

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Peñasco High School

Other names/site number: St. Anthony Parochial 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: 15086 75 State Highway

City or town: Peñasco State: NM County: Taos Zip Code 87553

Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

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.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education: school _____

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not in Use _____

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: adobe school

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Adobe, Metal, Glass

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

Peñasco High School is a six-classroom adobe school located in the mostly Hispanic village of Peñasco in Taos County in northern New Mexico. The school is located on sharp bend in the High Road to Toas. Built in 1931, the school was constructed in three periods (dates unknown) with a house on the north end, four classrooms in the middle, and a small restroom addition on the south end. The classrooms are aligned in a linear configuration without an interior corridor, which was common in traditional Hispanic domestic architecture. The front façade is supported on the interior by a recently built framework of wood posts and beams, which carry the weight of the roof. The sloping site was not graded so each classroom steps down to the next classroom to the north. Classrooms 3 through 6 were partitioned by folding wood doors, which could be opened for larger gatherings. A gable roof was built over the original flat or shed roof. Some of the adobes and buttresses evidence significant deterioration. Peñasco High School was built under the auspices of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, which leased the building to Taos County. The school was a public school from 1932 until 1948, even though Dominican Sisters from Michigan taught at the school from the beginning. In 1948, the community converted the school to St. Anthony Parochial School, which operated until 1987. None of the smaller secondary buildings on the property remain.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Narrative Description

Peñasco High School is in the village of Peñasco in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in south-central Taos County. The village includes the acequia (irrigation ditch) that provides water for long-lot agriculture and livestock. Residents number roughly 500 and there are 5,000 residents of the larger Peñasco River Valley. Peñasco is the hub of the nearby hamlets of Rodarte, Llano de San Juan, Llano Largo, Santa Barbara, Vadito, Placitas, Rio Lucio, Chamisal, Ojito, Las Trampas, Ojo Sarco, and Picuris Pueblo. Buildings in Peñasco are mostly one- and two-story houses clustered in compounds along New Mexico Route 75 and smaller connecting roads. The community includes stores, also located on Route 75.

In the early twentieth century, Peñasco Valley was ninety-five percent ethnically Hispanic and mostly Catholic. Children attended the Peñasco school with a small number of Native American children from the Picuris Reservation. In the 1930s, children attending school did not speak English. The teachers, Dominican Sisters from Michigan, spoke no Spanish, so students were required to learn and converse in English in school.

The school, among the largest buildings in Peñasco, measures approximately 178 feet by 30 feet. It was built with six classrooms in a single file. The long, rectangular building is constructed of adobe blocks (sun-dried mud blocks) that were plastered with mud, which was replaced with cementitious plaster. Most of this plaster was removed, exposing the adobe blocks. Large buttresses of stone cobbles, adobe, and concrete were built on three sides of the school to support the adobe walls. A framework of posts and beams on the interior west wall of classrooms 3 through 6 supports the adobe front façade by carrying weight of the roof.

The school was built in three periods of construction in 1931. The northern portion was originally a house, the construction date of which is unknown.¹ This is likely because the house was already located in this location and that the school was built to include it. This house or northern section includes classrooms 1 and 2. The central and largest portion of the building includes the remaining classrooms 3 through 6. The southernmost portion is small and consists of mostly restrooms and was most likely constructed after the initial building campaign. The designer and builders are unknown, but members of the Peñasco community likely contributed to the construction of the school with available materials, such as adobes and vigas (log beams).

The front of the building has three doors. The northwest door opens into the classroom 2; the center double-door serves as the main entrance into the building, and the door at the southwest corner opens into one of the small restrooms. The front of the building also has large sash windows for natural lighting and ventilation. The main façade features a ribbon window that illuminates classroom 3. Rooms 4 through 6 are each served by a large tripartite window. Two-part sash windows provide light to Classrooms 1 and 2.

¹ The school is mostly oriented north to south, so the main façade is described on the east side and the rear façade is on west side of the building. Classroom 1 is the northernmost classroom and classroom 6 is the southernmost classroom.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

The rear of the building includes only small clerestory windows beneath a full-length portal. The portal provide shade and protects the buttresses from sun and rain. The north elevation features exposed adobes and a deteriorated buttress.

The interior of the school is mostly open with Rooms 3 through 6 once partitioned by wood accordion doors that could be closed to provide quiet spaces and minimize distractions or they could be opened for larger community events. (The northwest accordion door in Classroom 3 is the only door that survives.) These four rooms were constructed without an internal corridor, which is a common building practice in Hispano domestic architecture. The building site was not leveled before construction so each classroom beginning with Room 6 steps down to the next classroom following the sloping terrain. Classrooms 1 and 2 at the northwest end of the school are set apart by their permanent walls. The ceiling is supported by large vigas and overlaid with wood planks. The floors are laid in tongue-and-groove wood strips.

The school underwent physical changes during and after its period as a school. Following the construction of the flat or shed roof, a gable roof was added by the 1970s. Buttresses across the main façade were removed after the 1970s and propane heaters were installed in each classroom, replacing cast-iron wood coal stoves.

After 1948, the front of the school included a lunchroom that was called the “Hot Lunch.” The Hot Lunch served students at St. Anthony’s Parochial School and students from the local elementary school. The large front lot also provided space for parking and a drive-through for morning and afternoon student pickups. Neither the lunchroom nor the drives remain.

The rear of the school included several small buildings that are no longer extant. These included an auxiliary classroom building, a shop building, and an apartment for the school custodian. Former students recall the back of the school as the playground, where they played on swing sets, played marbles and tag, and played football on a field that included goal posts. This area also included two, small wood privies for boys and girls.

Historic Integrity

Peñasco High School retains integrity, though some aspects have been diminished. The school is located in its historic location in a bend in the High Road to Taos. Its setting has been reduced by the loss of the parking lot and lunchroom in front and the several small buildings and ball fields in back. The school retains its historic design as a long, one-story school with interconnected classrooms covered with a gable roof. Its integrity of design and workmanship are apparent in the local materials, including adobe blocks covered with mud plaster, the large vigas that support the roof, wood floors, and windows. The school retains its association with education in rural Taos County and it retains its feeling of an early twentieth-century rural school.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

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.)

- 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

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education

Architecture

Period of Significance

1932-1948

Significant Dates

1932—Peñasco High School is completed and begins its first semester

1948—Peñasco High School becomes St. Anthony Parochial School

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

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 Peñasco High School is significant at the local level of significance under National Register Criterion A in the area of education because the school, which provided students with secular education from 1932 to 1948, was the only high school in southern Taos County. The Peñasco High School is significant at the local level of significance under National Register Criterion C in the area of architecture because the school is an excellent example of Hispanic linear construction with materials, workmanship, and design that reflect local Hispanic building traditions.

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

Peñasco High School is significant in the area of education because it provided students in the village and from nearby communities a superior education than any previous school in the region. The school, which was built by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe under the direction of Father Peter Cooper, opened in 1932. The Taos County School Board petitioned for Dominican Sisters in Michigan to teach in Peñasco. The Sisters, who were accredited teachers, taught in their religious habits and provided religious instruction for devout students before school. The school increased its enrollment, and soon became the only high school in the region.

The Sisters taught science, home economics, history, geography, biology, art, and typing. The school was where many students, who spoke Spanish at home, first encountered English, which they were required to learn. More than subject matter, the school served welfare functions, such as providing clean drinking water, which was not widely available in the village. The teachers were also tolerant of students who skipped school in the fall to help their parents reap the fall harvest. In 1948, the school was converted to the St. Anthony Parochial School and a new public high school was built across town.

Peñasco High School is significant in the area of architecture because it represents building forms, materials, and building practices that were common in northern New Mexico since the seventeenth century. Traditional Hispanic dwellings during the mid-nineteenth century developed in a linear file of small, interconnected rooms, with later additions constructed to form L- or U-shaped plans organized around a *placita* (courtyard). The Sofia Fernandez House in Llano Quemado, New Mexico, is a large, L-shaped house with fifteen rooms that form three noncommunicating apartments. The small rooms are strung out in a single file. The walls are built of adobe blocks and the ceilings are supported by vigas.² Most houses in the region were not as large as the Sofia Fernandez House, but these one- and two-room houses were built with the same materials and workmanship. After the arrival of the railroads in the 1880s, lumber

² Bainbridge Bunting, et al. *Taos Adobes* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1964), 49-54.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

became available and gable roofs were framed atop the flat roofs. Only the largest houses included ornament. In small communities, churches were the principal public buildings. They were larger than most buildings and were built with the same materials and workmanship as houses.

Peñasco High School, although the largest building in the village, was built by the members of the community with traditional Hispanic building forms, materials, and workmanship. The six-classroom building does not include interior corridors but aligns the rooms in a single file. Folding doors were used to create smaller spaces or opened to permit larger gatherings. The walls were constructed of adobe blocks and covered with mud plaster. The interior walls were also plastered. Like the walls in large houses and churches, they are supported by buttresses. The flat roof is supported by vigas and is formed with latillas (sticks), grasses, and then topped with earth. Later, a gable roof was added. It was framed with lumber and covered with sheet metal. Peñasco High School is significant because it represents traditional architecture forms and practices in northern New Mexico.

Peñasco High School meets Criterion Consideration A: Religious Properties

A religious property is eligible if it derives its primary significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance. The school meets Criterion Consideration A because it is significant because of its association with secular education in the village of Peñasco and because it is significant in the area of architecture because it is a good representative example of building design and building practices in northern New Mexico.

The school, from its first semester in 1932 until the end of the period of significance in 1948, had strong religious affiliation with the Catholic Church because the school was built and owned by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and classes were taught by Dominican Sisters from Michigan, who taught a secular curriculum during the day, but offered religious instruction to participating students before school.

Developmental history/additional historic context information

In 1931, the cornerstone was laid for the new high school in the rural mountain village of Peñasco.³ The school was owned by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, and from its first semester, the Spanish-speaking students were taught in English by Dominican Sisters from Michigan. The Sisters, whose salaries were paid by the State of New Mexico and who wore religious habits, taught subjects including science, home economics, history, geography, biology, art, typing, and music. The Sisters also taught religion classes (Catechism) to Catholic students for an hour

³ Kathleen Holscher, *Religious Lessons, Catholic Sisters and the Captured Schools Crisis in New Mexico* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 53.

Peñasco High School

Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico

County and State

before the beginning of the school day.⁴ The school also served as an auditorium where the community came together for ceremonies, plays, and other performances.

Sister Maura describes the early effort “to eliminate politics from education in Peñasco. A request (by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe) was made to the State Board of Education to establish an independent status for District 30, which included Peñasco. In April 1933, the petition was granted, and the district was released from the control of the Taos County school board. She added, “though the new set up under the Sisters at Peñasco [remained] part of the Taos County school system, the building and equipment were private property, [owned by the Archdiocese].”⁵

In the wake of the *Zeller v. Huff* decision limiting the role of religion in public schools, the Archdiocese of Santa Fe removed the Peñasco High School from the Taos public school system and converted it to a full-fledged Catholic school. In 1948, the school was renamed St. Anthony's Parochial School and a new secular Peñasco High School was built as part of the newly created Peñasco Independent School District.

The Dixon Case

Zellers v. Huff, also known as the Dixon Case, was a lawsuit started in 1948 in New Mexico contesting the use of nuns, religious brothers, and priests as teachers in publicly supported schools under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution. The case involved thirty schools in eleven New Mexico counties. The Dixon Case, the first applied First Amendment freedoms to state as well as federal law, was the first state case to implement separation of church and state in public schools.⁶

In Dixon, New Mexico, in 1941, the school board closed the public school and recognized the parochial St. Joseph's Catholic School as the only public school in the jurisdiction. Protestant parents formed the Dixon Free Schools Committee under the leadership of Lydia Zellers. The group filed suit in April 1948. The dispute broadened to include twenty-nine other schools across the state. The first named defendant was Raymond Huff, chairman of the New Mexico Board of Education. The defendants included Governor Thomas J. Mabry, and 145 priests, nuns and brothers of Catholic religious orders.

The trial was held from September 27 to October 7, 1948, in the district court in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Judge E. Turner Hensley ruled that the teachers and administrators had failed to uphold the separation of church and state and that the religious teachings and settings had significant indoctrinating influence on the students. In 1951, the ruling was broadened to prohibit teachers from wearing religious garb, doctrinaire textbooks, and publicly provided textbooks in parochial schools.

⁴ Sister Maura McDonald, “Contribution of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan to Education in New Mexico,” M.A. Thesis (University of New Mexico, University of New Mexico, 1942), 45.

⁵ Ibid, page 61

⁶ *Zellers v. Huff*, 55 N.M. 501, 236 P.2d 949 (1951).

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

New Mexico Supreme Court records indicate that five schools in New Mexico were taught by the Dominican Sisters:

- Peñasco High School, Peñasco, Taos County
- St. Francis School, Ranchos de Taos, Taos County
- St. Mary's School, Belen, Valencia County
- San Juan School, San Juan, Rio Arriba County
- Santa Cruz School, Santa Cruz, Santa Fe County

By 1942, the student population of Peñasco High School increased dramatically to 412 students. Mrs. Teresa Miera, a lay teacher at the school, believed that the increase was attributed to parents from distant places, such as Mora, New Mexico, approximately 34 miles east of Peñasco, who would arrange for their children to live with someone in Peñasco so they could attend school taught by the Dominican Sisters.

The Appellants' Brief

In May of 1951, John A. Danahe, Attorney for Appellees, submitted an Appellants' Reply Brief and Cross-Appellee's Answer Brief to the Supreme Court.⁷ This response addressed the hardships the Sisters encountered in Dixon and Peñasco, New Mexico, and the rural poverty of the children and their families:

Let us consider briefly situations such as those which confronted the Dominican nuns at Dixon or Peñasco, which are typical, and for which the name of yet other communities might be substituted with equal force. In September 1925 four Dominican Sisters, all volunteers, arrived in Dixon – a settlement remote, rural, impoverished, and retarded by language problems. Both the area and the population seemed singularly unpromising. Financial support for their teaching venture had to come from outside; indeed the Sisters often called on the more than 60 convents of their own Sisters and people in Michigan for supplies and money. Wood for fuel was the only donation asked the people. Ordered in a small adobe house really unsatisfactory for use, the Sisters found that fall rains and winter snows penetrated their leaky roof, often sporting books and clothing. Living under such conditions, the Sisters were often ill yet they bore the hardships. Among the people they were to serve, the general health was below par, home conditions were poor and the spirit of cooperation was practically negligible.

Yet when the Dixon school was open, children came who lived many miles from the village, and parents from distant missions arrange to have their children stay with friends or the relatives in Dixon. Among the latter were families from Peñasco, a small mountain village some 17 miles distant. The Taos County

⁷ Ibid.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

School Board itself petition for Sisters to be sent to Peñasco as teachers, the county board to pay their salaries, provided that the community could furnish the buildings. Even the latter were erected and furnished by contributions from outside.

The Sisters were accredited teachers possessed of qualifications of outstanding importance. From a small school enrollment in primary grades, in a few short years Peñasco has grown to be the only high school in southern Taos County and it was recommended for honorable mention at the Los Angeles meeting of the National Education Association. The Sisters were asked to give demonstrations at the New Mexico State teachers convention in Santa Fe in 1931.

Meanwhile, day by day the Sisters confronted the task of counteracting ignorance of health practices, primitive notions of sanitation, indifference to economic improvement, a type of moral and spiritual languor and a woefully inadequate educational background among the people themselves. Almost immediately, however, could be detected signs of eagerness for improvement.

When the Sisters arrived they found conditions were in rural school teachers were insecure as to 10 year, and not unnaturally, many bothered little about the kind of building and equipment. Tax collections were negligible and often there was no money available to pay for repairs, so that the building and equipment deteriorated rapidly. Children have learned scant respect for property where their elders manifested none.

The Sisters set about the task of dissipating the "don't – care" attitude. Children were taught to respect property as a medium through which service could be rendered to all alike. To renovate furniture, the Sisters wielded the plane, chisel and hammer. From orange and apple boxes, they themselves build seats and painted them. With the exercise of care, great savings resulting.

What was their methods? In music, they developed an interest in the songs and dances and melodies familiar to the Spanish people. Capitalizing upon a natural flair for dramatics, they utilize displays and sketches, for production before assemblies.

Drawing upon their own talents, the Sisters sought to inculcate self-expression through color and song and story, and every child was encouraged in the arts. The people speedily recognized the essential culture and the refinement inherent in the daily lives of the Sisters who work among them.

They found that many children were being kept from school in the fall and obliged to leave early in the spring to go with parents to other states to earn enough money for food and clothing for the winter. Poverty, selfishness and

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

unhappiness were taking a heavy toll among the children before they could reach the high school age, and the Sisters sought to contact and influence among the parents to remedy the conditions among which they lived.

Young people were seemingly unaware of the duties incumbent upon people living in a national forest, and there was little worry among them or their parents about such malpractices as overgrazing, improper irrigation, forest fires caused by carelessness and other doubtful practices. Forest rangers were then asked to spotlight their activities in various types of programs in both grade and high schools. Educational policies were caused to coordinate these programs with units in biology, English and every other possible subject which could lend itself to such adaptation. Educational moving pictures were displayed to which the parents were invited, and information was thus disseminated which has modified in marked degree some of the bad methods of timber cutting and the improper grazing techniques, but not the least effective result was the friendlier feeling which was developed between the forest officials and the people.

One of the first means the Sisters use to win the confidence of a people loathe to accept outsiders was to care for their little children. In each group of Sisters there was one trained and experienced in practical nursing. Mothers, fathers and little children soon found their way to the source of the ministrations which was so beneficial. Often food had to be prepared for the sick and carried to their homes. To overcome the double difficulty of ignorance and sensitiveness of the people, attention was given to the needs of the poor and the sick, even when Sisters themselves had to drive a car in all types of weather over rough mountain roads where passage was difficult and dangerous.

Health and sanitation had to be considered. Few homes had provisions for sewage disposal. Attempts were made to study and to meet each individual problem, whether through drills and competitive methods taught to the children, or through personal visits to their homes.

Yes, there were cows in the neighborhood of Peñasco, but for lack of adequate feeding and proper care there was little milk and that little was often contaminated. For every purpose water was often taken from the open ditches. When the Sisters caused a well to be drilled deep enough to tap a spring, the children at school drank the cool, pure water from the convent well and were warned against the dangers of dishwater. The Sisters brought in Jersey cows, and the milk and butter sent out from the convent attracted the natives and little Jersey heifers were soon in great demand. Capital improvement, the growing of vegetables and the making of bread became a necessity at home when the children were daily rewarded by the Sisters if they could report that they drank their milk, ate their vegetables and cereals and had good bread.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Since faulty diet caused much of the prevalent impetigo and other deficiency diseases among the people, the Sisters secured donations from their friends to purchase ammoniated Mercury to dispense to the children. Proper direction in its use and special care of the body did much to cut down appreciably the number of victims.

A domestic science instructor was secured through the Mother House, and through food units, girls were given practice in the preparation of well-balanced meals after instruction in the elementary principles of cooking. All took a lively interest when they were required to prepare three times at home the meals planned and cooked in class before credit was given for the unit in domestic science.

When the canning season came, the girls were taught the use of the pressure cookers, and they invited their mothers to demonstrations in the home economic classes. Today there is scarcely a home which is not equipped with canning facilities for the preservation of desirable items of diet, particularly vegetables which formerly were unknown.

When the Sisters discovered that malaria fever was taking a heavy attendance toll, a unit in biology was initiated for the study of the disease and the means to prevent it. The Sisters sought funds for the purchase of guppies which they planted in the irrigation ditches to eliminate the malaria mosquito. Windows and doors were screened, and the people were taught the fundamental precautions with effective results.

In the schools, the development of such programs produced the inevitable benefits of increased weight and vitality among the children, less susceptibility to colds and other respiratory diseases, better work especially in the late afternoon, and an appreciation of a variety of foods previously not included in their diet.

The first baseball game in Dixon was coached and umpired by a Dominican sister, for the nuns recognized that the extremely individualistic makeup of the Spanish – American children required a recognition of cooperation, to be achieved through sports.

Nobody talked then about the "separation of Church and State."

Memories of Peñasco High School by Former Students

Emma Atencio, a Class of 1947 graduate of Peñasco High School, vividly remembers the school and Sisters. To this day, she appreciates that she could attend school and receive instruction from the Sisters.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Maria Essie Martinez Fischer was a member of the Class of 1941 at Peñasco High School. She explains:

Education was neglected wholly or in part for the people earned their living mostly by using the whole family in sheep herding, farming, or other activities. In 1925, when the Dominican Sisters came to Dixon, some of the people of Peñasco sent their children there. The people then petitioned F. Koppers, the pastor, to open a school here. Funds could not be secured to have a parish school, so the far-seeing Padre asked the Taos County Board to employ four Sisters in a public school. Classes had been held in the old Dist. 30 schoolhouse with one teacher.

When Sisters Theodosia, Lorraine, Seraphine, and Sienna arrived in the fall of 1926, there were enrolled large numbers of children than ever before. Then, the number was at first only 75.

In 1931, the cornerstone was laid for the new high school, already badly needed. The Sisters had moved out of the few rooms that were some distance from the grade school, into a house across the road. It was said that this house was the oldest in the village. It had once been used as a refuge for people from all over the vicinity against the raids by the Apaches. The building from which the Sisters had moved was converted into a two room domestic science laboratory for the high school.

Since the Dominican Sisters came at the request of Father Koppers, great advances have been made in education. The domestic science department was furnished and equipped by the Sisters. Up to this time, they have also supplied an instructor without cost either to this community or the county. Many of the children from the missions have preferred to attend the grade school and they have been admitted. The high school is the only one in this part of the county and it served all children alike from Peñasco and the surrounding districts.

Much credit is due to Father Koppers for his interest in the education of children. Had he not persevered in his efforts, it is unlikely that we would have a high school to attend today."

Lucia Lopez, a member of the Peñasco Valley Historical Preservation Society (PVHPS), attended St. Anthony School ("La Parrochial"), which she recently visited. Ms. Lopez felt compelled to write about her time at the school:

On April 18, 2022, I went into the St. Anthony School. What a powerful experience it was! It brought back so many body memories of my life there, and how I thrived in that environment. I was introduced to the book *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White. It is still, to my 68-year-old self, the one book that introduced me

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

to reading and writing in the English language because I spoke only Spanish at home. It opened that wide door and very deep door to a world of make-believe. To the 8th child in a family who lost her father to cancer in 1965, when I was 11, school was the greatest reality show (the Shangri-la, as my 65-year-old sister, calls it), the place where there was nurturance, and guidance from the Dominican Sisters, who came from Grand Rapids, Michigan to be our teachers.

Probably during that fourth and fifth year of my attendance, I was a father-less orphan, but it was also the year that I wrote a play and directed it with classmates. The story was about how we should not litter, and my fellow students were the actors who wore masks made of brown paper for their parts. It was my first attempt at being a writer as well as an activist, a role I continued throughout my life working for non-profit organizations, and I continue as a volunteer for the PVHPS.

I attended St. Anthony's for seven years, even though it was an eight-year course of work. I started a year behind my school cohort because I was not seven years old until February 22, 1954. I attended with the group of students who were in the year behind me until sometime around fourth or fifth grade I completed both grades in one year. This way I graduated in 1968, with two boys and eight girls. Our classes were small, and we loved it. The class that graduated in 1969 also had ten students (two girls and eight boys). Life-long bonds resulted from those early experiences, especially with several other girls who also lost a parent to cancer.

Classes were held in rooms divided by floor-to-ceiling wood doors that opened in accordion fashion. So, at times, the open doors allowed two classes to be held together. Or in the case of school-wide events, three or four doors would be open and we could all participate, along with parents and friends. The religious holidays were busy, and as I got older, I volunteered to be the Master of Ceremonies, a challenge to a painfully shy child.

The school was the hub for our activities during the long winters, and then in the summertime we spent hours and days just being children with our parents and extended families. In the early years of my attendance, when in first and second grades, I wondered if the Sister were coming back. There was a sense in northern New Mexico at that time, in the early sixties, that the Sisters could leave and abandon us after opening up the enormous world in books and experience that would not have been possible otherwise.

My "wow" experience is that I visited the school on April 18, 2022, fifty-four years after the day we danced up a storm in celebration of eight years of Catholic school. Thank you, sisters, for coming 1,378 miles to little Penasco, New Mexico. We provided fertile minds and love, and you provided bountiful hearts and

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

nurturance. I wish, with the renovation of the St. Anthony School, that we can say to each other, "we love you back"!

Marduqueo Chacon, a former student, was quoted in the *Albuquerque Journal* saying: "I fell in love with those ladies mainly because why would such young, beautiful ladies ... dedicate their lives so that a dummy like me could get a good education."

Recent Preservation Efforts

In 1997, members of the community understood the significance of the building and engaged Karen Lewis of Cornerstones Community Partnerships of Santa Fe to produce a conditions assessment of the school. The Peñasco Valley Historical Preservation Society (PVHPS) has also worked with students in the University of New Mexico, School of Architecture to produce schemes for future uses of the building. The group is currently engaged in fundraising to support the rehabilitation of the building.

In 2017, former students united to prevent the demolition of Peñasco High School because of its historical and cultural significance. The PVHPS believes that saving this legacy will inspire the community and providing space to bring together the community. This effort coalesced into the Peñasco Valley Historical Preservation Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, which purchased the school building and the surrounding property. The PVHPS is governed by a five-person Board of Directors and 15 active members and many more volunteers. The PVHPS vision statement is "Honor our history, preserve our legacy, embrace the future."

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Bainbridge Bunting, et al. *Taos Adobes*. Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 1964.

Holscher, Kathleen. *Religious Lessons, Catholic Sisters and the Captured Schools Crisis in New Mexico*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

McDonald, Maura "Contribution of the Dominican Sisters of Grand Rapids, Michigan to Education in New Mexico," M.A. Thesis. University of New Mexico, 1942.

Sanchez, George I. *Forgotten People*, (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1940.

Schwind, Mona, *Period Pieces, An Account of the Grand Rapids Dominicans 1966*. West Michigan Printing, 1966.

Archer, Glenn L. "Personal Observations on the Dixon School Case" *Liberty: A Magazine of Religious Freedom* (1949): 44.

Lewis, Karen, "Peñasco: San Antonio de Padua Parish School Conditions Assessment." Cornerstones Community Partnerships, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1997.

Wroth, William, ed., *Russell Lee's FSA Photographs of Chamisal and Peñasco, New Mexico*, Taylor Museum of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, 1985.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.817 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 36.170100 | Longitude: -105.686231 |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Peñasco High School is identified on the sketch map, drawn to scale and corresponds to the points of longitude and latitude.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Peñasco High School includes the intact historic property associated with the school.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Alfredo T. Romero, Barbara Gallegos, and Yolanda Denny
organization: Peñasco Valley Historical Preservation Society
street & number: P.O. Box 861
city or town: Peñasco state: NM zip code: 87553
e-mail: alromero1392@comcast.net
telephone: N/A +
date: July 27, 2022

State Historic Preservation Office

name/title: Steven Moffson, State and National Register Coordinator
organization: New Mexico Historic Preservation Division
street & number: 407 Galisteo Street, Suite 236
city or town: Santa Fe state: New Mexico zip: 87501
telephone: 505.476.0444
date: October 19, 2022

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Peñasco High School

City or Vicinity: Peñasco

County: Taos

State: NM

Photographer: Steven Moffson

Date Photographed: August 18, 2022

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

Photo 1 of 16. Peñasco_High School, main façade, photographer facing northwest.

Photo 2 of 16.. Main entrance, photographer facing northwest.

Photo 3 of 16.. North end of the main façade, photographer facing northwest.

Photo 4 of 16. North end of school, photographer facing west.

Photo 5 of 16. Rear façade, photographer facing southeast.

Photo 6 of 16. Rear façade, photogrpaher facing south.

Photo 7 of 16. Portal on rear façade, photographer facing southeast.

Photo 8 of 16. Portal on north end of rear façade, photographer facing southwest.

Photo 9 of 16. South end of school, photogrpaher facing north.

Photo 10 of 16. Classroom 1, photogrpaher facing west.

Photo 11 of 16. Classroom 2, photogrpaher facing southwest.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 12 of 16. Classroom 3 with raised platform, photographer facing north.

Photo 13 of 16. Classroom 3-6, with partition door and support framing (right).
Photogrpaher facing southeast.

Photo 14 of 16. Partition Door. Photogtpaher facing northwest.

Photo 15 of 16. Classrooms 6, 5, 4. Photogrpher facing northwest.

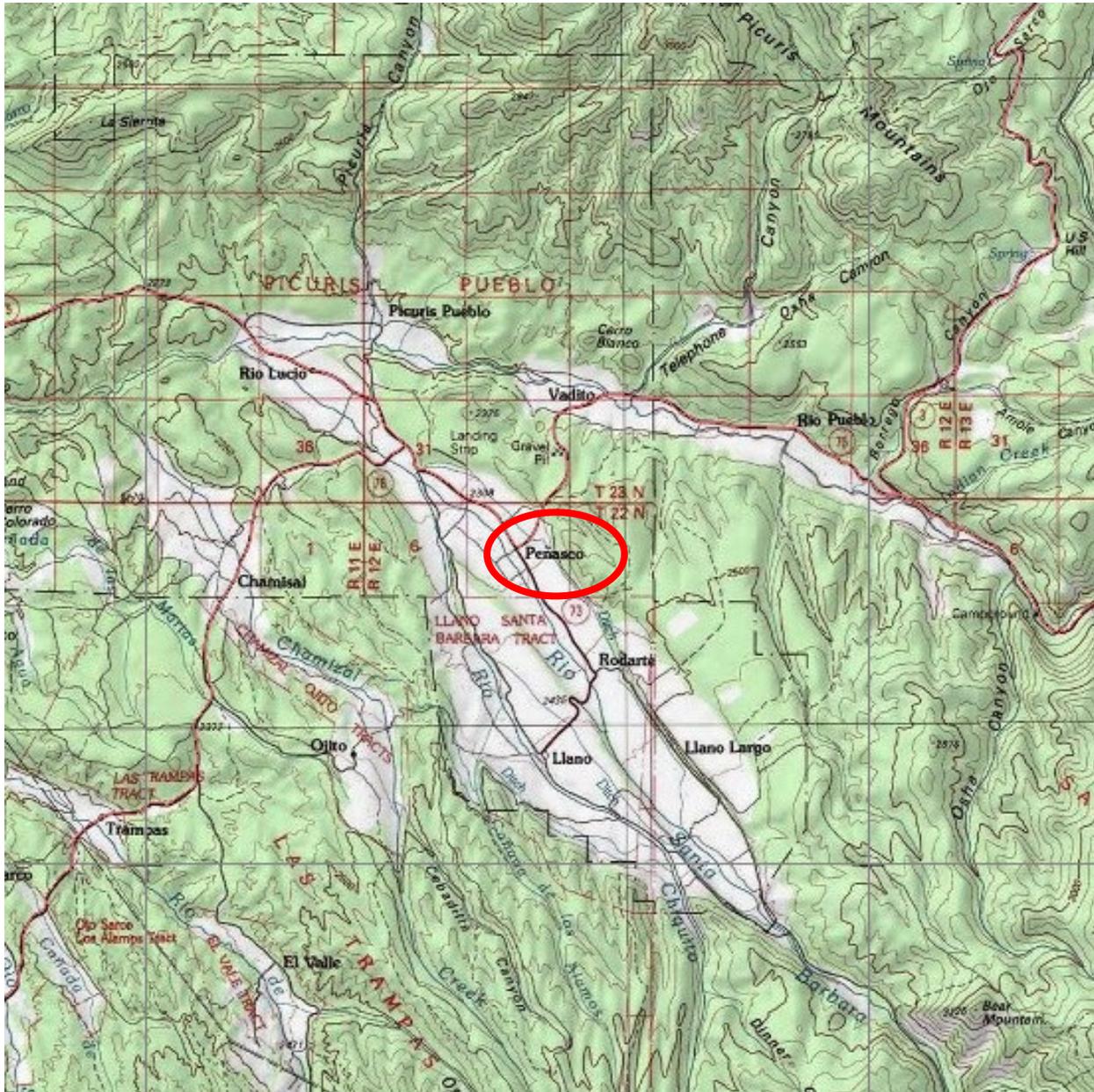
Photo 16 of 16. Classrooms 3-5 with restrooms in end wall. Photographer facing southeast.

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.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



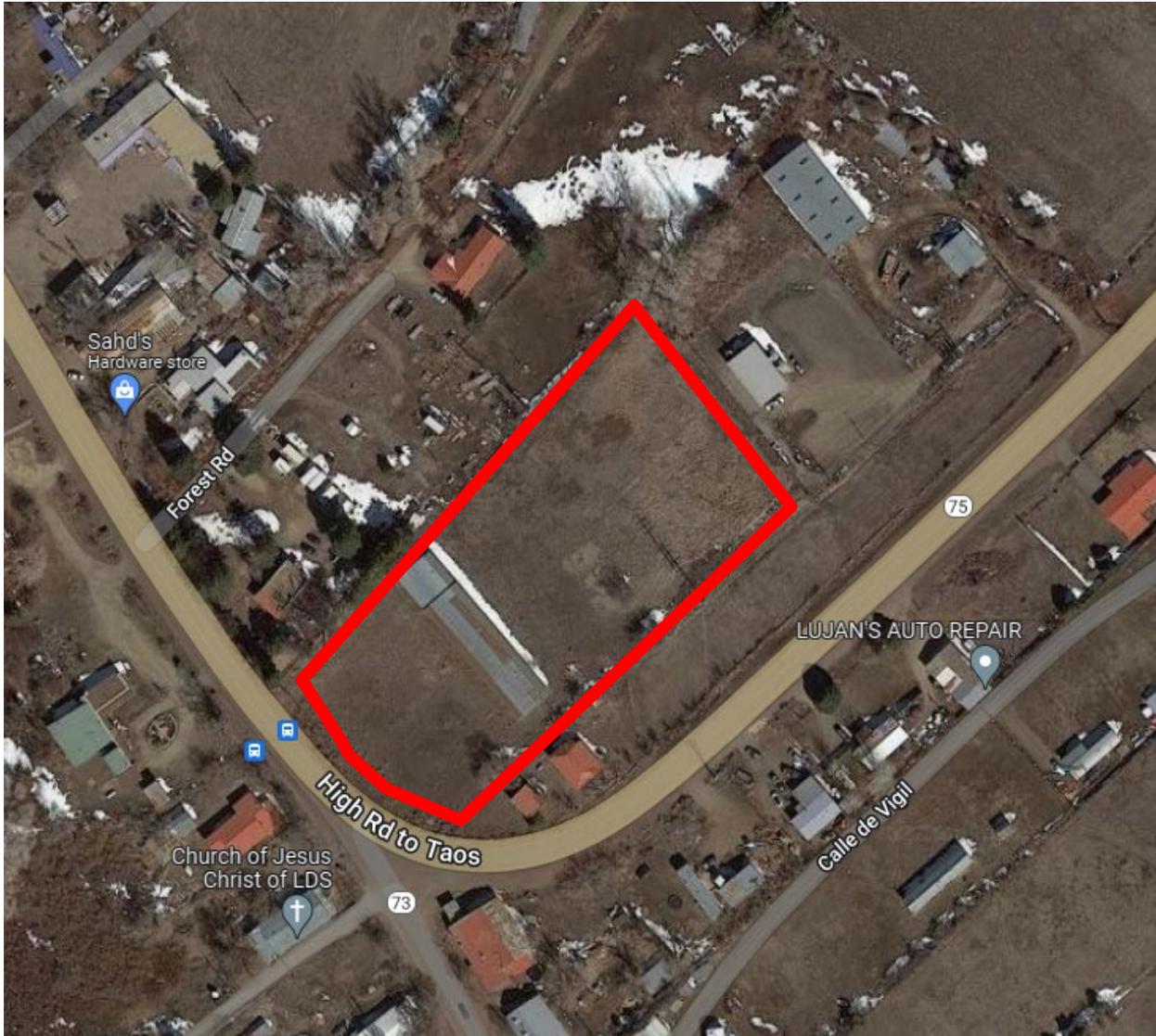
Peñasco High School
Taos County, New Mexico

Scale: one inch = 2 miles

Location Map

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



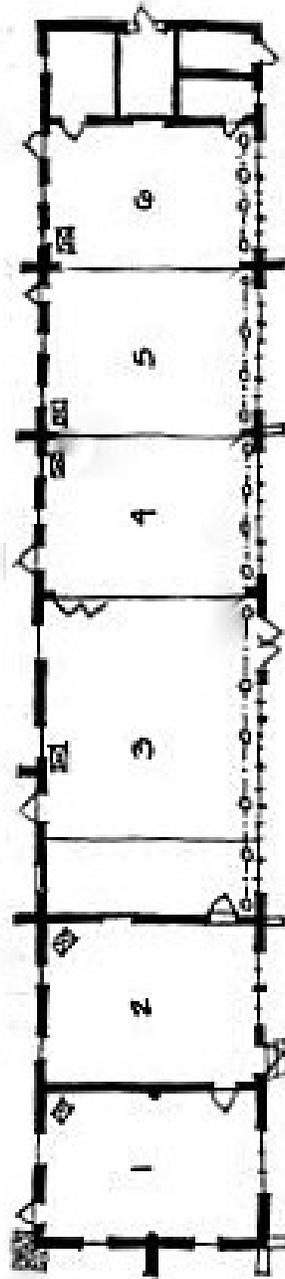
Peñasco High School
Taos County, New Mexico
National Register Boundary 
No Scale.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA PARISH SCHOOL
Peñasco, New Mexico



- HEATING UNITS
- SHORING SYSTEM
- BUTTRISES
- CONCRETE BUTTRISES
- DEMOLISHED BUTTRISES
- FOLDING DOORS



Sketch Map based on Karen Lewis, *Peñasco: San Antonio de Padua Parish School Conditions Assessment* (Cornerstones Community Partnerships, Santa Fe, New Mexico), 1997. Based on parish measured drawing and field investigation, July 1996. Not to scale.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



Peñasco High School, 1930s



Peñasco High School, 1930s



St. Anthony Parochial School, 1970s

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



Malcolm Collier, St. Anthony Parochial School and "Hot Lunch" building (right), 1957

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



John Collier, Jr., "Peñasco, New Mexico. High school supported by the state but administered by the Catholic church," 1943

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



John Collier, Jr., "Untitled," 1943

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



John Collier, Jr., "Peñasco, New Mexico. Hot lunch provided by community support at a grade and high school administered by the Roman Catholic church," 1943

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



John Collier, Jr., "Peñasco, New Mexico. Science class in the high school making soil tests," 1943

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



John Collier, "Penasco, Taos County, New Mexico. Domestic science class in a high school which is supported by the state but administered by the Roman Catholic Church," 1943

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photographs



Photo 1. Peñasco_High School,main façade, photographer facing northwest.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 2. Main entrance, photographer facing northwest.



Photo 3. North end of the main façade, photographer facing northwest.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 4. North end of school, photographer facing west.



Photo 5. Rear façade, photographer facing southeast.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 6. Rear façade, photogrpaher facing south.



Photo 7. Portal on rear façade, photographer facing southeast.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 8. Portal on north end of rear façade, photographer facing southwest.



Photo 9. South end of school, photographer facing north.



Photo 10. Classroom 1, photographer facing west.

Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State



Photo 11. Classroom 2, photographer facing southwest.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 12. Classroom 3 with raised platform, photographer facing north.



Photo 13. Classroom 3-6, with partition door and support framing (right). Photographer facing southeast.



Peñasco High School
Name of Property

Taos County, New Mexico
County and State

Photo 14. Partition Door. Photographer facing northwest.



Photo 15. Classrooms 6, 5, 4. Photographer facing northwest.



Photo 16. Classrooms 3-5 with restrooms in end wall. Photographer facing southeast.