboring houses visible across FM 95. The school is located at 19447 FM 95 S, seven miles east of downtown Mount Enterprise. The building occupies an irregular shaped parcel and shares the parcel with a non-contributing community center building constructed in 2013 by the Concord High School Alumni Association (CHSAA). The property features several nonhistoric components: a gravel parking lot on the west side of the parcel; a seventy-foot-long white plastic fence (noncontributing) along the front of the property (NC); a modern blue and white CHSAA sign; and a modern granite memorial for all the teachers at Concord School. Two shipping containers used for storage are north of the community center; a trailer seen on the west side of the lot in aerial photos is no longer on the parcel. All properties are indicated in the table at the end of this section.

General Building Description

The Concord Rosenwald School is a one-story five-room school with a cross-gable roof. The school's design followed the recommendations of Samuel Smith and Fletcher Dresslar of the Rosenwald School Fund, and was built in 1925 to the specifications from the Nashville Plan No. 3-B out of the Rosenwald plan book as a three-teacher community school, with the 1930s west wing addition of two rooms. Its form and features exemplify Texas Rosenwald school architecture built during this period. The foundation of the school consists of brick piers and wood beams. The building is divided into two sections, a three-classroom section on the east and the addition of a single classroom auditorium on the west. Both sections are gable-roofed with corrugated steel panels. The wood windows are generally double-hung with 9/9 or 6/6 lites. The five-panel, solid wood doors are surrounded by simple wood casing. The school is oriented north/south, with the primary entrance located beneath the front porch gable on the south elevation.

South Elevation

This buildings elevation serves as the primary pedestrian entrance to the school. The facade has two gables, one on the primary building and another that projects outward to form the covered porch, with wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails, wooden gable vents installed in both exterior walls, and original double ogee siding (Photo 1). Underneath the

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

louver on the gable to the main entrance is an exterior light fixture. A recessed porch with the original five-panel wooden double doors is at the center of the north wall of the porch, and two original five-panel wooden doors flank the main entrance. The flooring on the porch has mostly deteriorated and the doors have been sealed shut with wooden boards (Photo 2). To the east of the recessed porch is another entrance with an original three-panel wooden door that leads to a classroom. To the west of the recessed porch is a ribbon of three wooden double-hung 6/6 lites, most of the glazing is still extant but the windows are currently covered with plywood. On the west wall is a ribbon of three wooden double-hung 9/9 lites that still have most of the glazing still intact, however they are also boarded up. The brick pier and wooden beam foundation along this wall has been damaged and has failed. Also, on the exterior of the west wall, is an original wood burning brick chimney (Photo 3).

Southwest Elevation

The 1930s West Wing addition is gable-roofed with wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails and 1/8 shiplap siding with angle stud braces at the corners of the walls. In the center of the west wing there are two modern, white aluminum doors that replaced the original wooden doors. West of the two center doors are two wooden double-hung 6/6 windows covered in plywood. East of entrance is a ribbon of four wooden double-hung windows with 6/6 lites covered in plywood. The original steps deteriorated and have been removed and replaced with modern wood steps (Photo 4).

East Elevation

This elevation served as the main light and airflow source for the classrooms on the east side of the school. The east side gable roof has wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails and 1/6 double ogee siding (Photo 5). The roof has most of the original metal paneling, but there has been galvanized steel paneling added to replace the deteriorated original paneling. The original and modern roofing can be differentiated by the color, the original is a reddish-brown and the modern paneling is gray. Along the east wall's foundation there are three missing piers. From north to south along the east wall, there are two wooden double-hung 6/6 lites, a ribbon of three wooden double-hung 9/9 lites, two single wooden double-hung 6/6 lites, and a ribbon of five wooden double-hung 9/9 lites which are all covered with plywood. An original brick chimney protrudes from the roof along the east wall (Photo 6).

North Elevation

This elevation served as entrance and exit points from the classrooms on the north side of the Rosenwald school, along with exit points to the non-extant elementary school, gymnasium, shop, and cannery (Photo 8). This side is gable-roofed with wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails, 1/6 double ogee siding, and two wood louvers. The louver on the west side of the wall is damaged with only one board left. Along the foundation, most of the brick piers are damaged and one pier is missing. There are two original wooden five-panel doors located on the far east and west sides of the north wall. The door on the west has the reminiscence of the original stairs. The door to the east has no stairs (Photo 9). On the northwest side of the north elevation is a ribbon of four wooden double-hung windows with 9/9 lites, all covered in plywood (Photos 10-11).

Northwest Elevation

To the west of the north elevation, the 1930s West Wing addition is a gable-roofed with wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails and 1/8 shiplap siding with angle stud braces at the corners of the walls. There are three nearly evenly spaced wooden double-hung 6/6 lites covered in plywood. An original brick chimney protrudes from the roof between the two windows closest to the west side of the west wing (Photo 12-13)

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

West Elevation

This elevation served as the main light and airflow source for the classroom on the west side of the school. The west side is gable with wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails and 1/8 shiplap siding with angle stud braces at the corners of the walls. There are two evenly spaced wooden double-hung 6/6 lites that are covered in plywood and a single wood louver located above the windows (Photos 14-15).

Interior

The school has two rectangular floor plans that merge to create a T-plan. The building is divided into two sections, an auditorium with a single classroom in the western section, and three classrooms, one coat room, and an office in the eastern section. These sections are joined by a doorless opening that had bathrooms on either side of the opening. The auditorium and a single classroom in the west retain most of their original interior materials and design. The original storage cabinets and counter, protruding to the center of the room from the east wall of the auditorium, are intact (Photo 16). The flooring in the west section is red oak and the walls are 2x4 studs with 1 inch tongue and groove planking. The east section has long leaf pine flooring which has mostly deteriorated due to water damage. Cabinetry from the mid twentieth century remains in the east section (Photos 17-18) There are no original chalkboards present in the school but the locations where the chalkboards were hung are a different color than the rest of the walls (Photo 19). Nearly all of the windows still have most of the original glazing and are still present throughout the school (Photos 20-21). All of the doors throughout the building lack hardware.

Non-Contributing Building

The noncontributing 2013 community center was built by the Concord High School Alumni Association to the south of the school. The building features a side-gabled roof with a large awning over the main entrance. It has five windows, two doors, and is 2,897 square feet in area. It is used as a community center by the local unincorporated town of Concord and a meeting place for the alumni of the Concord Rosenwald School (Photo 22).

Integrity

The Concord Rosenwald School maintains sufficient integrity to convey its significance under Criterion A. The building is located on its original site and still retains the feeling of a rural school building within a rural setting. Integrity of the design and workmanship are high because the exterior is relatively unaltered, and the 1930s addition matches the design and materials of the 1925 building. The addition was compatible in scale and materials which harmonizes with the original building and is the product of design based entirely on function and efficiency. The Craftsman-inspired features include wide overhangs and exposed rafter tails. The double-hung windows with 9-over-9 and 6-over-6 lites still remain a strong part of the building's architectural identity and none of the architectural features have been removed or heavily altered. A small amount of deterioration has occurred since the school was closed in 1971. The wooden windows are still mostly intact, with only one missing, one that is heavily damaged, and the rest need restoration work to become functioning again. All but two of the original doors are still present and also need restoration work to become functioning again. The walls, flooring, foundation, and ceiling have been impacted the most by water damage. For example, the south room of the original 1925 building has water damage from ceiling to foundation that exemplifies the damage throughout the building (Photo 25). The east wall in another room in the original 1925 building has multiple 2x4 boards supporting the wall from falling. The ceiling and flooring have deteriorated enough that most of the original wood has deteriorated to a point that it needs to be replaced (Photo 26). The main hallway in the original 1925 building has damage to the ceiling, walls, and flooring (Photo 27). Despite water damage and deterioration, the building still retains the integrity of the materials and feeling of the building. Even with the 1930s west wing addition and the front porch alteration, the Concord School's craftsman architectural design

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

and rectangular floor plan has retained and clearly communicates a strong association with Rosenwald school designs from the early 20th century.

Property Table

Property	Type	Status
School	Building	C
Community Center	Building	NC
Shipping Containers (2)	Structures	NC (2)
Sign (nonhistoric)	Object	Not counted (small in scale)
Monument (nonhistoric)	Object	Not counted (small in scale)
Plastic fence (nonhistoric)	Structure	NC

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Concord Rosenwald School in Rusk County, Texas, was built 1924-25 with funds from the Julius Rosenwald School Building Program, which was established in 1917 for the advancement of African-American education in the rural South. The building serves as a physical reminder of this philanthropic program and is the lone standing building linked to the history of African-American education in the Rusk County, which once had 22 Rosenwald schools that served the Black communities that accounted for 40% of the total county population in 1920. It represents an era when legally mandated separate—but rarely equal—accommodations for black students were the norm throughout East Texas. The building is an excellent example of a Rosenwald school modeled on Nashville Plan No. 3-B as a three-teacher community school and is nominated to the National Register under Criterion A, in the areas of Education and Ethnic Heritage/Black, at the local level of significance, under the Texas Multiple Property Submission “Historic and Architectural Resources Associated with the Rosenwald Rural School Building Program,” approved by the National Park Service in 1998. The period of significance extends to 1971, when the school became part of the Henderson Independent School District, after which the building was no longer utilized as a school. The building is exceptionally significant as a rare physical reminder of segregated African American education in Rusk County, Texas.

Concord, Rusk County, Texas

The Concord community was established in the 1840s with mostly plantation homes with two roads connecting them to Mount Enterprise, Minden, and Caledonia. In the 1930s, the small community had a population of twenty-five residents and six businesses, including a mill, a cannery, and a cotton gin. In the 1940s, the population grew to 125. The population stayed relatively steady through the next forty years, but in the 1980s the population fell to twenty-three. The current population is roughly fifteen to twenty residents. The nearest community to Concord is Lawsonville, a few miles north, which has traditionally functioned as a part of the greater Concord community. In 1885, the small town had three mills, three cotton gins, a general store, three churches, a school, and a population of 200. The community had a post office until 1907 when it closed and all of the mail went to Mount Enterprise. By 1937, the community only had one business and the population was reduced to 115 people. In 1960, Lawsonville shrunk to fifty residents and one business, a general store. When the Concord Rosenwald School was closed, Lawsonville dwindled and by 2020 was no longer a recognized township.¹ Most of its businesses, mills, and cotton gins closed, as these services were offered in surrounding larger towns and cities such as Mount Enterprise, Nacogdoches, and Garrison.

The Julius Rosenwald Fund²

Julius Rosenwald was born in Springfield, Illinois in 1862. He began his business career at the age of seventeen as an apprentice in his uncles' clothing firm, and five years later set himself up as clothing merchant in partnership with his brother. Rosenwald joined the firm of Sears, Roebuck and Company in 1897, becoming president of the company in 1909, from which he retired in 1924. Influenced by the biography of William H. Baldwin, Jr. (a northern white man who had devoted himself to promoting African American education in the South) and the autobiography of Booker T. Washington, he established the Rosenwald School Building Program in 1913. The program funded the construction of schools that were to serve as models of rural school design, the first of which was built in 1913 near Tuskegee, Alabama, at a total cost of \$942.50, of which Rosenwald donated \$300. After Rosenwald donated to build this first school near Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Rosenwald collaborated with Booker T. Washington, a

¹ Texas Historical Commission. Miles Cemetery, Historical Marker No. 16817. Concord, Texas, 2010.; *A History of Rusk County, Texas*, 30-33.

² This section taken verbatim from the Hopewell School NRHP nomination (Bastrop County, Texas) by Karen Riles and Gregory Smith, which adapted from Karen Riles, *Historical and Architectural Resources Associated with the Rosenwald School Building Program*, Multiple Property Documentation Form, (Texas Historical Commission), 1998.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

prominent African American educator and leader at the now Tuskegee University, to address the lack of education for African American children in the Southern states, where educational opportunities for black students were severely limited due to racial segregation and systemic discrimination.

As the demand for these schools grew, Rosenwald consolidated his financial contributions and formed the Julius Rosenwald Fund in 1917. Although African Americans contributed a larger portion of the total cost of construction, equipment, and grounds, the buildings became universally known as "Rosenwald Schools." Schools built in the early years of the fund did not follow standardized plans and were constructed with inferior materials and workmanship. These buildings soon fell into disrepair thus making it necessary to conduct a thorough condition assessment of the schools in 1919. Following the publication of 1920 report by Fletcher B. Dressler, an authority on schoolhouse construction, the fund was reorganized and Dressler's recommendations regarding optimal school design led to the use of standardized plans for future Rosenwald Schools.³ These schools provided education to thousands of black students who previously lacked proper educational facilities. The Rosenwald Schools became a symbol of progress and hope for African American communities in the South. Overall, the Julius Rosenwald Fund, through its initiatives and collaborations, played a vital role in improving the education and lives of African American children in the Southern United States, particularly during a time of racial segregation and limited opportunities.⁴

Concord School, 1925-1971

The Concord Rosenwald School is nominated under Criterion A for its local significance in Education and Black Ethnic Heritage. The Concord Rosenwald School is significant in education for its association with the Julius Rosenwald School Building Fund and for its role in providing education to the African American children of the Concord community during the age of Jim Crow segregation. The school, with the support of the community, served as an educational and community center for the rural black enclave of Concord and the surrounding communities. The Concord Rosenwald School is locally significant in Black Ethnic Heritage as an excellent example of the school buildings built specifically for African American children in the rural segregated South. The school was used as the central meeting location and was the heart and soul of the Concord community.

J. Frank Alexander's Influence

Professor J. Frank Alexander led the efforts to obtain a Rosenwald School for the Concord Community. Alexander was born in Rusk County in the late nineteenth century and did not have access to a formal education. He therefore taught himself at night, after farming during the day. At the age of sixteen, Alexander became a teacher in the Concord area and later attended Prairie View A&M University (an HBCU) where he earned his degree. After college, he returned to Rusk County and taught at an African American school located in Mount Enterprise for nine years. In the early 1920s, Alexander moved to the one-room African American school in Concord and started advocating for a Rosenwald School to expand the school and give more rural Rusk County African American children access to an education.⁵

By 1924, Professor Alexander raised a total of \$3,100 to build a Rosenwald School in Concord. He obtained funding from the following sources: local African Americans \$600, local whites \$100, the public (school district) \$1,500, and the Rosenwald Fund consisting of \$900.⁶ The land where the Concord Rosenwald School was built was owned by the

³ Andrew Feiler, "The Architecture of Rosenwald Schools," *Architect*, March 31, 2021. https://www.architectmagazine.com/aia-architect/aiaadvocacy/the-architecture-of-rosenwald-schools_o.

⁴ Riles, Karen D. "Historic and Architectural Resources Associated with the Rosenwald School Building Program National Register of Historic Places Nomination." Texas Historical Commission, 1998.

⁵ Chas. Ross Jr, "Concord Negro Educator Has Envious Teaching Record," *Henderson Daily News*, June 30, 1937, 3.

⁶ "Concord School, Rusk County, Texas." Card from Rosenwald Collection, Fisk University.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Starling family from Concord. In 1887, Joe Starling, a freedman previously enslaved by the W.D. March family in Concord, bought 87 acres of land from the Marches for \$500. Starling cleared the timber on the land, became a farmer, and raised ten children on the property.⁷ While the school was being built, the Concord students met at Holly Springs Baptist Church, and in 1925 the school was opened for the fall semester in 1925. When the Concord School first opened, it only taught through eighth grade, serving dozens of African American students from the Concord, Old Center, and Greeley communities. By 1941, the school had expanded and taught twelve grades with new students from the Rock Hill, Caledonia, and Reese Mountain communities attending Concord School. As the school grew, an elementary classroom building, an agricultural building, cannery, and a gymnasium were added to the property to provide more access to African American school children to an education, extracurricular activities, and to learn professional skills.⁸

Federal, State, and Local Programs and Community Events

In the almost fifty years of operation, Concord Rosenwald School took part in multiple federal, state, and local programs along with hosting a number of community events at the school. These programs had their roots in early twentieth century government initiatives. In 1912, home demonstration work started in Texas when the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) started a program to work with girls' tomato clubs in central Texas, near Austin. The program was modeled on federal agricultural demonstrations that had been helping farmers across the state since 1903, but the purpose of the 1912 program was to organize rural girls and teach them homemaking and social skills. Two years later, the United States Congress passed the Smith- Lever Act, which gave financial support to establish nationwide agricultural and home economics demonstrations. Later in 1926, the Texas Home Demonstration Association (THDA) was formed to establish statewide home demonstration clubs, councils, and educational radio broadcasts. By 1937 over 50,000 white and black women in Texas were members and active participants of the women's home demonstration clubs.⁹ More specifically, in rural East Texas, more than 14,000 rural black women were home demonstration participants.

The Woman's Home Demonstration Club came to the Concord Rosenwald School starting in February 1939 and took place multiple times a year until the mid-1940s.¹⁰ While at Concord, they performed songs, dances, and plays, along with teaching rural women better methods in vegetable gardening, canning, sewing, cooking, household management, family health, poultry- raising and other aspects of daily life.¹¹ These demonstrations helped strengthen the rural African American community and economy in Concord but also throughout East Texas.

After the Great Depression started in 1929 and Texas was hit with a yearlong drought the following year, the federal government stepped in to help the rural farmers of East Texas. New Deal programs like the Farm Credit Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Farm Security Agency, and the Rural Electrification Administration were created to help rural white farmers, not the rural black farmers. However, the Department of Agriculture did move into the rest direction to ensure rural black farmers of East Texas received the help they needed. The USDA created jobs for individuals with agriculture backgrounds to serve as farm demonstration agents in each Texas county to be educators and liaisons for the rural farmers, even for the black farmers. As early as 1933, H.L. Brown, an African American himself, served as the Rusk County agent, serving the black communities for over a decade.

⁷ "Land Deal Begun in 1887 Completed," *Henderson Daily News*, June 9, 1937, 3.

⁸ Alpheus Moss, Texas Rural African-American Heritage Grants Application. Preservation Texas, 2022.

⁹ Kendra K. DeHart, "Making the Best Better": Home Demonstration Work on the Llano Estacado, 1914 to 1950, Texas State University-San Marcos, 2013.

¹⁰ "Concord Club Sponsors Event," *Timpson Daily Times*, February 7, 1939, 1.

¹¹ Paul Schattenberg, "Women Agents Demonstrated Their Importance to Texas History," *Texas A&M AgriLife*, March 8, 2012. <https://agriflifelife.tamu.edu/2012/03/08/edna-trigg-home-demo/>

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

In 1933, Brown started holding meetings with the black farmers in Rusk County to give farming advice and to establish a program for curing sweet potatoes, build potato houses, help give advice to the farmers' wives, and establish student boy and girl 4-H Clubs. Brown also brought the county's Farm War Alliance administrator, J.W. Miles, to the meetings to help give credit advice to the Rusk County black farmers and helped them fill out the necessary forms for government programs and assistance. After 4-H Clubs were set up at almost all of the black schools in Rusk County, J.F. Alexander started to participate in these meetings by bringing the 4-H Club students from the Concord Rosenwald School and giving presentations on various topics.¹²

In 1937, H.L. Brown held a gopher and rat poisoning demonstration at Concord Rosenwald School and supplied poison for future use by the school.¹³ Brown came to Concord numerous times over the course of his tenure in Rusk County to demonstrate on a number of different topics regarding rodents, other animals, agricultural topics, and 4-H Club purposes. In the same year, Brown held a contest to see which 4-H Club members had the best food supply, feed for livestock, water, toilet facilities, wood, and community cooperation. Out of the twelve award winners, two were Concord Rosenwald School students.¹⁴ The following year in 1938, Concord School 4-H students attended a meeting in Henderson to receive instruction, aid, and reports regarding their summer projects. The other purpose of the meeting was for the different clubs to raise the \$15 entry fee for the Prairie View College Farmer's Short Course, in which the 4-H Clubs did attend later in 1938.¹⁵ The hard work, dedication, and involvement by Brown into the rural black farming communities like Concord explains why in 1938 vocational agriculture became part of the curriculum at Concord Rosenwald School. As a result, a shop was built northeast of the school building which allowed the students to further their education in agriculture and allowed the Concord community to utilize the shop. A few years after adding agriculture to the school's curriculum in 1940, thirty-two students at Concord received vocational training in agriculture from The Texas Association of Future Farmers of America (FFA). These students received training in traditional farming, farm mechanics, livestock care, innovations in farm technology, welding, and woodwork.¹⁶

The impact of H.L. Brown's initiative to organize rural black communities and to educate young boys and girls also led to a Boy Scouts of America Troop to be organized at the Concord Rosenwald School in 1939. The scoutmasters of the Concord Troop were teacher A.D. Hodge and J.F. Alexander, the founder and principal of the Concord School, and the chairman of the troop committee consisted of teachers W.A. Nobles, Herman Black, Leonard Leadon, and Clinton Moss.¹⁷ The Concord Boy Scout Troop opened a new educational opportunity for the Concord Rosenwald School students and gave the Concord community and school another reason to come together in the name of community and education.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, the Concord Rosenwald School and the Concord community played their part in helping with the war. In 1940, the Department of Agriculture created a major nationwide project to construct five million mattresses to donate to low-income families. This project not only helped disadvantaged families but it also lowered the cotton surplus the federal government had in cotton. The Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, a 1933 New Deal Program, supplied cotton, needles, and striped fabric to make the 50-pound mattresses. The community came together at the Concord school in the summer of 1940 when the project started to make the mattresses.¹⁸ Concord School also served as a sugar ration registration location in May 1943. For three days school

¹² Henderson Daily News, July 24, 1933 - December 11, 1933.

¹³ "Gopher Poisoning Program for Week," *Henderson Daily News*, February 7, 1937, 9.

¹⁴ "Negro Youths Have Unusual Farm Exhibit," *Henderson Daily News*, March 14, 1937, 3.

¹⁵ "Negro 4-H Boys Hold Meeting Here Saturday," *Henderson Daily News*, May 30, 1938, 3.

¹⁶ "493 Rusk Co. Boys Get Vocational Training," *Henderson Daily News*, July 14, 1940, 3

¹⁷ "Three New Rusk County Boy Scout Troops Announced," *Henderson Daily News*, January 10, 1939, 5.

¹⁸ Jerry Watson, "13 Mattress Centers Are Established," *Henderson Daily News*, April 8, 1940, 5.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

was canceled while the Concord teachers registered Concord community members for their sugar rations within the school building.¹⁹

In 1944, the Vocational Agriculture Department at Concord received funds to build a cannery on the Concord Rosenwald School campus to assist citizens in supplementing their livelihood during World War Two. For nearly three years before Concord received these funds, the United States Department of Agriculture encouraged civilians to plant “victory gardens” to provide families and communities fresh fruits and vegetables. The victory gardens helped lower the price of vegetables needed by the US War Department to feed the troops, thus saving money that could be spent elsewhere on the military. The Concord community, however, were already growing their own fruits and vegetables. Since Concord was a rural black farming community; they were poor, were at a disadvantage at markets, and were forced to be self-sufficient and grow their own fruits and vegetables in order to save money.

From May to August of each year, families brought peas, greens, tomatoes, corn, and other fruits and vegetables to the cannery facility from their personal gardens, farms, or “victory gardens.” The families, along with volunteers from the community and school worked together to wash, prepare, and can the fruits and vegetables. After the canning process was complete, a label was placed on the cans to ensure the produce was returned to the correct family. After the war, the cannery continued to be used by the community and school to can the community’s fruits and vegetables, which helped families store their home-grown produce for the winter months, save money, and stay self-sufficient.²⁰

In the early 1950s a concept devised to help families weather the poor economic conditions of the Concord area and to maintain the school’s accreditation was instituted by the School District Trustees. Concord families and individuals from the community seasonally traveled to north and west Texas and Oklahoma to work in the cotton fields to generate extra income. The citizens would travel to these locations in late spring to chop cotton and in the early fall to pick cotton. These activities had a severe effect on the attendance of students at Concord School. In order to maintain school accreditation, the concept of “split school sessions” was devised and was implemented. After May graduations, school was reconvened after six weeks of “summer vacation” and the new school year started in mid-July. The academic semester was in session for six weeks and recessed for six more weeks and restarted the year around the middle of October. The concept was used for over fifteen years into the mid-1960s.

The Concord Rosenwald School played a significant role in educating the rural black children of the Concord community along with the surrounding communities during the age of Jim Crow segregation in Rusk County, Texas. Without the establishment of the Julius Rosenwald School Fund and the community, educational opportunities for these children would have been limited. All of the government programs, agricultural education, events, clubs, and demonstrations held at the Concord Rosenwald School created a much-needed community center that sustained and strengthened the rural black enclave of Concord. The Concord School was significant not only for the role it played in education, but also because it hosted different programs which enriched the lives of the Concord community.

Architectural Context

The Concord Rosenwald School plan follows “Nashville three-teacher school, plan #3-B,” a design intended for campuses with two or more acres of land for the schoolhouse, two sanitary privies, a teachers’ home, playgrounds, and a plot for agricultural demonstrations. The Concord campus lacked a teachers’ home and had a single playground. According to Rosenwald recommendations, the school was oriented north-south to allow every classroom to receive east and west sunlight. Even though the interior wall paint was updated at Concord through the years, the white wall paint served an important functional purpose by reflecting sunlight, thus increasing the amount of light inside the

¹⁹ “Registration for Sugar Rations Begins Mon,” *Henderson Daily News*, May 3, 1942, 11.

²⁰ Alpheus Moss, Texas Rural African-American Heritage Grants Application. Preservation Texas, 2022.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

classrooms, which made the interior more pleasing and brighter.²¹ The Concord Rosenwald School was a multi-use building, serving educational purposes and also as a community meeting location. This link between school and community and the development of modern educational buildings were key aspects in Rosenwald schools. The Concord Rosenwald School is a local example of this important development in the educational opportunities for African Americans in the early twentieth century.

The Concord Rosenwald School made an addition to the original three-teacher school building in the 1930s by adding two more classrooms to the west side of the original building. One of the new rooms served as a classroom and the second classroom served as a classroom and as the community meeting center, or auditorium. The auditorium had folding doors that were able to be opened to seat more people to host events and then closed to be used as a classroom. With the addition, the school added an enclosed porch to add a dedicated office space for the principal, and another door was built to the original 1925 building. This addition was made in order to accommodate the increase in students. When the Concord Rosenwald School opened, it was only an 8th grade school, serving dozens of African American students from the Concord, Old Center, and Greeley communities. By 1941, the school had expanded and taught twelve grades with new students from Rock Hill, Caledonia, and Reese Mountain communities attending the Concord Rosenwald School. As the school grew, an agricultural building was built in 1940, a cannery was built in 1944, and an elementary school building and gymnasium were built prior to 1954.

Closing of the School after Integration

In November 1970, Judge William Wayne Justice ordered the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to assume responsibility for desegregating Texas public schools. The ruling in *United States v. Texas* applied to the entire Texas public school system, affecting over 2.5 million children. In July 1971, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit affirmed Judge Justice's decision. At the start of the school year in 1971, this court decision forced Concord Common School District, the Concord Rosenwald School, to join the Henderson Independent School District.²² At the time the Concord Rosenwald School was forced to close its doors, the school served all twelve grades and over 150 rural black children. The Concord property was then sold in a public auction later in 1971 and the buildings on the Concord Rosenwald School were deconstructed in the following order: the gymnasium and elementary school between 1971 and 1977, the agricultural building and cannery between 1977 and 1982. The only remaining building is the Concord Rosenwald School.

As of 2023 the Concord Rosenwald School is one of the only remaining extant Rosenwald schools out of the twenty-two originally built in Rusk County. The Concord Rosenwald School is an excellent example of a 3-teacher type school promoted and built by the Rosenwald program through the 1924 publication "Community School Plans." The Concord Rosenwald School was built on The Nashville Plan No. 3-B, which is one of the least commonly built Rosenwald schools in East Texas. The building retains its original configuration, along with the 1930s addition of two rooms, and characteristics of the type including the gable roof with exposed rafter ends, wood siding, and large double-hung windows. Even though some of the windows and doors have been temporarily boarded up or replaced, the building and setting retains a high degree of integrity and portrays the rural Craftsman architectural style.

²¹ S.L. Smith, *Community School Plans* (The Julius Rosenwald Fund. Nashville: TN, 1924).

²² U.S. v. Texas: Cause No. 6:71-CV-5281, US District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division, 1971.

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

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Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Boundary Map

(Google Earth, accessed February 19, 2024)

The trailer shown northwest of the school building has been moved off the property. Two noncontributing shipping containers are to the east of the school building.



- A) Mobile home (removed from the site).
- B) Concord School
- C) Two shipping containers used for storage
- D) Community Center

Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Site Location: 19447 F M 95 S, Mount Enterprise, Texas (Rusk County) 31.937398 -94.6023939



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

1954 Aerial Map



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

1957 Aerial Map



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

1977 Aerial Map



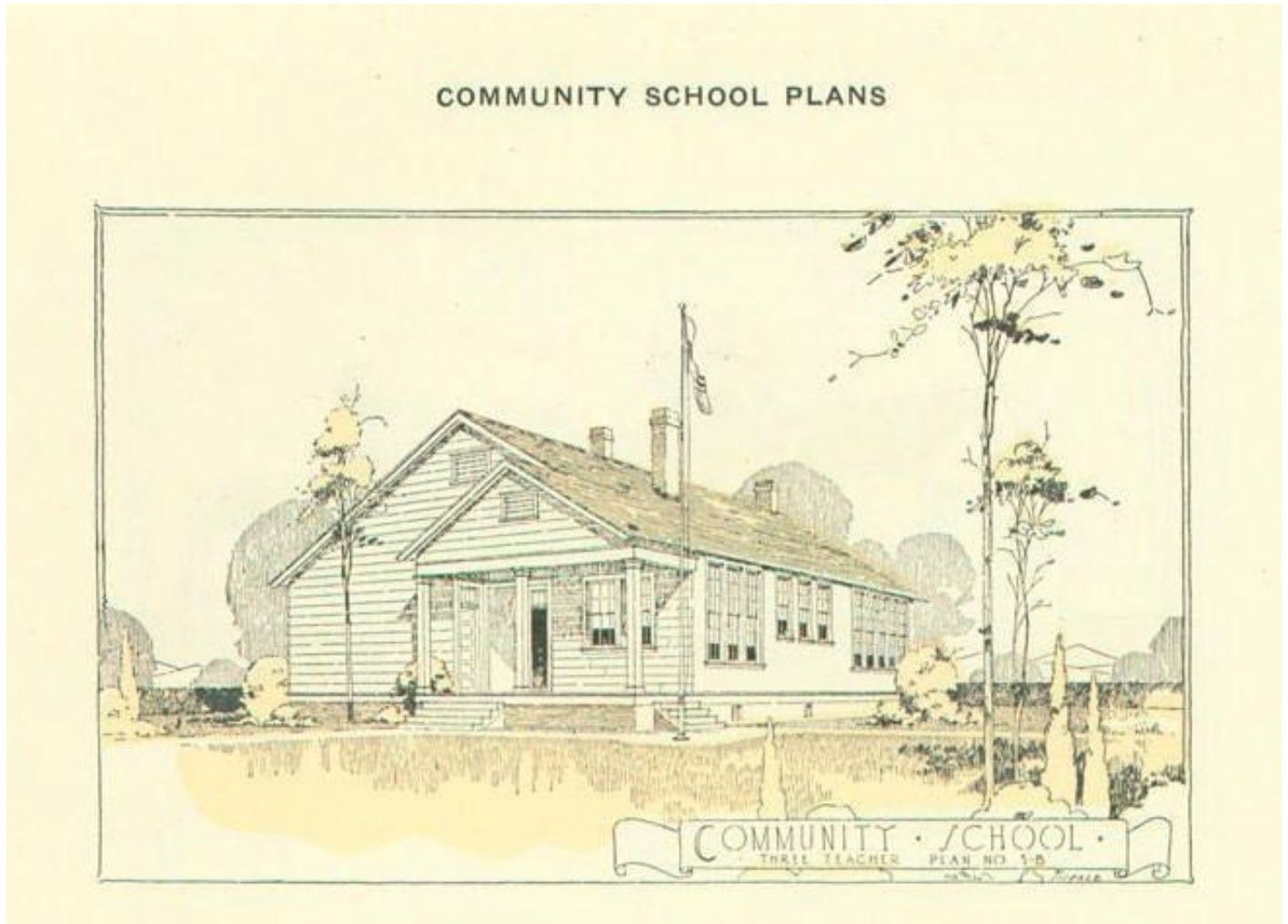
Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

1982 Aerial Map



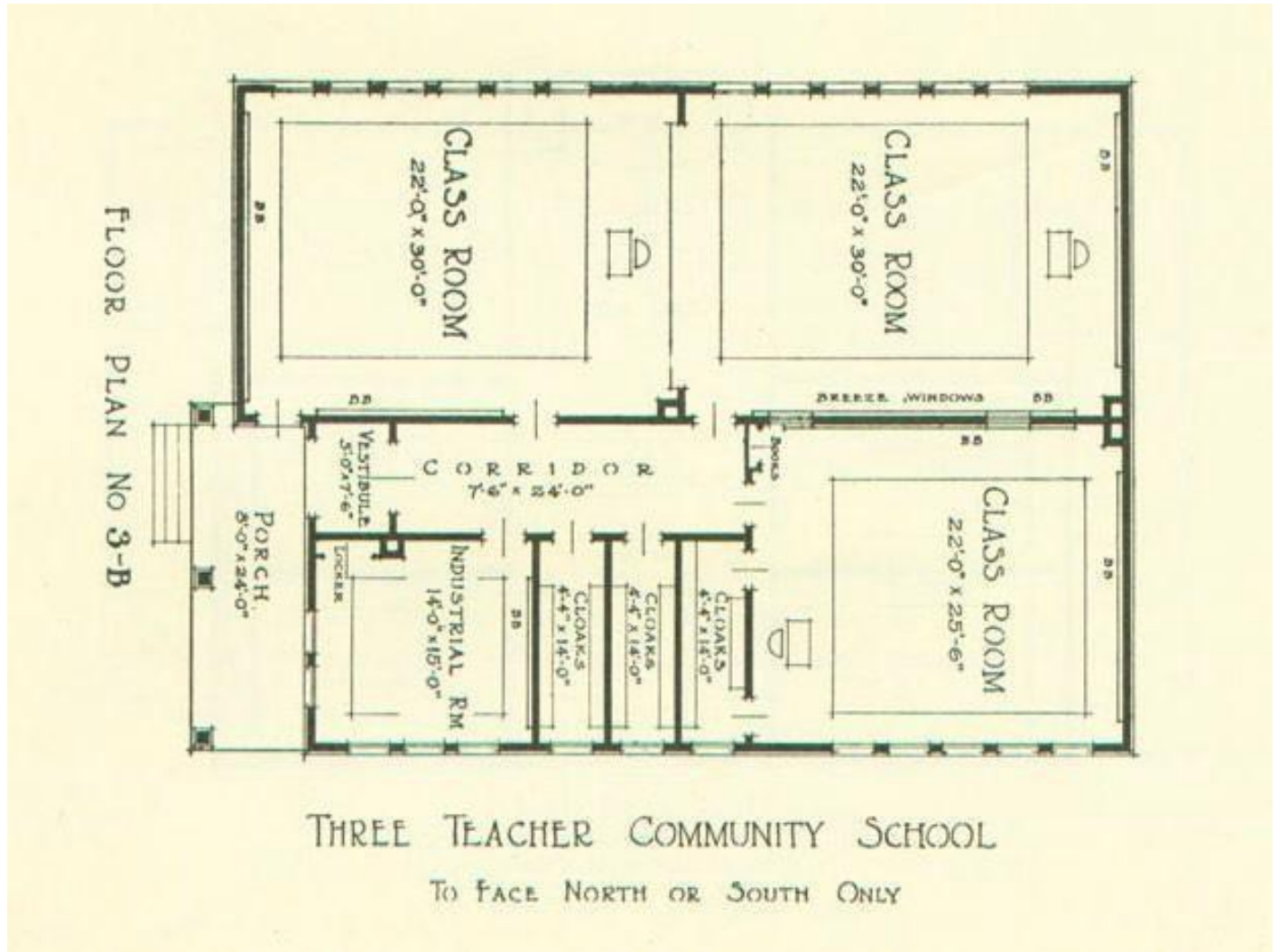
Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Community School Plans, The Julius Rosenwald Fund Nashville three-teacher school, Plan # 3-B



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Community School Plans, The Julius Rosenwald Fund Nashville three-teacher school, Plan # 3-B



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Concord School index card record and completion photos from the Rosenwald School archive at Fisk University

Concord School,	Texas
Rusk County	1626
Two acres of land	
Three-teacher type	
Built under the 1924-25 budget	
Application No.	31-D
Total cost	\$3,100 --Ins. \$3,000
Negroes	\$600.00
Whites	100.00
Public	1,500.00
Rosenwald	900.00

South elevation, c.1925.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

West elevation, c.1925.
(Rosenwald School archive at Fisk University).



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photographs

Photo Key (school exterior only)



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 1

South elevation, camera facing north. Main entrance of the original 1925 building.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 2

South elevation, camera facing north. Gable porch, main entrance doors and side doors.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 3

Southwest elevation, camera facing northeast. Chimney and difference in 1925 siding and 1930s addition siding.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 4

South elevation, camera facing north. 1930s addition.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 5
Southeast elevation, camera facing northwest.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 6
East elevation, camera facing west.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 7

Northeast elevation, camera facing southwest.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 8
North elevation, camera facing south.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 9
Northeast elevation, camera facing south.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 10
Northwest elevation, camera facing southeast.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 11
Northwest elevation, camera facing east.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 12
North elevation, camera facing south.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 13
Northwest elevation, camera facing southeast.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 14

West elevation, camera facing east.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 15
Southwest elevation, camera facing northeast.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 16

West elevation, camera facing east. Original desk in the auditorium, 1930s edition.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 17

South elevation, camera facing north. Original cabinetry in the 1925 building.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 18

North elevation, camera facing south. Original cabinetry in the 1925 building.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 19

South elevation, camera facing north. Example of the paint difference of where a chalkboard was hung.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 20

West elevation, camera facing east. Example of original windows and condition.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 21

South elevation, camera facing north. Example of original windows and condition.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 22

North elevation, camera facing south. Concord High School Alumni Association Community Center.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 23

South elevation, camera facing north. Blue and white Concord High School Alumni Association Community Center sign and white vinyl fencing.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 24

West elevation, camera facing east. Concord High School Alumni Association monument.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 25

Northeast elevation, camera facing southwest. Example of water damage to the ceiling, walls, and flooring.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 26

Northwest elevation, camera facing southeast. Example of water damage to the ceiling, walls, and flooring, and temporary structural boards holding the wall in place.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 27

North elevation, camera facing south. Example of water damage and deterioration to ceiling, walls, and flooring, located in the hallway of the 1925 original building.



Concord School, Mount Enterprise vicinity, Rusk County, Texas

Photo 28

South elevation, camera facing north. 1930s west wing addition to the left; main entrance of the original 1925 building to the right.



- end -