

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. In 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 for the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

Historic name St. Michael's Parochial School

Other names/site number St. Michael's School

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

2. Location

Street & number 504 5th Avenue North

City or town Grand Forks State ND County Grand Forks

Not for publication Vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

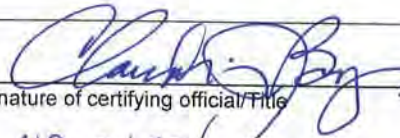
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant as the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

Application National Register Criteria x A B x C D

	DIRECTOR	6-2-16
Signature of certifying official/Title		Date
ND SHPO		
State or Federal agency/bureau of Tribal Government		

In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official	Date
Title	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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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

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	site
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structure
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	object
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/Elementary School
RELIGION/Church School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/Elementary School
RELIGION/Church School

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Romanesque/Colonial Revival
Modernist

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asphalt shingle/built-up tar & gravel
other _____

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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

St. Michael's Parochial School is a complex of three attached buildings. They include the original 1916 school (facing 5th Ave. N.), the 1949 Youth Center (at the corner of 6th Ave. N. and N. 5th St., facing 5th St.), and the 1953 school addition, which is located between and connects the original school and the Youth Center (facing N. 5th St.). The original school building is an example of a combination of Romanesque and Colonial Revival architecture; the 1949 and 1953 portions of the complex exemplify the unadorned post-World War II modernist architecture. The exterior cladding of all three buildings is brick, the foundations are concrete, and roofing materials include composition asphalt shingles (on the 1916 and 1949 buildings) and built-up tar and gravel (1953 building). The school is located at the edge of downtown adjacent to a residential neighborhood. The school complex shares the block with St. Michael's Catholic Church and Parish House.

Narrative Description

1916 School Exterior

This building consists of two stories on a raised concrete basement, plus an attic. The walls are clad with a reddish-brown brick veneer over a concrete and hollow clay tile structure. Most of brick is laid in a running bond pattern, although there are areas where brick was used in a decorative fashion. The roof is hipped and covered with composition asphalt shingles. The eaves overhang the roof and are enclosed. There are hipped dormers, clad with steel siding, on two sides and the rear. The dormer on the front façade is located behind the central bay parapet that extends upward beyond the dormer roof. A Colonial-style cupola is located at the center point of the roof. The openings include rounded arches with slatted vents and there is a cross located on the top of the cupola.

The main entrance is located in the Romanesque-influenced central bay, which projects forward from the wall plane of the building on the south elevation (see note below). The doorway is recessed in a rounded, brick arch entryway. The bases of the arched entryway are red sandstone, as are the spring line courses. Directly above the rounded arch opening is a sandstone lintel and brick railing. The door has been replaced with a modern aluminum and glass security door/window unit. A rounded arch fanlight is located over the door.

Above the entryway are two sets of three windows, slightly recessed into the central bay. Brick columns separate each window; the sills are red sandstone as are the lintels above the windows on the second level. The lintels above the third level windows consist of a brick soldier course. Embedded in the brick walls between the windows on the second and third levels are red sandstone crosses. The "Saint Michael's Parochial School" sign, engraved into red sandstone, is above windows on the third level.

At the top of the central bay is a large rounded arch window opening. This opening is also slightly recessed into the bay and is marked by a course of brick dentils below the window. This dentil course is capped with red sandstone. Above the window is a series of nine blind arches formed with brick. The top portion of the central bay extends outward on both sides and is marked by additional red sandstone. This bay extends upward beyond the attic dormer with a parapet wall capped by red sandstone. A marble statue of St. Michael stands atop the peak of the central bay.

Note: The orientation of the buildings is on a directional diagonal due to the orientation of this part of Grand Forks and its relation to the river. The true orientation of the front of the original school building faces southeast, but for the purposes of this nomination, to ease directional descriptions, the original building is considered to be facing south and all other directional descriptions are noted according to this adjustment.

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Flanking the central projecting bay are windows corresponding to the basement, first and second floors. They are set in a one-three-one pattern. The sills are red sandstone and a red sandstone belt course separates the basement level from the first floor level around the building. A cornerstone of red sandstone, engraved with "1916," is located on the front façade at the corner to the right of the central bay.

The exterior walls on the east and west ends of the building consist of large expanses of brick with external metal fire escapes centered on the walls. Pairs of windows are located at each landing of the fire escapes. There is a slight recess in the brick walls to each side of the fire escapes marked by decorative brickwork. The red sandstone belt course between the basement and first floor continues along each side. At the basement level, on the east side of the building three windows correspond with the hallway that connects the 1916 building with the 1953 addition.

The rear elevation of the building largely corresponds with the front elevation. There is a central bay, although in this case, recessed from the wall plane rather than projecting. The fenestration pattern on the first and second floors matches the front elevation. There is no window opening at the attic level. One of the basement windows has been bricked in; a second consists of a wooden slat vent opening. With the addition of the 1953 wing, the rear entry was modified and includes a hallway that connects the two buildings.

Most of the original window openings are intact. The original multi-pane windows are also intact, although the upper sashes have been covered over. There are interior storm windows, also multi-pane, that correspond with the wooden sashes.

Architecturally, the massing of the building, the fenestration patterns, and the cupola read as Colonial Revival style. The front projecting bay, however, is Romanesque in nature, perhaps reflecting the Romanesque style of St. Michael's Catholic Church, which sits on the same block west of the school.

1916 School Interior

The front entrance vestibule, located between the exterior door and the interior door, is situated on the level between the basement and first floor. All the original woodwork is intact and frames a double door flanked by sidelights. A three-fifteen-three part transom is located over the door and sidelights. Immediately in front of the door is the stairwell; a central stair leads to the first floor, while a split stair to the sides of the central stair leads to the basement. The original wooden railings are intact. A rear stairwell is located on the opposite side of the building. Both the front and rear stairwells are open.

The layouts on the first and second floor are identical. Each has four classrooms, a small restroom with a sink and toilet, one storage closet, and a central lobby. Narrow storage rooms with access to the fire escapes are situated between the classrooms on the east and west ends of the building. Also located at the front side of the building are small offices accessed by half-flights of stairs. Each of these office spaces is situated half way between the floor levels and corresponds with the windows in the front central bay. The interior spaces include the original woodwork, doors, and multi-pane windows.

The walls on the first and second floors are plastered. The original floors have been covered with carpeting. The original wood trim is intact. Each classroom has one wall of windows. The ceilings in the classrooms have been retrofitted with a drop acoustic tile; the ceilings in the lobby areas have an older acoustic tile applied directly to the ceiling surface.

The attic is accessed via an enclosed stairwell from the second floor. The layout and finishes appear to be mostly original. There is a large central room flanked by smaller storage rooms, from which the fire escapes

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can be accessed. The walls are plaster, the floors are wood. The ceilings, located beneath the slope of the roof, are clad with an acoustic tile. The original double-leaf wood doors to the central room are intact and include five-lights each and are topped by a twelve-light transom window. The main window corresponds to the rounded arch window in the front central bay. Portions of the window have been covered over and the bottom portion has been replaced with metal sliders.

The basement was completely remodeled following the Grand Forks flood in 1997, which inundated the space. It now includes two classrooms, new restrooms, a staff lounge, and storage closets. The walls are clad with sheetrock, as are the ceilings. The floors are carpeted. The original wood windows are intact, as is the surrounding wood trim. The original front and rear stairways have been retained.

1949 Youth Center Exterior

The Youth Center is a rectangular-shaped structure. It sits on a concrete foundation and the walls are clad with a light brown brick. The building's structure is steel. The gabled roof is clad with composition asphalt shingles. A smaller wing is attached to the rear of the building and is used as an apartment for clergy or custodial staff. A tall brick chimney stack is also located at the rear of the structure.

The front of the building, which faces east to N. 5th St., is distinguished by a single-story projecting entry and decorative elements on the front wall over the entrance. The entrance includes two doorways, each with a newer metal door flanked by a sidelight. Between the two doors is a decorative feature comprised of six small, square inset windows (covered over) set into a stone panel. The doors are also surrounded by stone. A projecting metal canopy extends from the front of the building over the entryway. Flanking the actual entryway are two small, one-story volumes. Each has a set of windows located between two stone belt courses; the windows facing the front of the building are newer metal sliders while the windows on the sides of these volumes have been covered. It appears that the window openings are original. The roof over the entire entryway and side volumes is flat.

Above the projecting entryway, located on the front wall of the gable end, are four angular stone columns set with decorative brickwork between them. The columns separate five small windows, also covered over, at the bottom of the columns, just above the entryway. To the right of this element, on the exterior wall plane, is a stone statue of St. Joseph standing on a small base and attached to the wall surface. To the left of the columns is lettering identifying "Saint Michael's Youth Center." To the right of the entryway, at the lower corner of the front elevation, is a granite cornerstone marked with "A.D. 1949" and includes two crosses.

The 6th Ave. N. side of the building includes a recessed entrance, located near the front of the building, topped by a glass block transom and surrounded by stone. The door is a newer metal security door. A second entrance is located near the rear of the building and is also surrounded by stone and topped with glass block. The original windows on this elevation have been bricked in with a darker red brick, but are evident between the brick columns separating them and the decorative brickwork that originally delineated them. A wide beltcourse along this wall is created with decorative brickwork.

The rear elevation of the building is largely a blank brick wall, marked only by openings for venting systems and a rear entrance with a new metal door. There is evidence of earlier window openings at the base of the wall, which have been bricked in. The beltcourse that runs along the long side of the building wraps around the corner to the rear.

The apartment wing extends south from the southwest corner of the building. It is a small rectangular space with a flat roof and brick walls that match the Youth Center. The entrance is located on the south side,

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centered between windows. Although the window openings are original, some of the windows appear to have been replaced.

A tall, brick chimney extends between the apartment wing and Youth Center. Approximately halfway up, there is a stone beltcourse around the chimney.

The Youth Center is attached to the 1953 school addition. On the front elevation, the connection is recessed between the two buildings and marked by a metal canopy over the doorway. The newer metal door is surrounded with stone. Above the doorway, over the canopy, is a panel of glass block. A newer hallway between the two buildings is evident at the rear, tucked into the corner of the buildings.

Architecturally, the building exemplifies the cleaner lines of the post-World War II era modernist style that was in favor at that time.

1949 Youth Center Interior

Most of the interior space is a large, open auditorium/gymnasium. The entrance vestibule is located at the front end of the building. A small room has been added to one corner near the entrance; it has a metal roll-up door.

The walls are clad with a combination of enameled ceramic tile and vinyl sheeting. The floor is covered with a modern commercial vinyl tile with markings for basketball courts. The ceiling is covered with acoustic tile and the recessed lighting is newer. Newer bleachers have been installed along the north wall. Access to the 1953 school addition is located on the south wall.

There is a small stage located at the west end of the building, opposite the front entryway on the east. A small room is located adjacent to the stage, which provides access to the stage and storage space. The proscenium is formed from plaster in a way to frame the stage, which is equipped with heavy draperies.

1953 School Addition Exterior

This portion of the school complex is a rectangular-shaped single story on a raised basement. The walls are clad with the same brick as the Youth Center. The foundation is concrete. The flat roof is covered with built-up tar and gravel. The structure of this building is steel and concrete block.

The front entrance, located on N. 5th St., is recessed into the southeast corner of the building and is covered with a projecting metal awning supported by metal posts. A brick planter box extends along the entryway on one side. A double metal security door is surrounded by a stone framing. Glass block is located above the doorway and awning.

The windows along the street elevation consist of three groups of three on both the main and basement levels. Each horizontal band of windows is set apart by a thin stone decorative surround. The original openings are intact, but the windows have been partially infilled and replaced with metal sliders.

The windows on the rear elevation, main floor, consist of two groups of four windows (three of equal size plus one smaller). The windows at the basement level consist of two individual windows plus a longer group of windows. As with the windows on the front elevation, the original openings are intact, but have been partially infilled and metal sliders inserted.

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The addition is attached to the 1916 school through a hallway at the northeast corner of the older building, part of which is enclosed with a modern atrium-style window. This portion of the hallway extends to the basement of the older building. A hallway on the upper level attaches to the older building at the rear stairwell.

The addition, which is located between the 1916 school and the 1949 Youth Center, attaches to the Youth Center as described in that section.

Stylistically, the 1953 addition also exemplifies the modernist architecture favored for school buildings following World War II.

1953 School Addition Interior

The layout of the main level is intact. The building was designed with five classrooms on this floor; one of these has been converted to school offices. The classrooms are arranged along a double-loaded corridor. The walls of the classrooms are plaster, the ceilings are acoustic tile with modern florescent lighting, the floors are carpeted. The hallway retains the original terrazzo flooring, the enameled ceramic tile and concrete block walls; the ceilings are acoustic tile with recessed florescent lighting. Much of the original trimwork appears to be intact. The original doors to the classrooms, with porthole windows, remain in place. There are two restrooms, one for boys and one for girls, on this floor as well.

Stairwells are located at each end of the addition. The north one leads to the Youth Center, as well as the basement level. A new elevator has been installed in this stairwell near the front of the building. The stairwell at the south end of the addition retains its original configuration and finishes.

The basement was completely remodeled after the 1997 flood. The layout includes a dining room, a kitchen and pantry, classrooms, and restrooms. All the finishes are new and modern.

Landscape Features

The school complex landscaping includes lawns, trees and shrubbery. Street trees are located on the front of the 1953 addition and the side of the 1949 Youth Center. A wider lawn with a very large evergreen tree is located in front of the 1916 building.

The combination of the three buildings forms an elongated "C" shape; a small courtyard is formed behind the buildings and is used for parking and a playground. Playground equipment in a fenced yard is situated on the west side of the 1916 building.

Alterations

All three buildings of the complex retain a very high degree of historic integrity. There are two main areas where alterations have occurred.

The first is in the case of windows. In the 1916 school, the original openings are intact, as are most of the original windows, but the upper portions have been covered over, resulting in a look of partial infill. In the 1953 addition, the original openings are also intact, but the original windows have been removed and replaced with contemporary metal sliders. Most of the windows in the 1949 Youth Center have either been covered over or the openings filled in with brick. These types of window alterations are common in school buildings where an

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effort in the 1970s and 1980s toward energy conservation resulted in covering over, replacing, or completely filling in window openings.

The second way in which this complex was altered was as a direct result of flood remediation. Both the basement of the 1916 school and the 1953 addition were flooded, necessitating the removal of ruined materials and the installation of new finishes.

In addition to these alterations, minor alterations have occurred over the years. These include general maintenance such as upgrading electrical systems, roofing repairs and new roofing materials, lighting installations, sewer improvements, and minor remodeling office spaces.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education
Religion
Architecture

Period of Significance

1916-1966

Significant Dates

1916, 1949, 1953

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wm. J. Edwards, architect
Dinnie Brothers, contractors/ builders
Ursa L. Freed, architect

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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.)

The St. Michael's Parochial School complex is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A for its contributions to parochial education in Grand Forks, North Dakota. It is also being nominated under Criterion C as a locally significant example of a school complex that exemplifies early 20th Century school architecture and the transition to mid-20th Century modernist architecture. The original school was designed by a local Grand Forks architect, William J. Edwards; the 1949 Youth Center and the 1953 school addition were designed by South Dakota architect, Ursa L. Freed. The 1916 school building was constructed by local contractor/builders, the Dinnie Brothers company, who constructed many Grand Forks buildings.

The period of significance is from 1916, the date the original school was constructed, to 1966, which reflects the 50-year mark associated with National Register listings. St. Michael's has provided education at this school continually since 1916. Dates of significance include 1916, 1949, and 1953, the dates of construction of each building within the complex.

The school complex retains a very high degree of historic integrity.

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

A Brief History of Parochial Education in America

Catholic schools in America were founded in Philadelphia. The Catholic community there established St. Mary's School in 1783 and the Holy Trinity School in 1788. Soon after, Catholic schools were established in New York City (St. Peter's parish school in 1800 and St. Patrick's parish school in 1815) and Boston (a parish school under the direction of the Ursuline Sisters of Montreal in 1820). The founding of the American Catholic parochial education movement, however, is credited to Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton, the first native-born American saint. With her vision to create an order of teaching sisters, Seton's Sisters of Charity operated at least fifteen schools in eleven cities between 1809 and 1830.¹

Parochial education in America experienced upheaval between about 1820 and 1870. A large influx of European immigrants changed the social, political, and religious face of the country. Many of the immigrants were Catholics and the Protestant response was swift and often violent. One of the outcomes was the movement for common schools (which were distinctly Protestant) and a call for public funding for these schools. Advocates of the common school sought to promote universal literacy and to create a common national identity by mixing children from all backgrounds and social classes. The common school concept met strong objection from the Catholic Church leaders, who were concerned with issues that were textual, catechetical, and cultural.²

The tension continued for decades, although the violence associated with the conflict subsided. Public school advocates resisted efforts to share tax monies or change the curriculum to accommodate Catholic concerns. Catholic leaders continued to seek a share of public funds to support their own schools. During this period,

¹ Timothy Walch, *Parish School: American Catholic Parochial Education from Colonial Times to the Present* (Arlington, VA: The National Catholic Education Association, 2003), 17-21.

² Walch, 23-30.

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however, the Catholic Church experienced upheaval and social change. Parochial education developed in different ways with three models: the publicly supported parochial school; the Americanized Catholic school; and the ethnic Catholic school – a trend that continued until the turn of the century.³

In 1903, the U.S. Office of Education acknowledged the importance of Catholic parochial schools upon education in America. Catholic education had “come of age” but at a cost of uncoordinated and disjointed efforts. The growth of the past three decades emphasized the need for organization, planning and supervision at the diocesan level. In the search for order, many dioceses established school boards and hired superintendents. By 1910, more than 55 percent of the dioceses had followed this trend in their effort to provide greater uniformity in Catholic schooling from one parish to another.⁴

The Catholic Educational Association was founded in St. Louis in 1904 (renamed the National Catholic Educational Association in 1928). This organization brought order to Catholic education on a national level. By 1930, Catholic education was “more efficient, more structured, and more ordered than it had been thirty years earlier.”⁵

The Catholic Church in Grand Forks

Several accounts describe the beginnings of the Catholic Church in Grand Forks. Most agree that the first masses were conducted in the early 1870s by Father Simonet, of Pembina, seventy miles north of Grand Forks at the Canadian border. Grand Forks was a growing community and a resident priest, Father Peter C. Hubert, was assigned to the town in 1878. Although Father Hubert left Grand Forks within a few months due to health issues, he is credited with organizing the first permanent parish in the community, which was St. Michael's Parish. Father Louis L'Hiver took charge of St. Michael's in September 1878. That year, Capt. Alexander Griggs, a riverboat captain and local community promoter, donated land for the construction of the first Catholic church. Located at Sixth St. and DeMers Ave., the church was a simple, rectangular wood-framed building with a free-standing bell tower.⁶

Within five years, the new church proved too small for the growing parish membership. Under the leadership of Father Bernard Ahne, the parish purchased a block of land between 5th and 6th Streets and 5th and 6th Avenues, the site which continues to be the home of St. Michael's today. A new church was built and dedicated in 1883. The parish incorporated on July 23, 1884 as “St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church of Grand Forks, Dakota.”

Father Ahne served as pastor of St. Michael's until 1885 and was followed, for a brief period, by Father Edward Kenney. In April 1885, Father Charles Metzger became the pastor of the parish. His term, too, was brief, lasting only until 1887. The next priest assigned to St. Michael's was Father Edward Joseph Conaty, who served the parish until 1911.

On June 16, 1887, a major windstorm (some say a tornado) destroyed the new church building, causing an estimated \$100,000 damage. A new church, built under the guidance of Father Conaty, was a large brick

³ Walch, 67-77.

⁴ Walch, 100-102.

⁵ Walch, 116-117.

⁶ Saint Michael's Church, Diamond Jubilee of St. Michael's Church Grand Forks, North Dakota 1872-1947 (Grand Forks, ND: self-published, 1947), 16.

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building with "high ceilings, beautiful columns and elaborate altar." It was dedicated in late 1887.⁷ The building was designed by John W. Ross, who also designed the new rectory in 1892.⁸

Grand Forks was growing rapidly during this time period. The "First Dakota Boom" had brought tens of thousands of people to North Dakota. According to U.S. Census figures, Grand Forks had a population of 1,705 in 1880 and just under 5,000 by 1890. Those numbers grew to 8,652 by 1900 and 12,478 by 1910. With the growing population came increased numbers of Catholic parishioners at St. Michael's Church.

Unfortunately the 1887 church, too, was destroyed, this time by fire in 1907. It fell to Father Conaty to lead the parish to construct another new church. The new church, which continues to serve the parish, was designed by the Hancock Brothers of Fargo and at Father Conaty's urging was designed to be large enough to serve the needs of a growing population. To accommodate the new structure, the rectory was moved to the northwest corner of the block; the new church was built on the southwest corner of the block. The large, elaborate Romanesque style building was constructed by E.C. Richmond of Grand Forks. It was dedicated in 1909 and considered one of the finest church buildings in North Dakota.⁹ The decision to build a school soon followed.

Grand Fork's second parish, St. Mary's, was organized in 1915 and a new church built in 1918. A third parish was formed in 1960, when Holy Family was established to serve the growing neighborhoods in south Grand Forks. Across the river, in East Grand Forks, MN, the Sacred Heart parish was established in 1893.

Parochial Education in Grand Forks

Catholic education in Grand Forks began relatively early when, in 1884, the Ursuline Sisters opened St. Bernard's Academy. The academy was a combined classroom and dormitory facility. Enrollment reached 150 by the end of the year. The first school was a small log building, which was quickly replaced with a larger, brick building in 1885. Financial conditions forced the closure of the school in 1914.¹⁰

Following the closing of St. Bernard's Academy, St. Michael's Church opened a school (details are found in the following section of this nomination). St. Michael's Parochial School opened in 1916.

The sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet purchased the old St. Bernard's Academy and, in 1917, started another school, known as St. James Academy (later St. James High School). They operated in the old building until 1956, when a new modern structure was completed. Enrollment at that time was nearly 400. Financial difficulties, however, eventually resulted in the closure of St. James. Its final commencement was held on May 25, 1969.¹¹

Continued community growth and the demand for parochial education resulted in new schools associated with St. Mary's Church in 1929 and Holy Family in 1961.

⁷ Diamond Jubilee, 19.

⁸ Ellen O'Connor and Rev. William C. Sherman. "St. Michael's Church," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (Washington, DC: National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1988), 8-1.

⁹ O'Connor and Sherman, 8-2.

¹⁰ St. Michael's Church, Centennial Souvenir (Grand Forks, ND: self-published, 1972), no page.

¹¹ St. James High School Records, OGL#56 (Grand Forks, ND: Elwyn B. Robinson Department of Special Collections, Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota), accessed August 2015.

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In East Grand Forks, Sacred Heart parish built and opened its first school in 1912. It was replaced with a new building in 1952.

The History of St. Michael's Parochial School

By early 1915, following the closure of St. Bernard's Academy, a movement began at St. Michael's to build a new school to serve grades one through eight. In July of that year, three architects had been asked to present plan designs and costs to the newly formed Parochial School Committee. Following that meeting, the committee decided to award a contract to William J. Edwards of Grand Forks. His plan was for an eight-room building at an approximate cost of \$33,000.¹²

In January 1916, the committee put out a call for bids for construction. The contract was awarded to Dinnie Brothers of Grand Forks. The cost was \$24,497. Sub-contracts for plumbing and heating went to Spriggs Brothers for \$7,869, electrical to H.J. Monley for \$472, and hardware to Barnes and Nuss for \$300. An additional \$2000 was approved for the purchase and moving of the Williams and Dunlop houses, which occupied lots on the block on which the school was to be built.¹³

The original plan, due to lack of funding, was to construct the building, but complete the interiors for only the basement and first floor, with plans to complete the second floor and attic at a later time when funding would allow. In January 1916, M.F. Murphy, a member of the parish, offered to loan \$30,000 to St. Michael's parish in order to complete the full construction that year. Murphy was to be repaid in an annual amount of \$2,700 for twenty years. His offer was accepted and plans were made to finalize the entire school project.

Plans called for the school to be a "modified Romanesque" style of architecture. It contained twelve classrooms, an office, a library, a nurses' office, and an assembly room on the attic level. Construction proceeded quickly and the school opened on September 11, 1916 with an enrollment of 242 pupils. Its first principal was Mother Grata Powers. The school was officially dedicated on September 24, 1916. The school served both St. Michael's and St. Mary's parishes until the new St. Mary's school was opened in 1929.

Even after the opening of St. Mary's, enrollment at St. Michael's school continued to grow. In 1920, there were about 300 students; by 1930 the numbers reached 446; and by 1945, there were 550 students enrolled. The desire to expand school facilities had been discussed for years, but economic conditions and the war delayed movement toward that end. In 1947 plans were initiated to build a gymnasium/auditorium, named the "St. Michael's Youth Center," behind the rectory at the corner of North 5th St. and 6th Ave. North.

In 1949, construction began on the 400-seat center, which included a stage, and which served as a gymnasium and auditorium and a space for youth and parish meetings. An architect from South Dakota, Ursa Louis Freed, was hired to design the building; W. Siefert was his assistant. The total cost was \$325,000. The Youth Center was dedicated in October 1949.¹⁴

Plans were also made to build an addition to the 1916 school. In 1952, U.L. Freed was again hired to design this addition. The addition was to have six classrooms, a large cafeteria/dining hall, and a modern, well-

¹² Minutes of the St. Michael's Parochial School Committee meeting, July 1915 (located in St. Michael's School safe), accessed August 2015.

¹³ Minutes of the St. Michael's Parochial School Committee meeting, January 1916 and March 1916 (located in St. Michael's School safe), accessed August 2015.

¹⁴ Monsignor William McNamee. Catholic Schools in Grand Forks, 1883-1987 (no publisher, no date), 31-32.

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equipped kitchen. The total cost was \$154,000. The design and materials matched the new Youth Center. The school addition was dedicated on August 30, 1953.¹⁵

The twenty years following World War II saw tremendous growth in Grand Forks and the community saw the addition of several schools during the 1950s and 1960s. The addition to St. Michael's was well-timed as the desire for parochial education grew as well. By 1955 the enrollment at St. Michael's was 733 students. That number stayed steady for at least five years; the enrollment in 1960 was 725. In 1965, enrollment had dropped to 647.¹⁶

Changes to the public school system in the late 1960s resulted in a change for the parochial schools, especially the grade schools. Prior to that time, St. Michael's educated grades 1-8; following the public school reorganization, the parochial schools cut back to six grades to fit the model used in public schools and to make it easier to transfer between parochial and public schools. Kindergarten was added in 1972.

Even as enrollments declined over the years, St. Michael's continues to educate youth of the parish. Enrollment numbers vary some from year to year, but current enrollment remains at about 120 pupils.

The Architecture of St. Michael's Parochial School

St. Michael's Parochial School is a locally significant example of the styles and forms of early 20th century and mid-20th century school architecture, illustrating the transition from the early traditional style to the mid-century modernist style. Two architects of note are associated with the school designs – William J. Edwards and Ursa L. Freed. In addition, Dinnie Brothers of Grand Forks were the builders of the 1916 portion of the school.

School architecture in the early 20th Century tended to follow traditional conventions – single buildings with multiple stories; masonry construction; stone detailing; sloped roofs; main centralized entry, often elevated up a number of steps; large windows, often double-hung in wood frames; interior plaster walls; high ceilings; wood flooring, trim, railings; traditional detailing and ornamentation; open staircases, and incandescent lighting. Many of these schools included bell towers. Stylistically, these schools were traditional in their reliance on late 19th Century architectural styles. Examples include styles such as Classical Revival, American Renaissance, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Romanesque, Second Empire, and Colonial Revival, and several variations and/or combinations of these styles.

The 1916 building of St. Michael's school was no exception. It clearly exemplifies the multiple-story, masonry building detailed with stone, hipped roof, large double-hung windows, and a central entry in a Romanesque-inspired projecting bay. The cupola that tops the building is Colonial Revival stylistically. The interior retains the plaster walls, higher ceilings (intact above the dropped acoustic tile ceilings) and extensive wood trim especially on the open staircases. The original window openings and double-hung windows are intact, although portions have been covered over for energy efficiency. Only in the basement, which was gutted and remodeled following the 1997 flood, are the finishes completely new and modern. All other alterations appear to be surface alterations that could be easily restored to their original materials.

A shift in architectural design began following World War I when traditional styles gave way to buildings with cleaner lines and limited ornamentation. Early examples of this shift include the Prairie style, the Streamlined Moderne style and the Art Deco style. A number of schools built during the 1930's Great Depression utilized

¹⁵ McNamee, 32.

¹⁶ McNamee, 32.

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these styles. As educators pressed for school space that was flexible and adaptable, new design innovations included outdoor spaces and greater access to sunlight and fresh air. By the late 1930s and early 1940s, the modern school design was ready to take form. World War II, however, brought a halt to new school construction. It was not until the years following World War II, when growing populations created a demand for new schools, that the truly modernist school form took shape.¹⁷

Functionalism played a large part in the development of modernist schools. It provided a practical and expedient means of realistically addressing not only the challenges of meeting the unprecedented demand for new schools, but functionalism also addressed the changed theories and practices of providing education. The new modernist school form also had several practical advantages over the traditional schoolhouse. It used new building technologies and materials, making it less costly and easier to erect the buildings. The style was more adaptable to the new suburban neighborhood in scale and approachability. And in general, it was seen as more flexible in accommodating changing educational needs and growth.¹⁸ It was also during this time period that gymnasiums and auditoriums were placed in separate buildings or large additions rather than using space such as attics and basements in earlier buildings; a shift in design provided greater functionality for specific activities.

Characteristics of this new modernist school style included low profile, one and two-story buildings; the use of glass and metal (in addition to masonry); multiple entrances (rather than one central entry) usually at grade and often sheltered by metal canopies; bands of continuous windows, usually in steel or aluminum frames; flat roofs; glazed tile interior walls; low ceilings; aluminum railings; simple and limited detailing; and fluorescent lighting. The modularity of design allowed for the easy addition of more classroom and activity space, especially for schools sited on large parcels of land. When more than one building occupied a site, they were often connected via covered walkways and courtyards.

The 1949 and 1953 buildings of St. Michael's school complex exemplify the modernist design aesthetic. The 1949 Youth Center was designed as a separate gymnasium/auditorium space that incorporated new and modern materials in a stripped down architectural style. Ornamentation was limited to simple, flat stone elements at the front and side entrances and the stylized simple design at the front gable end. The interior space included space for both sports-related activities and a stage with wings for performance activities.

The 1953 school addition completely embraces the modernist style. It is one story on a raised basement, presenting a low-profile that stretches between the original school building and the Youth Center. It made use of new materials – steel and concrete structural elements (faced with brick), interior walls clad in part with glazed tile, bands of windows set in metal framing, multiple entrances recessed beneath metal canopies, the use of aluminum railings in stairwells, lower ceilings, and very limited ornamentation and detailing. Only in the concern of connectivity is there a departure from the modernist approach. The 1953 addition actually connects to both the 1916 school building and the 1949 Youth Center, creating a complex connected by interior hallways rather than exterior covered walkways. This adaptation makes sense in Grand Forks, where winter weather can provide challenges for movement between the buildings.

¹⁷ R. Thomas Hille. Modern Schools: A Century of Design for Education (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2011), no page.

¹⁸ Hille, no page.

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The Architects and Builders of St. Michael's Parochial School

William James Edwards was born in 1862 and raised in Rankin, Ontario, where he attended school. At the age of thirteen, he remodeled an old log house, converting it into a modern and comfortable home. He became interested in architecture and the builders' trades. For a time he worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway Company as the superintendent of their water services, building water tanks and various structures for the company. By the 1890s, he concentrated his energies on his architectural profession and in 1892, he became a resident of North Dakota. In 1902 he moved to Grand Forks. He married Theodora Georgiana Hunt in 1887 and together they had eight children. His son, William P. Edwards, was an architectural draftsman and worked with his father in Grand Forks. Edwards was active in community groups as a member of the Commercial Club, the First Methodist Church, and the Acacia Lodge, No. 4.¹⁹

Although Edwards is not considered one of Grand Forks better known architects, his importance and contributions to local educational buildings should be noted. He was responsible for designing a number of schools in Grand Forks, including the original Winship School (1903), the Washington School (1907), and Central High School (1917), in addition to St. Michael's Catholic School. Edwards designed buildings throughout most of the state including schools, hospitals, churches, bank buildings and other public structures.

Dinnie Brothers was a construction firm in Grand Forks, one of the largest contractors in the state of North Dakota. John and James Dinnie moved to Grand Forks in 1881 from Canada. They began work as common bricklayers, but soon were responsible for many of the buildings in Grand Forks. Among those credited to them are the Masonic Temple, the New Hampshire Block, the YMCA, the Carnegie Library, the Clifford Building, the Hotel Dacotah, the Corliss Block, St. Bernard's Academy, and buildings on the University of North Dakota campus. They owned a brick yard near the university and manufactured between three and four million bricks each year. Both John and James were prominent citizens, served as mayor of the city, and were active in a variety of local organizations.²⁰

Ursa Louis Freed was an architect from South Dakota. He was born June 21, 1890 in Michigan and moved to South Dakota during his youth. Records shows that he was working as a carpenter in Huron, SD in 1910, the year he married Mary O'Connor. For a number of years, Freed bounced around – in 1912, he worked for Jeffers & Co., Architects in Mason City, IA; in 1913, he was employed as a draftsman for George Issenhurth, an architect in Huron. He was drafted in 1917 and served during World War I. Following the war, he worked as an architect in Minneapolis; his firm was known as Macomber and Freed. By 1922, he is listed as a resident and practicing as an architect (solo practice) in Watertown, SD. In 1929, he moved to Oklahoma to work as an estimator for Cowen Construction Company. By 1932, he was back in Huron. The city directories list him as residing and practicing architecture in Aberdeen, SD in 1936; he apparently was a resident of Aberdeen until his death in 1957. At some point, during his time in Aberdeen, he also had an office in Fargo.²¹ Ursa and his wife had three children, Robert E. Freed, Connor L. Freed, and Jane Freed Street.²²

Little information has been found about Freed's education; it appears that he did not have formal training in architecture, rather he learned the profession through his work as a carpenter and draftsman. He was a prolific architect with many buildings to his credit in South Dakota, North Dakota, and Minnesota. Most of his designs

¹⁹ "William J. Edwards" in *North Dakota History and People*, Vol. III (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1917), 698-701.

²⁰ *Minnesota Bricks* website (www.mnbricks.com), accessed November 2015.

²¹ "Architect Files" at South Dakota State Historic Preservation Office (Pierre, SD), accessed November 2015.

²² "Aberdeen Architect Dies," *Rapid City Journal*, 5 July 1957, 3.

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were for schools and churches, although other commissions include the City Hall in Faith, SD, and as co-designer (with Perkins and McWayne) of the Codington County Courthouse in Watertown, SD. His commissions in North Dakota included churches in Courtenay, Kenmare, Rugby, Hettinger, Towner, and Minot, and schools in Towner and Grand Forks. In addition to designing St. Michael's Catholic School Youth Center and the 1953 addition, he also designed the 1951 auditorium and the 1952 school for Sacred Heart parish in East Grand Forks, Minnesota (both demolished following the 1997 flood).

Comparative Analysis

St. Michael's Parochial School complex is the only example in Grand Forks of a school complex that illustrates the transition from traditional school architecture to the mid-century modernist architecture popular after World War II. The 1916 building is an excellent example of an early 20th Century school with its traditional form and massing, materials, and the use of Romanesque and Colonial styles. The 1949 Youth Center and the 1953 addition are excellent examples of the mid-century modernist styles with their streamlined profiles, use of new materials, minimal ornamentation, and new approaches to educational classroom and activity spaces.

St. Michael's is the only surviving active elementary school in Grand Forks from the early 20th Century. There are other historic school buildings in Grand Forks, including Washington (1907), Central High School (1917), St. Mary's School (1929), and the original South Junior High School (1932, 1956). Only Central High School, an example of a public school designed in the traditional Classical Revival style, is still used as a school. Other early Grand Forks schools have either been demolished or converted to alternative use.

There are also a number of schools in Grand Forks that represent the mid-century modernist style. Grand Forks, like most communities, experienced tremendous growth following World War II, and the demand for new schools resulted in the construction of nine new elementary schools, two junior high schools, and a new high school. All but two were public schools; St. Michael's and Holy Family (1961) were parochial schools. It is fair to say that all of these schools have undergone additions and alterations through the years, and some of them are excellent examples of modernist trends, but none incorporate the old with the new as does St. Michael's.

St. Michael's Parochial School clearly illustrates the ability to adopt new architectural trends and successfully incorporate them into an existing school complex. Each of the buildings exemplifies the architecture trends of the period in which it was constructed and each retains a very high degree of historic integrity.

Conclusion

St. Michael's Parochial School is significant to the City of Grand Forks for its historic and continued contributions to parochial education in the community (Criterion A). Although not the first parochial school in the city, it is the oldest surviving parochial school, having educated thousands of children since it first opened in 1916. Now called St. Michael's Elementary School, it is the oldest surviving elementary school in Grand Forks.

It is also significant as an excellent example of the use of both the traditional and the mid-century styles of architecture and it clearly illustrates the transition from the early trends in educational buildings to those following World War II (Criterion C).

It meets the Criteria Consideration for a religious property because it is historically important in the area of education and architecture.

St. Michael's Parochial School
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9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Preliminary determination of individual listing
- Previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- Designated a National Historic Landmark
- Recorded by Historic American Building Survey # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- Recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map): NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Zone <u>14</u> | Easting <u>646470.75</u> | Northing <u>5310058.28</u> |
| 2. Zone _____ | Easting _____ | Northing _____ |
| 3. Zone _____ | Easting _____ | Northing _____ |
| 4. Zone _____ | Easting _____ | Northing _____ |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property)

The boundary includes the half-block on which the school complex sits.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected)

This boundary encompasses the original 1916 school, the 1949 Youth Center and the 1953 school addition as they were historically and are today.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Michelle L. Dennis
Organization M.L. Dennis Consulting
Street & number 513 Meade St.
City or town Rapid City State SD Zip code 57701
E-mail michdenn@msn.com Telephone 605-342-8286
Date April 2016

Property Owner

Name St. Michael's Catholic Church
Street & number 520 North 6th St
City or town Grand Forks State ND Zip code 58203
Telephone 701-772-2624

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 district 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.

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 dpi (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: St. Michael's Parochial School

City or Vicinity: Grand Forks

County: Grand Forks State: ND

Photographer: Michelle L. Dennis

Date Photographed: August 2015

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

- 1 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0001] Front of 1916 school (camera facing northwest)
- 2 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0002] Centered front bay with main entrance of 1916 school (camera facing north)
- 3 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0003] East end of 1916 school (camera facing west)
- 4 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0004] North and west sides of 1916 school (camera facing southeast)
- 5 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0005] Front stairs of 1916 school (camera facing south)
- 6 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0006] Classroom (currently used as library) in 1916 school (camera facing northwest)
- 7 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0007] Central lobby on third floor of 1916 school (camera facing north)
- 8 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0008] Front of 1953 addition from the south (camera facing northwest)
- 9 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0009] Main entry of 1953 addition (camera facing northwest)

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- 10 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0010] Rear of 1953 addition (camera facing east)
- 11 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0011] Cafeteria in basement of 1953 addition (camera facing north)
- 12 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0012] Classroom in 1953 addition (camera facing east)
- 13 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0013] Hallway on main level of 1953 addition (camera facing north)
- 14 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0014] South stairwell of 1953 addition (camera facing east)
- 15 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0015] Front of 1949 Youth Center (camera facing northwest)
- 16 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0016] Front of 1949 Youth Center with 1953 school addition in the background (camera facing southeast)
- 17 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0017] Detail over the main entrance to the Youth Center (camera facing west)
- 18 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0018] North side of Youth Center (camera facing west)
- 19 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0019] West side and attached apartment of Youth Center (camera facing northeast)
- 20 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0020] Interior of Youth Center from the stage (camera facing east)
- 21 of 21. [ND_Grand Forks_St. Michael's Parochial School_0021] Stage in the Youth Center (camera facing west)

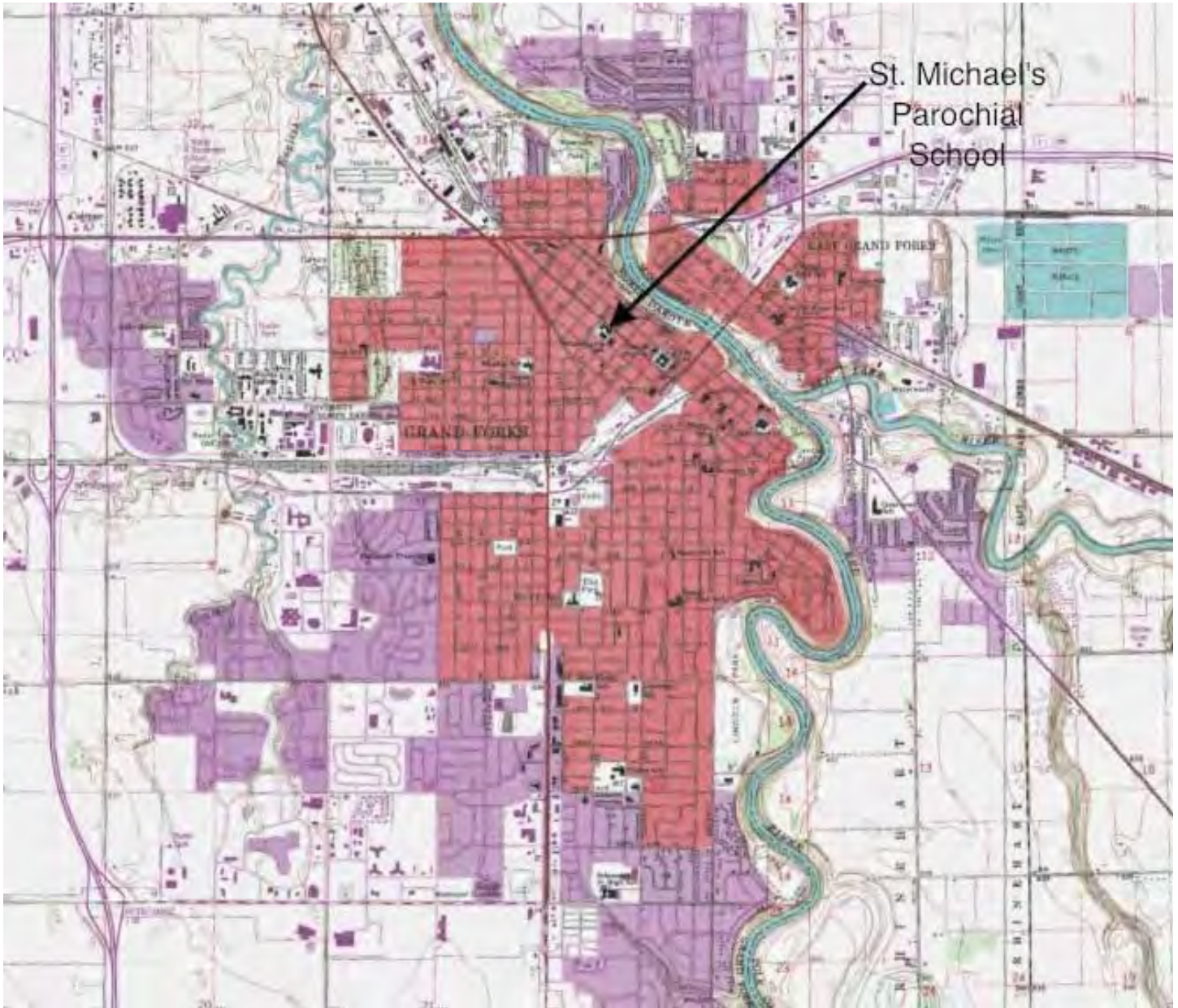
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain 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.

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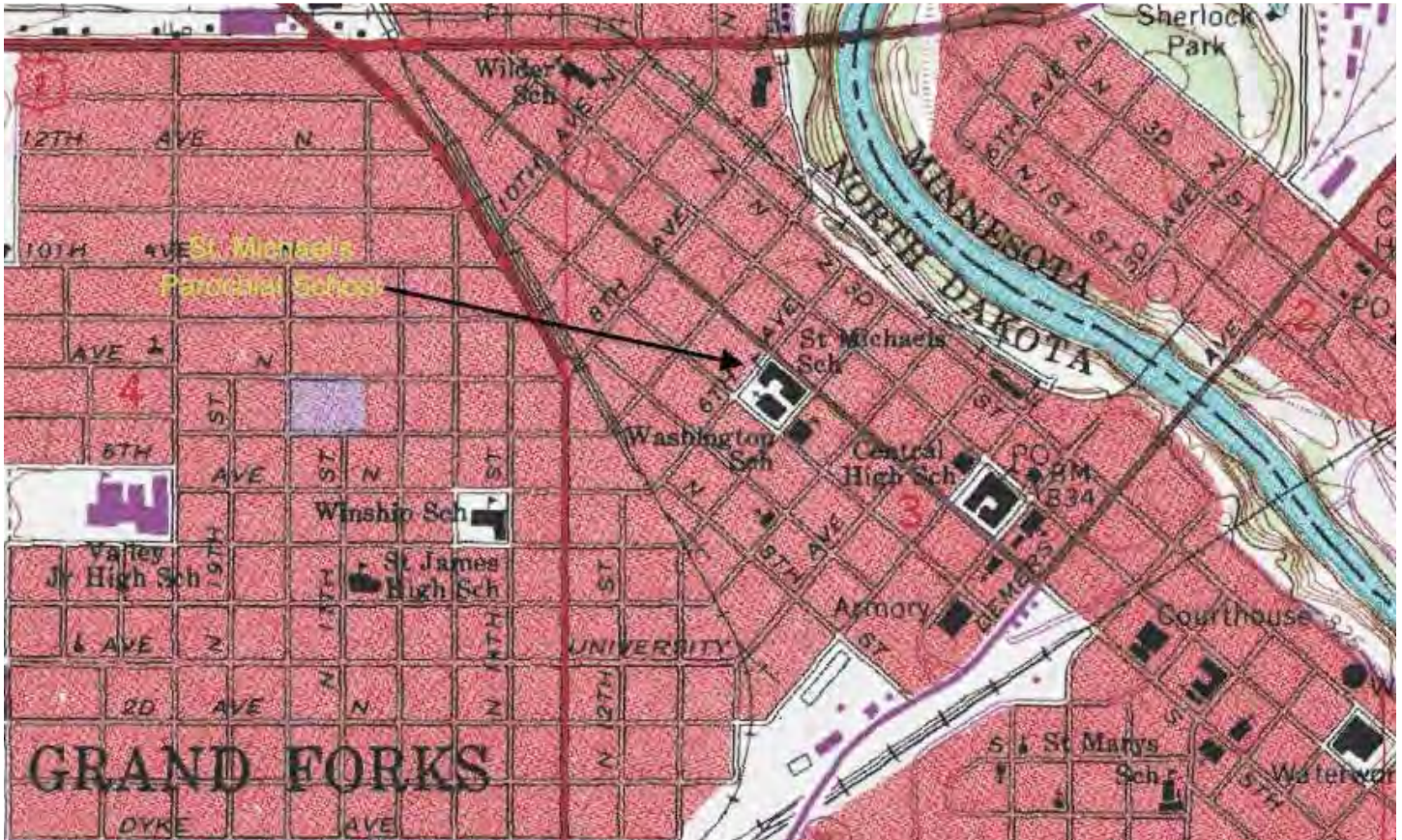
USGS Map of Grand Forks
Arrow indicates location of St. Michael's Parochial School



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USGS of St. Michael's Parochial School Neighborhood
Arrow points to the school complex



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Aerial view of St. Michael's Parochial School
Three school buildings plus church are called out with arrows





SAN MICHAEL'S
FACULTY SCHOOL



2

1916





SAINT MICHAEL'S
PAROCHIAL SCHOOL





BEATTITUDES

White statue or figure



COURTYARD PARKING
Handicapped & Senior
Handicapped and
Senior Needs Only

St. Michael's
REQUIRES
ADULT
SUPERVISION
when children
are present









EXIT



Report
Broken Item



St. Michael's
CATHOLIC SCHOOL









Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu



FIELD TRIP





**SAINT
MICHAEL'S
YOUTH CENTER**

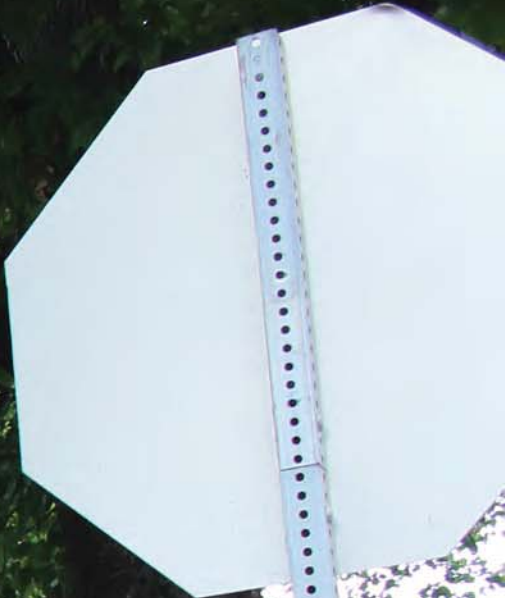


NO
PARKING













ST MICHAEL'S
REF

S^TM



EXIT

