

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

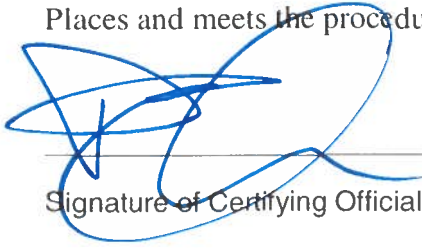
Name of Property: Castle Rock Elementary School
County and State: Douglas, CO
NR Reference Number: NRIS.84000827

State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this additional documentation move removal
 name change (additional documentation) other

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.



Patrick A. Eidman

5/31/23

Signature of Certifying Official/Title:

Date of Action

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
- additional documentation accepted
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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Castle Rock Elementary School (5DA.342, NRIS.84000827) 3rd and Cantril Street, Castle Rock:

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph:

Listed originally in 1984, the Castle Rock Elementary School building, (5DA.342, NRIS.84000827) was listed under Criterion C for its architectural significance. The resource's rhyolite construction of local material and architectural style contributed to its prominence within the town. The Douglas County News Press reported that the school, also known as the Cantril School, was the "most architecturally significant structure in Castle Rock since the burning of the old courthouse."¹ This is accredited to the unique, local stone construction and the carefully selected style aimed to present stability and prominence within the county. However, the school's original nomination does not promote the educational significance of the building within Castle Rock and Douglas County at large. The Castle Rock Elementary School is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Education. As the primary schoolhouse within the county and the first to offer high school courses, the school's role of educating students within the county served as a testament to investment in education and the economic benefit of such local education resources. The period of significance spanned from the school's construction in 1897 to 1907 when the opening of the Douglas County high school significantly reduced the school's population and provided a new home to the high-level courses. Access to education within the county provided new opportunities to students outside the town as well as prosperity to Castle Rock through boarding houses and educated labor. The subject of this amendment regards the local support of the school as a foundation of valuable education within the county.

Narrative Statement of Significance:

SIGNIFICANCE UNDER CRITERION A:

Education (Period of Significance 1897-1907)

The Castle Rock Elementary School building is significant in the area of Education for serving as a school and for offering the first high school courses in Douglas County. Beginning with its construction in 1897, the Cantril School served the students and residents of the developing town providing new opportunities for growth and prosperity to rural ranchers and local merchant families alike. With its construction, the communal effort and investment in a long-standing resource presented the town with a symbol of their commitment to education. Over the coming century, the Cantril School served students as a school building itself and as an administrative hub for the school district. From 1897 to 1907, the Cantril School facilitated great strides on education available to local citizens and witnessed a significant growth of student populations and higher-level education. Though the use of the Cantril building as a school shifted greatly following 1907, the lasting impacts of its role remained. Both through the economic prospects of students with advanced education as well as the prosperity drawn to Castle Rock through supporting said students, the school brought new success to the town. By investing

¹ "Starlighting Day Program: Take a Walk to Pioneer Days-Historical Tour," *Douglas County News Press Suppl.*, November 23, 1991.

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in the construction of a sturdy school building, the town of Castle Rock started a legacy of education. Over the next decade, student population growth and the need for more space illustrated the success of the endeavor. Though ultimately these new buildings led to the retirement of the Cantril building as a school in 1983, they also have served as evidence of the Cantril School's role in fostering and originating a history of education in Castle Rock.

Developmental History/Additional Historic Context Information:

Prior to the construction of the Cantril School, a wooden schoolhouse served the town. Built in 1875, the wooden schoolhouse sat on the same site as the Cantril School. In 1888, a northern wing had been added as well. Prior to the wooden schoolhouse, students of the town attended school within local homes. In November of 1896, the original wooden schoolhouse burned down, likely from a dysfunctional flue. Around nine in the morning, townspeople spotted smoke from the school. Shortly thereafter the entire school was up in flames. Though the volunteer hose company ventured to save the structure, they quickly found their hose did not reach the building so efforts to save it were abandoned. After about an hour the walls fell in. The schoolhouse had been insured for \$2500, however even with full compensation this reimbursement could not pay for a new school to be built.²

In late November of 1896, a special meeting was called for patrons of School District 11 to decide steps and requirements for the construction of a new building. This decision was not taken lightly as many saw the matter as both one of education as well as an economic asset to the town. They determined the needs of the school as well as the budget, while also establishing the next meeting, December 12th, where construction plans would be reviewed, and one chosen for the new schoolhouse.³

December 10th, just prior to the next meeting, the local newspaper published an article to address what kind of school building should be constructed. They advocated for a substantial building of local stone, large enough to provide for all students and support an influx from around the county. The Castle Rock Journal proposed that a possibly more expensive but more stable schoolhouse both represented the city well and served as a better public investment in terms of longevity. The article expressed the importance of representing the town positively to draw in considerable benefits from increased student populations and educated inhabitants.⁴

Propositions have been advanced and considered quite favorably to build an addition to the current structure costing in the neighborhood of \$1500 or \$2000. This it seems to us it not the exact method of facilitating this question. Patched work upon an old structure like this is money thrown away. If there is any one thing that Castle Rock needs and needs badly, it is a finely constructed school house; one built of the splendid building stone at our very door, costing in the neighborhood of \$5000. If Castle Rock ever amounts to anything as a town, it must eventually come to this in the course of four or five years... There is nothing that would beautify our town so much and show it off to better advantage that would indicate a live and intelligent class of people than a splendid structure of this nature. Not only this but the citizens of the county acknowledge Castle Rock to be possessed of the best school in the county. They now send their children here for instruction. If this district would erect a good building it would not only be the

² "School House Burned," *The Castle Rock Journal*, November 20, 1896.

³ "School Matters," *The Castle Rock Journal*, November 27, 1896.

⁴ "What Shall We Build?," *The Castle Rock Journal*, December 11, 1896.

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pride of our town but the county as well. It would be a high school in which most of the advanced branches could be taught. Citizens of the county would then see this and readily take advantage of the splendid facilities we could then offer them.⁵

Seemingly, the Castle Rock Journal's stance reflected popular opinion as in December of 1896, the school board meeting determined that the construction of a new school would be funded through an \$8000 bond. A budget larger than previously suggested, this demonstrated support for a greater allocation of funds to a larger and more robust building. Mr. Robert Roeschlaub, Colorado's first licensed architect, offered a plan for the schoolhouse that could be completed for nine thousand dollars.⁶ However, this plan exceeded the determined budget for the school. Mr. William Quayle, a Denver architect, submitted amended plans for the schoolhouse as to reduce the cost, improve stability and guaranteed it could be completed within the necessitated budget.⁷

Shortly thereafter, the local newspaper issued a notice to contractors to illicit bids for the construction of the two story, six room, stone schoolhouse.⁸ The contract for the construction was awarded to the bid of Thompson and Atkinson, a Denver contractor, for \$7775, \$225 under the budgeted \$8000 for the school. Work began shortly afterwards with the stipulation that it be completed and turned over to the school district by August 1.⁹

The Cantril School was constructed from rhyolite mined from a local quarry. The sturdy rhyolite structure served to present a sense of longevity and prominence within the town. The bell tower housed the bell, cast in 1881, that previously sat within the wooden schoolhouse. The Cantril schoolhouse was styled to resemble the nearby stone courthouse and defined both structure as buildings of institution and value through robust stone construction, Roman arches, and ornate scrolled cornices.¹⁰ These details demonstrated the investment of the community in both longevity and representation of their town as one that valued education as an asset. The Douglas County Courthouse, at nearby 301 Wilcox, was built in 1889, shortly preceding the school building. In 1978, a fire burned down this courthouse, leaving the Cantril School as the sole remaining public institution building of this era in downtown Castle Rock. The choices the town made in the investment in and construction of these two buildings established a commitment to public resources and enduring stability of the new town, a legacy now carried by the Cantril building alone.

On September 6th, the Cantril School opened for its first term. The high school courses were taught by F.M. Shaw who oversaw twenty-six students from Castle Rock as well as 4 students from the surrounding county. The grammar department was led by C.A. Hollingshead and consisted of twenty-seven local students and three from around the county. The intermediate teacher, Miss Rose Beardsley taught twenty-eight Castle Rock students. Finally, the primary department was taught by Miss Emma Wieman—who also taught German to a small club—and consisted of twenty-eight local students.¹¹ Drawing in an enrollment of 116 in its first term, this school was the first organized to offer high school courses in Douglas County which drew students from surrounding areas to Castle Rock.

Previously, a student looking to take such courses would have had to go to either Denver or

⁵ "What Shall We Build?"

⁶ "School Meeting," *The Castle Rock Journal*, December 25, 1896.

⁷ "Notice to Contractors," *The Castle Rock Journal*, February 19, 1897.

⁸ "Notice to Contractors."

⁹ "Contractor," *The Castle Rock Journal*, March 19, 1897.

¹⁰ "Starlighting Day Program: Take a Walk to Pioneer Days-Historical Tour."

¹¹ Bertha Triplett, "School Notes," *The Castle Rock Journal*, September 10, 1897.

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Colorado Springs both of which had much higher boarding costs, making the Castle Rock School more budget friendly for local ranching and merchant families. This proximity also allowed students to return home for breaks and weekends to help with family and ranch tasks, making an education more accessible to rural students.¹² “Why should parents send their children out of the county to school any longer, paying several hundred dollars per year for board when the same advantages may be obtained at home for less money?”¹³

The local newspaper published the “New School Building” advertisement on September 10th, 1897, sharing the completion and opening of the school with those in the surrounding area. This advertisement also included courses offered in the high school study as well as staff names.¹⁴

After a successful first few years, the school opened as a county high school in September of 1900. Teachers were employed and a curriculum prepared, designed to prepare for and admit to university courses. Curriculum included German, chemistry, physics, math, drawing, algebra, history, English, and bookkeeping, providing a well-rounded and comprehensive education to the county.¹⁵ By providing this advanced education within the county, the Cantril School kept young people in Castle Rock near their families. This kept students away from temptation, brought revenue to local Castle Rock merchants, and created an educated labor force in the county.

The Castle Rock Journal expressed considerable pride in the staff hired to the school. Professor D.R. Hatch, the high school principal, moved to Castle Rock with a considerable resume, as he had been principal at Golden High School, superintendent of the State Industrial School, and published a book “Hatch’s Civil Government of Colorado.” Ida Walker, a graduate of the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, was hired to the school as a teacher.¹⁶ Boasting of the competent and esteemed staff, the local paper shared the pride of the town in the talent they had acquired to educate their students.

The following decade, the school would serve the town of Castle Rock with both primary education and the high school courses, often referred to as the Douglas County High School. However, as the population increased and more students pursued education, the school soon outgrew itself. In 1906 the newspaper reported, “One of the evidences of progress made in our community was demonstrated by the attitude of the people at the mass meeting held last week to discuss the question of erecting a high school building... The Douglas County High School has grown to such an extent that there are left now only two alternatives: one is to build a schoolhouse, the other, abandon the High School.”¹⁷ The meeting discussed which course of action should be pursued. Suggestions included a new primary school house, a new high school building, or continuing with the Cantril School and limiting student populations. However, the latter opinion was unpopular as, “Statistics show that the high school graduate’s chances for success in life are twenty-three times as great as those of the citizen with only a common school education.”¹⁸

With considerable consensus about the investment in education benefitting the town and county, in 1907 the Douglas County High School at 620 Wilcox opened. Two years later, this school would burn down and be replaced with a rhyolite building in 1909. The stone school similarly mirrored the prominence and monumentality of the Cantril School a few blocks away. This separation of primary and

¹² “County High School,” June 22, 1900.

¹³ “The Castle Rock School,” *The Castle Rock Journal*, August 22, 1888.

¹⁴ “The New School Building,” *The Castle Rock Journal*, September 10, 1897.

¹⁵ “County High School.”

¹⁶ “County High School.”

¹⁷ “High School Building,” *The Castle Rock Journal*, June 22, 1906.

¹⁸ “High School Building.”

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high school classes led to a smaller population at the Cantril School. As high school courses left the Cantril School for a new schoolhouse, the school's greatest era of redefining education within Castle Rock came to an end. The Cantril School then served primary and junior high students until 1961 when the Castle Rock Junior High opened. Between 1961 and 1983, the Cantril School hosted portions of the elementary student body based on population. At this point, the 1983 construction of the new Castle Rock Elementary school building enabled the consolidation of elementary grades in one building, leading to the retirement of the Cantril School as classrooms. The building remained integral to local education as a center of administrative office spaces for the school district.¹⁹

In 1984, at nearly ninety years old, the Cantril School retirement party hosted previous students and Castle Rock residents to celebrate.²⁰ The same year, the school was officially placed on the National Register of Historic Places for its architectural significance thanks to the work of resident Linda Bell.²¹ Currently in use by the Douglas County School District for office use, the buildings lifetime use has been devoted to educating the students of Castle Rock and Douglas County. While the school's most innovative years of trailblazing ended with the relocation of the high school courses in 1907, this building served students through its 1984 retirement and onwards as administration and district faculty spaces.

¹⁹ "Castle Rock Schools" (Douglas County Libraries Archives and Local History, August 2019).

²⁰ Georgene Lahm, "Grand Retirement Party for Cantril Building," *Douglas County News Press*, March 23, 1984.

²¹ Jill Penney, "It's Official! Cantril School on National Register," *Douglas County News Press*, November 3, 1984.

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Photo Log:

Photo 1 of 12: Photo 1 of 12: Image facing East of the original primary entrance under the belltower. This image features the local rhyolite stone exterior and the detailed stonework in the arch and its stone ornamentation, characteristic of the style and craftsmanship.

Photo 2 of 12: Image taken facing East of the bell tower over the original primary entrance. The image features the entrance from Photo 1 as well as including the stonework around windows and the arched openings to the bell chamber.

Photo 3 of 12: Image facing East of an original entrance, which is currently used as the primary entrance. Directly off the parking lot, this door features an ADA compliant ramp as constructed within the past 10 years.

Photo 4 of 12: Image taken facing North of the primary hallway off the original primary entrance. This serves as a lobby space off the classrooms to either side.

Photo 5 of 12: Image facing East of the auditorium space. The largest gathering space in the building, this room was added in 1931 off the northern elevation and stylistically matches the rest of the building.

Photo 6 of 12: Image facing Southwest on the second story of the building. Originally a classroom space, this space is representative of the typical use of the seven classrooms in the building.

Photo 7 of 12: Image facing West of the bell tower room. Currently in use as an office, this space features the rope to operate the bell in the chamber above this room.

Photo 8 of 12: Image facing Southwest from the intersection of Lewis and Fourth streets. The original building can be seen behind the 1962 addition on the Northeastern corner of the property.

Photo 9 of 12: Image facing South of the 1962 addition (left) and the northern elevation of the 1931 auditorium addition as well as the original building behind it. This parking lot connects to the accessible ramp to the entrance (Photo 3).

Photo 10 of 12: Image facing North from Third Street of the Southern elevation of the original building. This image features the bell tower as well as some of the 1962 northeastern addition (right).

Photo 11 of 12: Image facing Northwest from the intersection of Lewis and Third Streets. This image shows the original building and its connection to the 1962 concrete masonry unit addition above the back entrance to the school.

Photo 12 of 12: Image facing East of the primary elevation of the original building. When facing the primary facade, the additions to the building cannot be seen. The original entrance (Photo 1) under the bell tower (Photo 2) as well as the secondary entrance (Photo 3). Sitting atop a hill, this view is visible from the surrounding neighborhood as well as downtown Castle Rock. The geographic positioning of the school on "Schoolhouse Hill" as well as its large size and architectural style makes it an iconic representation of the city's past.