

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property _____

County and State _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable) _____

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100003552

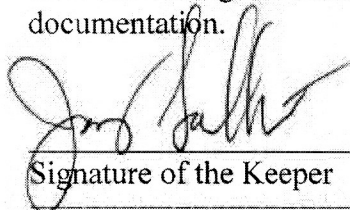
Date Listed: 3/25/2019

Property Name: Lee, S. D., High School

County: Lowndes

State: MS

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper

3-25-2019

Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8: Period of Significance

The Period of Significance is hereby changed to 1953-1971. This coincides with the era of use as the "white" high school during the Equalization era up until desegregation was accomplished.

1977, 1996, and 2011 are hereby deleted as significant dates.

The Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file**Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

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: S. D. Lee High School

Other names/site number: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

2. Location

Street & number: 1815 Military Road

City or town: Columbus State: MS County: Lowndes

Not For Publication: ☐

Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

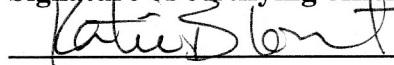
I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

11-29-18

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

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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.)

Private: ☒

Public – Local ☐

Public – State ☐

Public – Federal ☐

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) ☒

District ☐

Site ☐

Structure ☐

Object ☐

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

1. Function or Use

Historic Functions: EDUCATION: School

Current Functions: WORK IN PROGRESS

Currently being rehabilitated as a multiple dwelling and multi-purpose facility

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

International Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: concrete, brick, steel, wood

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

Begun in 1953, the mostly two-story S. D. Lee High School combines International Style horizontality (e.g. strip windows, concrete spandrels) with gable roofed masses and combines concrete frame and wall construction with laminated timber roof construction (in major spaces). The original 1953 school has a T-shaped plan, with large spaces such as the auditorium and cafeteria, as well as specialized classrooms, in the head of the T and a central corridor double-loaded with classrooms in the base of the T. West of this classroom wing, a similar classroom block with a steel rather than concrete structural system was built about 1967 and extended north in 1977. The two classroom blocks were joined by a north connector in 1996. Still farther north, a steel-rigid-frame gymnasium went up in 1958-59 and was subsequently connected by a steel walkway canopy to the 1996 connector.

Narrative Description

Location/Setting (photo 19)

S. D. Lee High School is located on Military Road north of 18th Avenue North and northeast of downtown Columbus. It sits on flat ground and faces east across a lawn to a shopping plaza on the east side of Military Road. There are two, large oak trees on the eastern edge of the site in front of the original classroom wing as well as several small pear trees and a small magnolia and some shrubs. There is a parking lot north of the lawn and east of the gymnasium and an open field north of the parking lot and the gymnasium. South and west of the school, there are wooded residential neighborhoods with single-family residences. West of the complex is another paved area.

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1. C Original T-Plan Building 1953 R.W. Naef, archt.
(with later additions, see building plans)

Configuration

The 1953 building consists of two wings forming a 'T.' The one-and-two-story south wing forms the head of the T and contains, on the first floor, the lobby, auditorium, arts classrooms, cafeteria, and industrial arts classrooms. (In this portion of the building the second-floor library and a related classroom adjoin the balcony level of the auditorium.). The two-story, double-loaded-corridor north wing forms the foot of the T and contains classrooms, the main office, and the teachers lounge. While this north wing has a low-sloping gabled roof, it appears to have a flat roof when seen from ground level.

Structural System (photos 3 and 10)

The R. W. Naef firm combined two structural systems infrequently seen together, but here used them to good effect. Most of the building consists of a concrete column-and-beam frame, with bays between the structural members in-filled with poured-in-place concrete, concrete block, and brick. This system changes in major spaces lacking a floor above them, where laminated wooden roof beams are set into the beams of the concrete frame and support wooden purlins and pine-plank decking. In most instances, the upper chord of these wooden beams supports a low-sloping gable roof, while the lower chord has a gentle curvature, producing a pleasing spatial quality akin to that of masonry arches.

For the concrete construction, Naef developed an innovative process, which he described in the trade journal *Architectural Concrete*. In this process, the structural frame of columns, beams, and slabs was poured first, with reinforcing rods eight inches apart left projecting from the wall sides of the columns. Separately, but close behind, the walls and spandrels were formed-up and poured, with their reinforcing steel overlapped with the rods projecting from the columns. Ten sets of wall forms were prepared and reused within the repetitive column bays.

Exterior Appearance (beginning at the east side of the auditorium and moving north, then returning to the south side of the auditorium and moving west)

Auditorium (photos 1 and 8)

The auditorium rises up two stories as a brick-veneer box and has an east-facing low-sloping gable roof with metal fascia. Tall, steel-sash windows on the north side introduce natural light. Most circular metal downspouts remain. On the east side of the auditorium, a one-story shed-roofed projection housed backstage storage and choir and band rehearsal spaces. Its exterior walls have poured-in-place concrete bases, steel-sash clerestory windows, and wooden fascia panels between wooden outriggers supporting the overhanging roof, with brick construction set forward at the northern and southern extremities of the projection. Decorative stretchers project at the northern end of the projection's east wall, in front of which a low enclosure features an openwork brick screen.

Principal Entrance (photo 2)

Public ingress into the entrance lobby occurs in a three-bay, three-concrete-stair unit north of the auditorium. On the east side, two concrete columns on the ground floor are faced with a gray

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marble veneer. Above them, there is a concrete spandrel panel, a plaster soffit, and a three-bay width of steel-sash windows. The wooden entrance doors are currently covered with plywood, but are visible on the interior [photo 32]. The low-sloping roof with wooden-plank soffit projects above and is supported by projecting wooden outriggers. On the west (rear), the entrance ensemble is similar, but has no marble veneer at the columns and no stairs.

North Wing (photo 3)

North of the principal entrance, the two-story classroom wing has a low-sloping gabled-roof. The two-story, east-facing principal facade is an International Style composition consisting of long bands of steel-sash windows and poured-in-place concrete base walls and spandrels. The concrete columns of the structural system are visible, alternating with narrower steel uprights between window bays. Wooden laminated beams project through the wall as outriggers supporting the roof overhang, which has a pine-plank soffit. The main office north of the principal entrance projects slightly to the east on the first floor and is covered by a shed roof. Circular-cross-section metal downspouts remain at some column locations. The west facade of the classroom wing is similarly organized. At the north end of the wing, the end wall has a brick veneer. Adjacent to this end wall, the corridor, stair, elevator unit was added in 1996 as a connector to the northwest classroom-wing addition.

(description now returns to the south side of the auditorium and moves west)

Range of Spaces Facing South Onto 18th Avenue (photos 5 and 6)

The Naef office manipulated the head of the T-plan here to have alternating projecting and recessed masses, with the projecting masses having front-facing gables and the recessed masses having transverse gables.

South Classrooms (contiguous with the south wall of the auditorium) (photo5)

A cluster of classrooms dedicated to the arts wraps around the auditorium as one-story construction until it reaches the south extension of the classroom wing, where the building rises up two stories. Farthest east, the roof is a low-sloping gable. Beneath the gable, the facade is brick except for a band of steel-sash windows with wooden panels above them and a concrete planter below them. There are two steel-sash windows and a pair of recessed double doors in the west sidewall of this gabled unit. Farther west, two, one-story classrooms are set back and covered by a shed roof. Their south-facing facade consists of a long band of steel-sash windows above a brick spandrel, and the windows have alternating wider and narrower uprights, as seen (and described above) on the main classroom wing. The brick side wall of the auditorium rises up behind these classrooms and has five individual steel-sash windows. Farther west still, the main classroom block continues south as a projecting two-story unit, which contains the library on the second floor. This unit has a low-sloping gabled roof and full-height, brick cheek walls in its gabled end. Above a second-floor concrete spandrel, the entire area under the gable is glazed with steel-sash windows. Below the spandrel the wall is set back and consists of a band of steel-sash windows above a base wall of concrete. At the east wall of this classroom block, there are two steel-sash units on the second floor and one on the first. At the west wall, there are five steel sash and double doors on the first floor, and on the second floor four steel sash introduce natural light into the classroom north of the library.

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Cafeteria (photo 6)

The one-story cafeteria with low-sloping, transverse-gabled roof is set back to the north in the plan and is connected farther west to the kitchen, which has a south-facing gable. All of this construction has brick-veneer walls. The south wall of the cafeteria is completely glazed with steel-sash windows above a concrete planter and has the bay articulation seen throughout the 1953 building: wider concrete columns and narrower uprights in the middle of steel-sash units. The western half of the gabled kitchen block is a projecting brick wall, while the facade of the eastern half is set back and glazed with a band of steel-sash windows above a brick base and below plastic-covered wooden panels between wooden outriggers inside the gable. The projecting roof creates an entrance porch, and entrance is made behind the projecting brick wall.

Boiler Room and North-Facing Entry

A shed-roofed, brick-veneer extension to the rear of the cafeteria and kitchen contains the boiler room and, along with support spaces, an entry vestibule facing the c. 1967 classroom wing. A brick smokestack rises from the boiler room.

Industrial Arts Classrooms and Freestanding School-Bus Canopy (photo 6)

This farthest-west one-story unit has a transverse-gabled roof, brick-veneer walls, and a continuous band of steel-sash windows in its south facade above a brick base wall. In front of it, a steel canopy supported by steel pipe columns slopes down to the north. The west end wall of the industrial-arts wing is brick faced, as is the north side of the wing, which has a single door unit and a band of steel-sash windows farther east.

Interior

General Notes:

1. Throughout the school the concrete-slab floors are covered with vinyl tile.
2. The heating and cooling system is hot and cold water, with fan-coil units attached to walls in classroom and corridors and set behind grills in the auditorium, library, etc.
3. Most artificial lighting consists of suspended fluorescent fixtures.
4. Throughout the entire building, the only doors that have been replaced are those with panic hardware. Metal, glazed storefront assemblies with metal-frame doors have been added in a number of locations.

Entrance Lobby/Auditorium Lobby (photo 9)

These two spaces, which have lay-in tile ceilings, are contiguous. The entrance lobby connects the two parts of the T-plan 1953 building. It is adjacent, to the north, to the teachers lounge and main office, and it is contiguous, to the south, with the auditorium lobby, which also serves as a corridor leading to the arts classrooms.

At both the east and west walls of the entrance lobby, banks of wooden doors with brass kick plates are intact, as are the wooden frames of the glazed walls in which they are imbedded. A file of concrete columns with a gray marble veneer begin in the entrance lobby and continue south into the auditorium lobby, where the walls have a brick veneer. A wooden trophy case is located between two of these columns in the entrance lobby, while, in the northeast and northwest corners, display cases with faux mansard roofs are not original.

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Auditorium (photo 8)

The auditorium seats have been removed from the sloping, ground-level concrete floor. The auditorium's lateral walls are poured-in-place concrete, with pilasters projecting between vertical strips of steel-sash windows on the north wall. The canted wing walls in front of the proscenium have stacked-bond brick veneer. The roof structure is laminated wooden beams and purlins with a drywall finished ceiling. Suspended light fixtures are probably replacements. The balcony at the west end of the auditorium has a drywall soffit and a steel-pipe handrail atop a low east wall and has concrete seating tiers; the balcony seats have been removed.

Band hall and Arts Classrooms

The band hall and adjacent classrooms north and west are of one-story construction. The classrooms farther west still and south of the auditorium lobby are located beneath the second-floor library. The band hall is the principal space of the group. Its concrete frame is infilled on the east side by poured-in-place concrete base walls, with steel-sash clerestory windows above and with concrete-block walls elsewhere. The columns support laminated beams and purlins carrying the pine-plank decking of the roof. This same construction, but in a lean-to form, continues into the classroom to the north (behind the auditorium stage). The classrooms to the south of the auditorium also have laminated wooden beams, wooden purlins, and pine-plank roofs in a lean-to configuration, while the first-floor classrooms south of the auditorium lobby have ceilings with concrete beams and concrete floor slabs. Commonly, acoustical tiles have been applied directly to the underside of the slabs and decking.

Library and Related Classroom (above the western arts classrooms) (photo 10)

On the second floor, the library complex occupies the south end of the south extension of the classroom wing and features a roof structure of laminated wooden beams, along with wooden purlins and pine-plank decking. The floor has been carpeted. The wooden library shelving is intact, with some newer wooden shelving located along the south wall. The complex includes a classroom on the west side of the wing, west of the auditorium balcony and north of the main library space, which has a new metal storefront wall at its north end. This classroom also has laminated wooden beams, wooden purlins, and pine-plank decking.

Cafeteria and Kitchen

Two flights of stairs with outboard brick cheek walls lead up (to the west) from the auditorium lobby to the cafeteria, with the kitchen farther to the west. The cafeteria's north, east, and west walls are poured-in-place concrete, with pour joints visible about four feet up from the floor. Inside the concrete frame, the south wall is almost entirely glazed with steel-sash windows. The roof construction consists of laminated wooden beams and purlins and pine-plank decking.

Industrial Arts Classrooms

The industrial-arts wing extends west from the area of the cafeteria's kitchen and adjacent corridor. The three classrooms in the industrial-arts wing have concrete frames with concrete-block infill and roof construction of laminated wooden beams and purlins and pine-plank decking. The easternmost of these classrooms has its south wall glazed with steel-sash windows above a poured concrete base wall.

1953 North Wing, First Floor

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Corridors (photo 11)

The corridors on both floors have brick-veneer walls. The first-floor corridor has a lay-in tile ceiling, while the second floor has acoustical tile applied directly to the underside of the ceiling slab. At intervals, there are banks of lockers, which are surrounded by wooden frames, and at intervals there are fixed-glass transoms above the brick and below the ceiling.

Stairwells (photo 13)

Stairs consist of steel stringers and steel pans filled with concrete and covered with vinyl tile. Stairs are flanked by steel-pipe handrails, the outboard ones mounted on concrete cheek walls with metal edges. The stairwell walls are poured-in-place concrete with visible pour joints.

Restrooms

Restrooms retain their fixtures and marble slabs separating toilet stalls. The floors and wainscot are covered in ceramic tile.

Classrooms (photo 12)

Flush-panel, solid wooden doors with wire glass panels open from the corridor into the classrooms. At their ceilings, the first-floor classrooms have acoustical tile applied directly to the underside of the concrete floor slabs. Corridor-side walls are plastered concrete block and end walls have a brick veneer, sometimes plastered, with various wall surfaces now overlaid with superficial materials. Steel-sash windows illuminate the interiors. Wooden cabinets under the windows have formica-covered tops. Built-in, wooden, formica-topped laboratory tables remain in the science classroom.

Main Office and Teachers Lounge (at the south end of the 1953 classroom wing)

Construction in these rooms is similar to that in the classrooms. The office retains its formica-top counter. Lay-in tile ceilings have been added in both spaces.

1953 North Wing, Second Floor

Note: Conditions here are generally the same as those on the first floor, with the exception that the classroom ceilings have exposed laminated wooden beams and purlins and have pine-plank decking, with acoustical tile applied to its underside.

1967/1977 Classroom Wing and 1996 Connector

Configuration (See plan drawings.)

This two-story construction eventually produced a central courtyard with the original classroom wing in front. It consists of a classroom wing located west of and parallel to the 1953 north wing and a northern connector running east-west, which includes a corridor, stairs, elevator, and six classrooms.

Construction Sequence

The wing and connector was built in three phases. The first phase (c. 1967) included all of the classrooms except the two classrooms farthest north on each floor. The second phase (1977)

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included these northernmost classrooms. The 1996 connector was the third phase. The joint between c. 1967 and 1977 construction is visible as a vertical groove in the concrete base wall. A metal covered walkway running east-west remains, and it connected the two classroom wings before the north connector was constructed.

Structural System

This portion of the building has a steel column-and-beam frame, steel bar joists, corrugated-metal and composite decking, and concrete floor slabs.

Exterior (photo 7)

The c. 1967/1977 classroom wing is quite similar in appearance to the original classroom block on the eastern front. Its east and west facades have two long bands of steel-sash windows and concrete bases and intermediate metal spandrels. The fenestration pattern differs from that in the original wing in having strictly repetitive uprights separating the windows. The low-sloping gabled roof overhangs like that of the original wing but differs in having steel outriggers and lay-in-composite and ribbed (at the 1977 classrooms) soffits. Beneath the overhang, steel beams span over the tops of the windows. The north and south end walls of the classroom wing have a brick veneer and minimal steel-sash openings. The connector has a brick veneer and a few square windows.

Interior

Corridors (photo 14)

The corridors have lay-in tile ceilings and concrete-block walls. Lockers are located in recesses, with their wooden enclosures projecting slightly beyond the face of the corridor walls. Doors throughout are wooden and are hung in steel frames.

Stairs (photo 16)

Stairs in this wing have steel stringers and steel pans filled with poured concrete. Steel-pipe handrails have metal panels and decorative steel half-circles at intervals.

Restrooms

Restrooms retain their fixtures and have metal toilet-stall partitions. The walls and floors are covered in ceramic tile.

Classrooms (photos 15 and 17)

Classrooms have concrete-block walls on their corridor sides and brick-veneer end walls and steel-sash windows. On the ground floor, steel columns and beams support exposed, steel bar joists, which carry exposed corrugated roof decking and concrete slabs. On the second floor, classrooms have steel beams and purlins supporting composite decking. The connector classrooms have lay-in tile ceilings.

2. C Gymnasium and Walkway Canopy 1958-59 R.W. Naef, archt.

Structural System

The gymnasium has a steel rigid frame, steel purlins, and composite roof decking.

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Exterior (photo 4)

The gymnasium has a low-sloping gabled roof with metal fascia and brick-veneer exterior walls, with bands of clerestory windows at both the north and south end walls and doors on the west, north, and south facades, and has square-cross-section metal downspouts. At the east side of the gymnasium, there is a flat-roofed, one-story brick projection with a concrete base wall beneath steel-sash clerestory windows. North of this projection, there is an openwork, brick, enclosure, and south of this projection there is a flat-roofed, steel walkway canopy, which extends to the classroom-wing connector.

Interior photo 18)

The gymnasium has concrete-block interior walls and a hardwood basketball-court floor. At court level there are retractable wooden bleachers on the north and south ends of the building. Above these bleachers, there are concrete mezzanines with steel-pipe railings.

3. NC Maintenance Building 1970s

This one-story all-steel maintenance building sits on the north end of the school property, separated from the school and gymnasium buildings by a large practice field and a chain-link fence. A gravel drive runs along the eastern edge of the school parcel, terminating in a gravel parking lot on the east side of the maintenance building. A low-slope gable roof on a north-south axis shelters the building, and the foundation is a poured concrete slab. Two roll-up garage doors are on the south end, and three are on the north end. A shed-roof office section is on the east side.

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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.) N/A

- ☐ 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.)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Period of Significance

1953-2011

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Significant Dates

1953	construction of original building
1958-59	construction of gymnasium
1967	construction of west (rear) classroom wing
1977	extension of west classroom wing to the north
1996	construction of north connector
2011	closing of the school

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

R. W. Naef

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.)

S. D. Lee High School is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning/Development as, when built, it manifested local community leadership and organization in the early 1950s at the beginning of the post-World War II ‘baby boom’ and during the early years of school “Equalization” in the State of Mississippi.

S. D. Lee High School is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a transitional design by notable Mississippi architect R. W. Naef wherein he combined latent traditionalism and emerging modernist sensibilities in a large building with multiple clusters of functions (auditorium/band rooms together with arts classrooms; academic classrooms together with administrative offices and library; cafeteria and kitchen; and industrial arts classrooms) and wherein he developed an innovative method for sequentially pouring a concrete structural and enclosure system.

The period of significance begins with the construction of the original building in 1953 and extends to the closing of the school in 2011.

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

Community Planning for School Buildings in Columbus After World War II

Birth rates increased across the United States after World War II, and Columbus, Mississippi families participated in this increase. In 1948, the Columbus School Board attempted to pass a \$1,500,000 bond issue for new school construction, but this bond issue failed. In 1949, the School Board commissioned a team headed by Professor J. D. Falls of the Department of Adult Education at nearby Mississippi State College (now Mississippi State University) to study the problem of burgeoning school enrollments.¹ The resulting report examined the four local schools for white students and the four for black students. The white schools were Franklin Academy (1939, designed by R. W. Naef in a neo-classical form), which had 720 students; the existing S. D. Lee Junior/Senior High School (1917), which had 840 students; Barrow Elementary School (1907, designed by Meridian, Mississippi practitioner P. J. Krouse), which had 180 students; and the Mississippi State College for Women's Demonstration School (1929, designed by Claude H. Lindsley), which had 300 students, totaling 2040 white students, while the four black schools had 990 students.² Based on the report's assessment that these facilities were already inadequate for both black and white students, Columbus passed a \$1,500,000 bond issue in 1950 and eventually combined these funds with Equalization funds from the State of Mississippi to build three new schools: Hunt High (now Middle) School for black students (1953, designed by R. W. Naef) and Stokes-Beard Elementary School for white students (1952, designed by the Starkville firm of Johnston, Jones, and Reynolds; destroyed by a tornado in 2001), and S. D. Lee High School for white students (designed by R. W. Naef).³ All three schools were built north of old highway 82 (now highway 182), which was then Main Street, and north of downtown Columbus: S. D. Lee farthest to the north on Military Road (south of present highway 82) within white residential subdivisions, Hunt southeast of it in a black residential area, and Stokes-Beard southwest of Hunt in a downtown area long occupied by white residents.

Hunt Middle School is eligible for listing on the National Register, but is still owned and operated as a school by the Columbus Municipal School District, which currently has no interest in pursuing a nomination. Hunt has an L-shaped plan, with one leg of the L being the classroom wing and the other being the auditorium/gymnasium/cafeteria, which has retractable bleachers. (A freestanding vocation building built in 1945 stands north of the school.) Hunt is mostly two stories and has a concrete frame and brick veneer. The classroom wing has a low, gabled roof, horizontal bands of windows, and horizontal brick spandrels. The gymnasium has a steel-truss roof. Unlike S. D. Lee, Hunt has no dedicated bus-unloading canopy.

¹ "Falls Will Explain Needs of Columbus. City Schools," [Columbus] *Commercial Dispatch*, 5 November 1950, p. 1.

² "The Answer in 20 Questions . . . Vote for the School Bond Issue," [paid advertisement] [Columbus] *Commercial Dispatch*, 19 November 1950.

³ "\$1,500,000 School Bonds Get Overwhelming Approval Here," [Columbus] *Commercial Dispatch*, 22 November 1950, p. 1.

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School Equalization

Concurrent with this planning and construction activity in Columbus and at a time when rulings on school integration were anticipated from the United States Supreme Court, the Mississippi Legislature set out, without saying so publicly, to improve the quality of school buildings for black students. They hoped that these students would then choose not to attend white schools, even if the federal courts made integration the law of the land (which the Supreme Court did in 1954 in *Brown v Board of Education*). The legislature proposed an "Equalization Plan," which played out in two phases, the first lasting from 1946 to 1953 and the second from 1953 to 1960. In 1946, the legislature appropriated \$3,000,000, with the bill's sponsors anticipating that the bulk of the money would be used to build schools for black students. However, two-thirds of this allocation was used to building schools for white students. The legislature then made additional appropriations of \$3,000,000 in 1950 and \$3,000,000 in 1952, and between 1951 and 1954, 85 per cent of these amounts was used to build schools for black students, and the appropriations used to build additional schools for black students only increased throughout the 1950s and early 1960s.⁴ It was within this period of legislative machinations that the three new schools, Stokes-Beard (white elementary school), Hunt (black high school), and S. D. Lee (white high school) were built, and, in this instance, a city took the problem of equalization largely into its own hands. While the school system eventually received some \$300,000 in equalization funds for work at S. D. Lee and Hunt, the initial construction cost for the two high schools was paid entirely through the city bond issue, making this was an unusual case in the state during this period where two more-or-less equal high schools were built simultaneously, one for white students and one for black students.

Architect R. W. Naef, His Evolution as a Designer and His Knowledge of the Technics of Architecture

Robert W. Naef (1900-1974) received a degree in architectural engineering from the University of Illinois in 1923. From 1923 to 1928 he worked in the Jackson, Mississippi office of the dean of Mississippi architects, N. W. Overstreet, as a specification writer, structural engineer, and eventually as office manager. He did the same work for long-time Mississippi practitioner Claude H. Lindsley from 1928 to 1931. Overstreet and Lindsley were the two most prominent advocates of traditional architectural styles in Mississippi at this time and were very knowledgeable about concrete construction. Naef opened his own office in 1931, and by 1950 ran one of the largest practices in the state. He produced many buildings in traditional styles, including some quite inspired ones, such as the Kennon Observatory (1939) at the University of Mississippi, which is an innovative Georgian-revival composition. By 1946, when his office was responsible for Morgan Center, an early shopping plaza in Jackson, he was exploring the possibilities of the modernist International Style. In the next decade, his office produced buildings displaying a kind of modern formalism, such as the symmetrical Carrier Hall (1954) at the University of Mississippi, which has a modernist flat roof above a front loggia with columns

⁴ Baughn, Jennifer V. Opager, "Education, Segregation, and Modernization: Mississippi's School Equalization Building Program, 1946-1961, *Arris*, Vol. 16 (2005), pp. 37-41 and Charles C. Bolton, "Mississippi's School Equalization Program, 1945-1954," *Journal of Southern History*, 66, No. 4 (November 2000): 781-814.

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of classical inspiration. It is within this context of both latent traditionalism and emerging modernist sensibilities that the design for S. D. Lee High School must be considered.⁵ Also, throughout his academic training, employment with other architects, and as the principal in his own office, and whether using traditional or modernist forms, Naef demonstrated abundant knowledge of, concern for, and innovative thinking about building materials and methods of construction.

Twentieth-Century School Design in Mississippi and R. W. Naef's Role In It

After the consolidation of one-room school houses into larger structures serving larger catchment areas, which began in 1910 and continued through World War II, Mississippi's schools for white students and some for black students were designed in informed traditional styles, most commonly some variety of colonial revivalism, and they typically had so-called 'alphabet plans.' These plans, which combined classroom wings and an auditorium in symmetrical T, U, H, and L configurations, were quite efficient for modest-sized schools but spread out enough to allow for adequate natural light and cross ventilation. Likewise, taken to three dimensions, their projecting wings were unified under singular gabled and hipped roofs.

The period of equalization-school construction witnessed a rapid change from traditional to modernist designs throughout Mississippi, and this modernism was frequently derived from the International Style, with its associated horizontality and asymmetrical planning. By 1954, the *Architectural Record* magazine had recognized the prominence of modern architecture in Mississippi and documented this phenomenon in their September, 1954 issue in an article titled "Architectural Practice in Jackson, Mississippi."⁶ This article concentrated on practitioners who had weathered the Great Depression and served in World War II and had set up their practices immediately following the war. However, it included photographs of and commentary on the University of Mississippi Medical School and Teaching Hospital (1952-55), which had been designed by Naef, Overstreet, and E. L. Malvaney, as well as Naef's College Park Auditorium (1949-52), and it reported that Naef's name was one of those most often given in response to the question "In your opinion which architect in Jackson has done the most for the profession?" As a member of the generation beginning their practices in the 1930s, R. W. Naef was not the most progressive of Mississippi's mid-century modernists, but he was a force among them. As a man who had been trained as a traditionalist and made the transition to modernism as a mature practitioner, he was in a position to successfully combine aspects of both approaches, and as a practitioner well schooled and experienced in the technical aspects of his profession, he was in a position to exploit both older and newer technologies.

With his T-shaped plan for S. D. Lee, Naef continued the alphabet-plan tradition, but because S. D. Lee was much larger and more functionally complex than the earlier alphabet schools, he had to develop new organizational and massing strategies. In his T plan, the foot of the T became the International Style classroom wing with administrative offices and library. It is

⁵ "Questionnaire For Architects' Roster And/Or Register of Architects Qualified For Federal Public Works" submitted to the National American Institute of Architects by R. W. Naef on 11 June 1946, copy in the R. W. Naef file, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) and R. W. Naef in the MDAH Historic Resources Database (<https://www.apps.mdah.ms.gov/Public/search.aspx>).

⁶ pp. 141-52.

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a streamlined, horizontally proportioned mass with ribbons of windows and long, low concrete base and spandrels and apparently flat (when seen from ground level, but actually slightly sloping) roof. The second-floor library, which is a southward, second-floor extension of this classroom wing, has a steeper-sloping gable roof. Within the head of his T plan, Naef combined multiple functions of various sizes into four clusters: the library and associated classroom; auditorium/band rooms together with arts classrooms; cafeteria and kitchen; and industrial arts classrooms. Because of the diversity of rooms sizes and functions here, he chose to use more traditional, gable-roofed units throughout, with the units alternately projecting to the south under longitudinal gables and set back under transverse (east-west) gables. Overall for S. D. Lee High School, Naef produced a novel, clever, and energetic, if not fully refined, merging of traditionalist and modernist thinking. (The gymnasium and second classroom wing are consistent with Naef's original vision.)

R. W. Naef and Innovations in Concrete Construction

Given his training and experience as a structural engineer and his work experience with N. W. Overstreet and Claude H. Lindsley, it is not surprising that R. W. Naef was an innovator in concrete building construction. When partners during the 1930s, Overstreet and A. Hays Town experimented with poured-in-place concrete and documented their thinking in several articles published in the trade journal *Architectural Concrete*.⁷ The two architects stressed the economy of concrete construction in a state where hand labor was plentiful and inexpensive. Town divided the firm's contemporary designs into "conservative modern" and "ultra modern," with the former tending toward the Moderne and the later toward the International Style, meaning that he did not have a modernist ideology or related purist sensibility; he saw Modernism as simply the latest style.

Naef incorporated similar thinking in his design for S. D. Lee High School, where he combined International Style forms—apparently flat roofs, horizontal base walls and spandrels, and horizontal ribbon windows—with gabled roofs, and combined exposed concrete and innovative concrete formwork with exposed natural-finish wooden construction in the form of laminated beams, purlins, and decking. Like Overstreet and Town before him, he documented his ideas in *Architectural Concrete* in an article discussing the structural system at S. D. Lee (as well as at a building for the Lipton Tea company in Virginia, a project executed jointly with Claude H. Lindsley). In this article, titled "New Construction Technique Proves Economical," Naef described his system for S. D. Lee wherein the concrete frame—columns, beams, and slabs—was poured first, followed by the walls and spandrels, and he argued that this system simplified and reduced formwork.⁸ Illustrated by construction details showing formwork and supporting scantlings, his text describes concrete columns poured with steel reinforcing rods projecting from their sides at eight-inch intervals and reusable wall forms made from "plastic coated plywood." Once the formwork was removed from the columns, the reusable forms were inserted into the bays between them and the reinforcing steel in the walls was "lapped" over that of the columns, and the walls or spandrels were then poured. Horizontal seams produced by this construction technique are visible throughout the building, as are sloping seams in the stairwells.

⁷ Town, A. Hays, "Design for Space Economy," Vol. 4, No. 2 (1938), p. 25.

⁸ *Architectural Concrete* No. 54 (1954).

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At column centerlines, “rustication (a term Naef borrowed from classical architecture) strips” attached to the forms produced the vertical grooves seen at the base walls and spandrels.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

"The Answer in 20 Questions . . . Vote for the School Bond Issue," [paid advertisement] [Columbus] *Commercial Dispatch*, 19 November 1950.

"Architectural Practice in Jackson, Miss.," *Architectural Record*, 116:3 (September 1954), 141-52.

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Naef, R. W. "New Construction Technique Proves Economical," *Architectural Concrete*, 1954.

"New Lee High School Going Into Use Soon, Lacks Little," [Columbus] *Commercial Dispatch*, 23 August, 1953.

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"Questionnaire For Architects' Roster And/Or Register of Architects Qualified For Federal Public Works" submitted to the National American Institute of Architects by R. W. Naef on 11 June 1946, copy in the R. W. Naef file, Historic Preservation Division, Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH), Jackson, MS and R. W. Naef in the MDAH Historic Resources Database (<https://www.apps.mdah.ms.gov/Public/search.aspx>).

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"S. D. Lee Middle School and Robert E. Hunt Intermediate School," Mississippi Landmark Significance Report, prepared by Jennifer Baughn, Historic Preservation Division, MDAH, copy in the S. D. Lee file at the Historic Preservation Division, Jackson, MS.

Town, A. Hays, "Design for Space Economy," *Architectural Concrete*, 4: 2 (1938), 24-26.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
___ previously listed in the National Register
X 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:

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 087-CBS-0269

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 14.4 acres

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 33.517441	Longitude: -88.418824
2. Latitude: 33.517698	Longitude: -88.417147
3. Latitude: 33.514112	Longitude: -88.417314
4. Latitude: 33.514080	Longitude: -88.419001

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

A tract of land located in the East Half of the Northeast Quarter of Section 9, Township 18, Range 18 West, Lowndes County, Mississippi and more particularly described as follows:

Commencing at the point marking the Northwest Corner of the Northeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter of said Section 9; run thence south a distance of 76.0 feet to a point; run thence east at distance of 383.0 feet to a point; run thence North 02 degrees 15 minutes East a

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distance of 30.0 feet to a point on the north right of way of a public city street known as 18th Avenue North and the point of beginning of the herein described tract.

Continue thence North 02 degrees 15 minutes East a distance of 328.5 feet to an existing 1 inch pipe; run thence North 88 degrees 27 minutes East a distance of 8.0 feet to a point; run thence North 03 degrees 15 minutes East a distance of 323.5 feet to a point; run thence North 79 degrees 27 minutes West a distance of 13.8 feet to a point; run thence North 02 degrees 15 minutes East a distance of 50 feet to a point; run thence East for 525 feet, more or less, to a point on the east boundary line of Military Lee LLC's property; run thence South 01 degree 41 minutes West a distance of 60 feet, more or less, to a point on the west right of way of a public city street known as Military Road; run thence southwesterly along said west right of way of Military Road and a curve to the left a distance of 107 feet having a chord bearing and distance of South 20 degrees 20 minutes West-105.9 feet and a radius of 219.5 feet to a point; run thence South 02 degrees 15 minutes West, along said west right of way of Military Road a distance of 527.7 feet to a point intersection said north right of way of 18th Avenue North; run thence South 89 degrees 23 minutes West along the north right of way of 18th Avenue North for a distance of 505.0 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the tract of land operated as S.D. Lee High School from 1953 until the school's closure in 2011. The tract is now owned by Military Lee LLC, which is rehabilitating the property.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: michael fazio
organization: private consultant
street & number: P. O. Box 2870
city or town: Mississippi State state: MS zip code: 39762
e-mail: mfazio@caad.msstate.edu
telephone: 662-312-3039
date: 28 August 2018

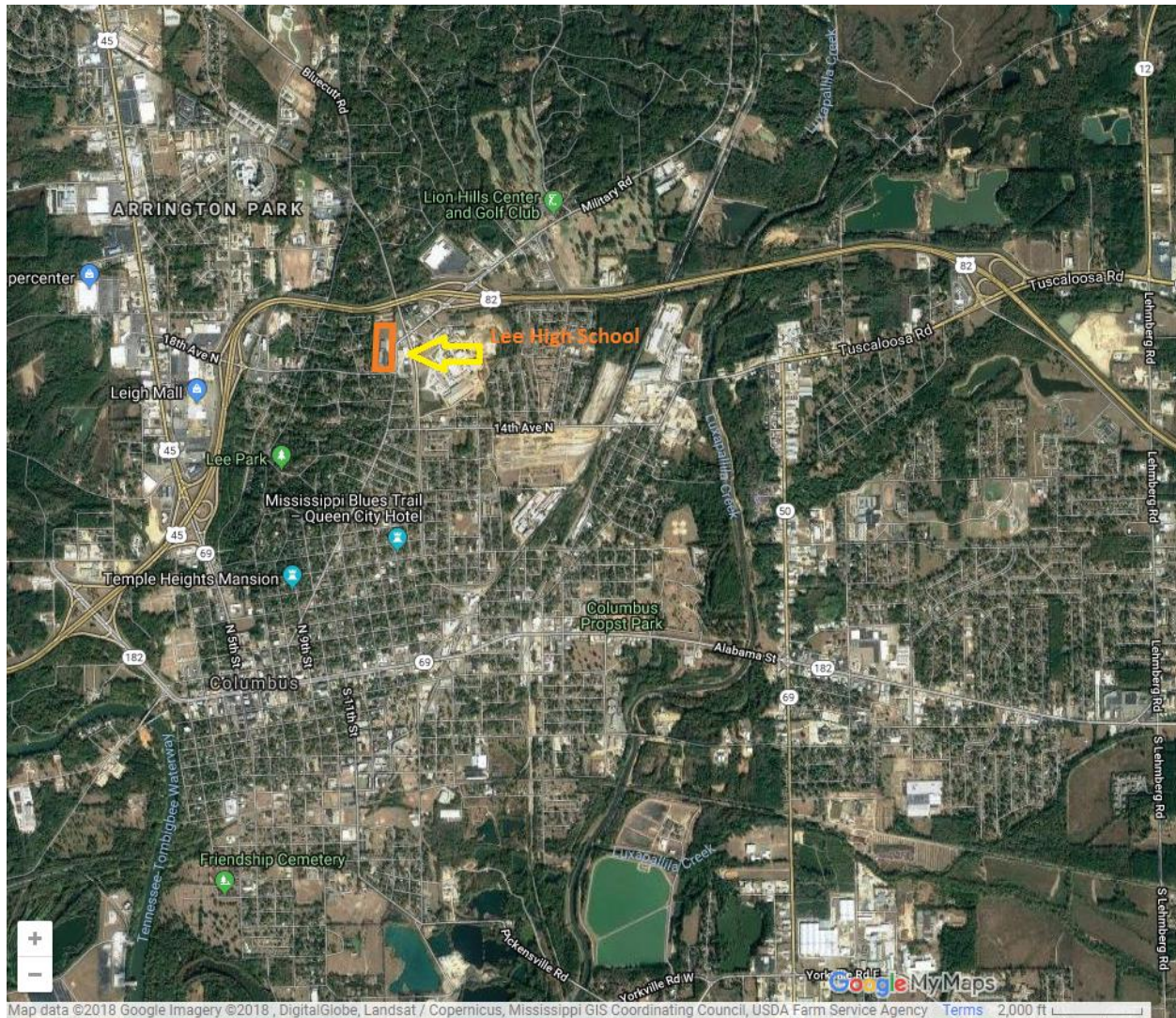
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.



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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: S. D. Lee High School

City or Vicinity: Columbus

County: Lowndes

State: MS

Photographer: Michael Fazio

Date of photograph: June, 2018

1. Auditorium and classrooms, looking southwest
2. Principal (east) entrance, looking west
3. 1953 classroom wing, auditorium to the left, connector to the right, looking southwest
4. Gymnasium, looking southwest
5. Arts classrooms (right), Library above arts classrooms (left), looking northwest
6. Bus canopy and vocational wing (left), cafeteria (center), classrooms and library (right), looking northeast
7. 1967 classroom wing, looking northwest
8. Auditorium interior, in the balcony, looking northeast
9. Entrance lobby, looking north
10. Library interior, looking northeast
11. 1953 classroom wing, first-floor corridor, looking north
12. 1953 classroom wing, first floor, typical classroom, looking northeast
13. 1953 classroom wing, stair to second floor, looking west
14. 1967 classroom wing, first-floor corridor, looking south
15. 1967 classroom wing, first floor, typical classroom, looking southeast
16. 1967 classroom wing, stair to the second floor, looking east
17. 1967 classroom wing, second floor, typical classroom, looking southwest
18. Gymnasium interior, from the south balcony, looking northeast
19. Aerial view with property lines

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.



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0001



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0002



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0003



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0004



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0005



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0006



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0007



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0008



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0009



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0010



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0011



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0012



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0013



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0014



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0015



MS_ Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0016



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0017



MS_Lowndes County_S.D. Lee High School_0018