

**City of Madison Landmarks Commission  
LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (1)**

**I. Name of Building or Site**

(1) Common

Hiestand School

(2) Historic (if applicable)

District #1 Town of Burke and  
Blooming Grove

**II. Location**

(1) Street Address 4400 block  
of Milwaukee Street, Madison

(2) Ward (available @ City Clerk)  
Third Ward, City of Madison

**III. Classification**

(1) Type of Property (building, monument, park, etc.)

Building and long time school yard area

(2) Zoning District

Still zoned as Agricultural

(3) Present Use

Closed

**IV. Current Owner of Property (available at City Assessor's office)**

(1) Name(s)

Town of Blooming Grove

(2) Street Address

3325 Thurber Avenue

(3) Telephone Number

249-2194

**V. Legal Description (available at City Assessor's office)**

(1) Parcel Number

0710-041-0096-4

(2) Legal Description Sec. 4, T7N,  
R10E, Part of  
Sec. 3 W. along S. line of S  $\frac{1}{4}$  115.5  
ft. then W. 214 feet, then E 115.5 ft  
then S 214 ft to P.O. B. except part  
use for street

**VI. Condition of Property**

(1) Physical Condition (excellent, good, fair, deteriorated, ruins)

Fair

(2) Altered or Unaltered?

Unaltered

(3) Moved or Original Site?

Original location

(4) Wall Construction

Concrete and cement block

(5) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the present and original physical construction and appearance (limit 500 words).

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (2)

VI.(5) Describe Present and Original Physical Construction and Appearance:

Present physical construction and general appearance is essentially the same as when originally built in 1915. Steps to an emergency door exit were added on the last side of the structure some 25 years ago for safety reasons.

Windows on both sides have been boarded up to prevent damage and vandalism. No connections were made to city water and sewer mains. The school's deep well, septic tank and dry well are still intact as far as I know.

The bell and belfry are still in order. The central heat, coal or oil burning furnace, is probably not useable. The building has a full basement with cement floor. Main floor of the school room is in generally good condition; so are the joists and rafters, studding and walls. The school has been closed for about twenty years. and the fact that the school has been closed for about 20 years.

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (3)

**VII. Significance**

(1) Original Owner School District #1, Town of Burke & Blooming Grove

(2) Original Use Elementary School

(3) Architect or Builder

(4) Architectural Style

(5) Date of Construction  
1915

(6) Indigenous Materials Used

(7) On a separate sheet of paper, describe the significance of the nominated property and its conformance to the designation criteria of the Landmarks Commission Ordinance (33.01), limit of 500 words.

**VIII. List of Bibliographical References Used**

1. George Sprechur
2. Charles Lansing
3. Elizabeth Hiestand McKenna (Mrs. Donald McKenna)
4. Christ Bultman
5. I have reviewed the situation with the above who are still living. I have known and visited with teachers, school board members, and many well-known citizens before and since the turn of this century.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

**IX. Form Prepared By: Milo K. Swanton, Retired**

(1) Name and Title Former school board member and an 80 year resident of the community.

(2) Organization Represented (if any)

(3) Address  
4610 Milwaukee Street 53714

(4) Telephone Number  
244-2164

(5) Date Nomination Form Was Prepared

September 4, 1975

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LANDMARKS AND LANDMARK SITES NOMINATION FORM (4)

**VII. (7) Significance of Nominated Property and Conformance to Designation Criteria:**

The long known and highly regarded Hiestand School District reflects the historical development and significant influence of education from pioneer days to recent times. Also it has been an **indelible** part of the area's cultural pattern.

Leading in this development were pioneer settlers from New England and Ohio as well as many from Europe. Typical of these newcomers were Jacob Hiestand and wife, Mary, who came from Ohio in 1852. They developed a farm directly across the road from the district school. With seed of cigar type tobacco from Ohio, Mr. Hiestand in company with Ralph Pomeroy, later of Edgerton, grew Wisconsin's first tobacco and carried on in his barn, the making of cigars.

The Hiestands raised a fine pioneer family of six children all of whom became leaders in the educational and cultural unfolding of the community.

The neighborhood's pattern of school influence was reported to have begun, soon after Wisconsin's statehood, in a homestead cabin about 60 rods east of the present school building. Apparently in accordance with constitutional recognition of need for a common school system and with authority to tax assessed property, School District No. 1 was created. The district was largely within the north-western part of the newly organized township of Blooming Grove plus some farms on the southern fringe of Burke.

In about 1855 the original frame school house was built within the present school yard. A wood shed was attached in back. A high board fence north of the woodshed divided the play ground and outhouses, -for girls to the west and boys to the east. To the front was the so-called entry, a place for dinner buckets, caps, coats, and overshoes, -also specifically for girls to the west and boys to the east. Inside was the typical one-room school, heated to some extent by a round oak wood stove. There was no basement. Hence, cold winter floors produced an "epidemic" of chilblains, and it was not unusual for the one and only dipper to freeze tight in the water pail.

In spite of such adversities it was not difficult to hire good non-degree teachers in those early days for wages as low as \$25.00 a month. In fact many winter term "school masters" moved on to become leaders in various professions.

Also from among the school boys of this district came such men as: W.D. Hiestand, registrar of the U.W. for 27 years; Ed Brown, an outstanding civil engineer; Father Morgan Dempsey, vicar general of the **Archdiocese** of Detroit; Hiram Gill, twice mayor of Seattle; George Sprecher, a long time administrator of Wisconsin's Conservation Department and Al Steinhauer, president of Anchor Savings and Loan. These and many more civic leaders, farmers, teachers and professionals attest to the quality of educational, cultural and training that emanated from this center of constructive influence in rural Wisconsin.

In keeping with the need for improved educational and social facilities, citizens of the district voted to replace the 60 year old school building with a modern structure. The present building was built in 1915 with central heat, running water, from a well on the property, and sanitation facilities. The new modern building

became a pattern for rural community changes that were then beginning.

In addition to enabling a far better offering in rural elementary education, this 1915 building also made way for the development of a social center that served for decades to provide adult education programs, high quality entertainment and good cultural influence. These constructive offerings at the Hiestand School extended well beyond the school district limits to people in Madison and communities in Burke, Cottage Grove, and throughout Blooming Grove.

When urbanization moved across the one-time Hiestand neighborhood, sharp change came to the community structure. Added to this was the closing of schools brought about by legislation calling for school area reorganization. Now with the one-time community pattern gone and, with it, the old time system of educational and cultural influences, it seems worth while to preserve this important structure and to designate the school yard as a site of historic significance.