

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: District No. 5 Schoolhouse
 Other names/site number: Underhill Center School
 Name of related multiple property listing:
Educational Resources of Vermont
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 32 Pleasant Valley Road
 City or town: Underhill State: Vermont County: Chittenden
 Not For Publication: Vicinity: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 <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
_____ Signature of commenting official:	_____ Date
_____ Title :	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- 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>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	Total

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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education/School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Work In Progress

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frieze. The primary Greek Revival details are located at the entry door, which is centered on the façade. In typical Greek Revival fashion, the wide, six-paneled door has three short panels at the bottom and three long ones above. The enframing around the door consists of flat pilasters supporting a simple entablature. Windows throughout the building are 6/6 double-hung, true-divided-light, wood-sash replacements based on the remaining historic windows that were left after a fire in 1951.

The main entry on the façade (northwest elevation) is flanked by two six-over-six windows, with two more of the same windows directly above on the second story. Above the entablature of the door is a wooden sign that reads: "Underhill Dist. 5 School 1861-1951." Below the peak of the roof are two metal brackets supporting a vertical flagpole.

The side (southwest) elevation features large banks of windows on the first and second stories on the rear two-thirds of the elevation. There are six windows on each story for a total of twelve, and the front third of this elevation is blank. These large banks of windows on a south-facing elevation are characteristic of 19th century schoolhouse design.

The rear (southeast) elevation has a recent porch addition and ramp for ADA access. There is a secondary entrance/exit to the building on this porch. On the west side of the door is a single six-over-six double-hung window, and on the east side of the door are two more of the same windows. There are four windows on the second story that are aligned vertically above the lower windows and door.

The other side (northeast) elevation is very simple, with no windows and single door on the second story. A metal fire escape staircase provides access to and from the second story, and is presently the only means of access to the second story of the building.

INTERIOR

The interior of the District No. 5 Schoolhouse reflects both the form and function of the building, as well as the changes made to it over the decades. The main entry on the northwest elevation leads into a large, open space that measures 36' long x 24' wide. Historically, the main entry opened into a small antechamber measuring 9' deep x 24' wide that was separated by a wall from the main classroom space. A staircase to the second floor was in the southwest corner of the antechamber. The wall and stairs are no longer extant, having been destroyed by fire in 1951. There is a small enclosed storage space/restroom to the left of the entry. Running down the center of the ceiling in the main classroom space is a laminated wood beam supported by two wooden posts. There is a wooden picture rail on three of the four interior walls. The interior walls have been repaired with drywall, and the old wood floor has been replaced with a new wood floor.

At the present time, the second story is only accessible via the exterior fire escape. Unlike the first story, the second story has not been substantially rehabilitated and retains many original features including the wall separating the antechamber from the main classroom. The present entrance to the second story, at the rear of the northeast elevation, opens directly into the main

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room. Measuring 27' long x 24' wide with a single metal column support at the center, the main room has fiberboard walls with 3" wide wooden battens over the seams. The fiberboard is backed by three-inch wide tongue and groove boards. The floor retains the 1915 tongue and groove boards on top of eight-to-twelve-inch-wide boards that are approximately 2.5 inches thick. On the north wall of the main room there is a metal thimble in the chimney, to which a wood stove would have been attached.

The ante chamber measures 9' deep x 24' wide and is located at the front (northwest) end of the building and shares a single doorway with the main room. As indicated by the wooden newel posts that remain in place, this is where the interior stairs were originally located when the second story was constructed in 1915. The stairs were lost in a 1951 fire and not replaced.

The roof is framed with common rafters made of peeled logs that support horizontal sheathing boards.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Education
Architecture

Period of Significance

1861-1951

Significant Dates

1915

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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 District No. 5 Schoolhouse is locally significant under Criteria A for its contributions to the broad patterns of educational history in Underhill, Vermont. It is also locally significant under Criterion C for its Greek Revival design and its embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of the schoolhouse property type. It meets the registration requirements for the "Multiple Classroom School" property type as defined by the "Educational Resources in Vermont"

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multiple property listing. The period of significance begins in 1861, when the first story of the school was built, and ends in 1951, the year the building ceased being used as a schoolhouse.

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

Education has played a significant and often progressive role in the history of Vermont. The 1777 constitution of the Republic of Vermont was the first constitution in what was to become the United States to include a provision for education. It stated: "A school or schools shall be established in each town, by the legislature, for the convenient instruction of youth, with such salaries to the masters, paid by each town, making proper use of school lands in each town..." This constitutional requirement shaped how small, rural Vermont communities like Underhill would deal with education for decades to come.

A 1782 state statute required all towns to either create a single district or divide the town into into multiple districts, with each district having authority over its educational facilities and programs.¹ In Underhill, the town was divided into multiple districts, and by 1869 had fourteen school districts.² The first school building in the town was built c. 1787 in District No. 1 and was made of logs.³ District No. 5 was established in 1811, and in 1820 the first schoolhouse in the district was built. Like the District No. 1 building, it was built of logs and measured 16' x 20'. The 1820 schoolhouse was replaced with another log building in 1835, which remained in service until 1861, when it was torn or burned down by town officials after serving as a "pest house."⁴ This use may have been related to a diphtheria epidemic in this and an adjoining school district in 1860-1861.⁵ Figure 1 shows what is believed to be the District No. 15 schoolhouse, also built of hewn logs, and probably similar in design to the earlier District No. 1 and No. 5 Schoolhouses.

¹ John A. Sautter, "Equity and History: Vermont's Education Revolution of the Early 1890s." *Vermont History* Vol. 76, no. 1 (2008): 3.

² For a brief period in the 1860s there was also a District No. 15 school, on the Mountain Road near the Green Camp.

³ F.W. Beers, A.D. Ellis, and G.G. Soule, *Atlas of Chittenden County, VT* (Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1971), 5.

⁴ Patrick Lamphere, letter to Nancy E. Boone, June 28, 1985.

⁵ Town of Underhill Death Records

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Figure 1. Log Schoolhouse, Underhill, VT.
Courtesy of UVM Landscape Change Program

After the destruction of the 1835 District No. 5 Schoolhouse in 1861, the need for a new, updated building became obvious. The new building, constructed in 1861 and known as the Center School, was another one story, one room school. The district minutes briefly describe the building: "A 24' x 36' building with the end facing the road, door center front, two windows in front, three on each side, twelve lights 10" x 14", with a wood shed, 12' x 16' on the grounds." The cost for the building was \$616.91, slightly under the \$700 budget. Unlike its log predecessors, however, the 1861 building was of frame construction with wood clapboard siding and numerous windows. This building is shown in Figure 2.

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Figure 2. View looking east at the District No. 5 Schoolhouse, in the center of the image. Due to the lack of a second story, this photo was taken pre-1915. Courtesy of the Underhill Historical Society.

In 1885, fourteen individual school districts, each with its own schoolhouse, were operating in Underhill. In 1892, a new state law changed the state's funding for schools and made the town, not individual districts, the basic unit of control with responsibility for funding both the schools and the teachers. This change forced the closure of many of the smaller district schools and led to the consolidation of many smaller districts. Some former district schools, such as the District No. 5 Schoolhouse, were retained for use as town schools and remained in service. In 1915, due to effects resulting from the closure of smaller schools and an increase in population, town officials decided to enlarge the District No. 5 Schoolhouse. This was done by adding a second story to the 1861 building and clustering the windows on the southwest elevation to provide as much daylight as possible to the interior of the building. A staircase was constructed in the northwest corner of the antechamber, providing access to the new second level. With the addition of a second story, the District No. 5 Schoolhouse became a rare example of a two-story school with one classroom on each floor and an interior staircase. Most two-room schools were one story, with the classrooms side-by-side and accessed by a central entry.⁶

⁶ Ann Cousins and others, *Educational Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Listing* (Montpelier, VT: Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, 1993), F6.

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Between 1915 and 1951 additional changes to the building occurred, including small additions to serve the needs of the growing student population and the installation of a fire escape on the west elevation. Figure 3 shows a flat-roofed, 12' x 16' addition on the northeast elevation of the building. This addition was built in 1926 and contained a woodshed and chemical toilets. This addition is no longer present. Electricity was brought into the building in the early 1930s, although it lacked indoor plumbing and continued to be heated by woodstoves. In 1951, a fire that began in the first-floor woodstove caused extensive damage to the building.



Figure 3. View looking west during the fire in 1951. The flat-roofed addition housed a woodshed and chemical toilets. Courtesy of the Underhill Historical Society.

Underhill's student population fluctuated in the mid-20th century, with only five schools serving a total of eighty-five pupils in 1946. By 1951, however, the student population had grown to 114 and the superintendent began to recommend the transportation of 7th and 8th-grade students from two of the other schools to the District No. 5 Schoolhouse. This plan was derailed by the fire in 1951, which caused significant damage to the building and posed a dilemma for the town. Should they repair the building and continue to use multiple schoolhouses around the town, or should they consolidate all the town's educational facilities at one site to serve the entire town? The decision was made to build a new elementary school, the Underhill Central School, just 1/10 mile up the road from the District No. 5 Schoolhouse.

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No longer needed for educational purposes, the town converted the District No. 5 Schoolhouse into a garage for a school bus. This was accomplished by cutting away the lower-right portion of the façade and installing a laterally-sliding garage door. The building was gradually fell into disrepair and stood abandoned for nearly thirty years. In 1980, the poor condition of the building was causing concern, and the school district conveyed it to the town with the hopes that they could restore the building. The town, in turn, enlisted the Underhill Historical Society to oversee the stabilization and rehabilitation of the building. The historical society studied the project and determined that they would restore the school to its 1915 appearance, because anything prior to that date would require the removal of the second story. It also allowed for the removal of the 1926 woodshed/outhouse addition on the east elevation, which had fallen into disrepair. Between 1983 and 1987, the Underhill Historical Society undertook numerous repairs, including removing the garage door on the façade and restoring its original window and door configuration based on historic photographs and physical evidence. These efforts were sufficient to stabilize the building and prevent further deterioration, and efforts are now underway to fully restore the building and use the first story as a community meeting space. The second story may be used by the Underhill Historical Society, the group responsible for the building's continued existence today.

Comparative Evaluation

Underhill used to have fourteen district schoolhouses, but only six remain standing today. Except for the District No. 5 Schoolhouse, which is owned by the town, the other remaining schoolhouses are all privately owned and are either vacant or have been converted into residential properties. The District No. 5 Schoolhouse is the most intact example of its type in the town, and it has not been significantly altered since it achieved its present form in 1915.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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

Andrews, Edward D. "The County Grammar Schools and Academies of Vermont."
Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society, v.4 (1936): 117-209.

Beers, F.W., A.D. Ellis, and G.G. Soule. *Atlas of Chittenden County, VT*. Rutland, VT:
Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1971.

Bush, George G. *History of Education in Vermont*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government
Printing Office, 1900.

Cousins, Ann, Mary Hotaling, Stephanie Jacon, James Lindberg, Douglas McVarish, Nadine
Miller, and Amy Worden. *Educational Resources of Vermont Multiple Property Listing*.
Montpelier, VT: Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, 1993.

District No 5 Schoolhouse <http://underhillhistoricalsociety.org/tags/distirct-no-5-schoolhouse>

Fuller, Town report of schools. Underhill, Vermont: 1885- 1953

Sautter, John A. "Equity and History: Vermont's Education Revolution of the Early 1890s."
Vermont History Vol. 76, No. 1 (2008): 1-18.

School No.5, Book of records years 1853-1869,

Town of Underhill Death Records

Underhill Historical Society, District No. 5 Schoolhouse Task Force Summary Report, 2014

Vermont Division for Historic Preservation, *Underhill Historic Sites and Structures Survey*,
1979.

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 # _____

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Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Underhill Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 0415-30

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 1.4 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: 44.50883 N Longitude: 72.89543 W

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

The boundary of the District No. 5 Schoolhouse is as described in the lease dated March 25, 1861: "Beginning at a stake in the line of the highway a few rods westerly from the foundation of said schoolhouse, thence a right angle with the line of the highway a southerly direction four rods to a corner, thence an easterly direction six rods to an elm tree marked on two sides an standing partly in a small stream, thence a northerly direction four rods to the line of the highway, thence on a line of the highway six rods to the place of beginning."

Tax Parcel ID number: PV032-X

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.) This is the boundary description used in the 1861 lease and encompasses the property historically associated with the school.

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Daniel Rhode
organization: University of Vermont
street & number: 133 South Prospect Street
city or town: Burlington state: VT zip code: 05401

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.)

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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: District No. 5 Schoolhouse

City or Vicinity: Underhill

County: Chittenden County

State: Vermont

Photographer: Daniel Rhode: Photographs 0001, 0005, 0006, 0007, 0008, and 0009

Date Photographed: December 2016

Devin Colman: Photographs 0002, 0003, 0004, and 0010

Date Photographed: November 2017

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

- 1 of 10. Exterior view looking east at the southwest (side) and northwest (front) elevations. Note the large bank of windows on the first and second stories of the southeast elevation that provide maximum daylighting to the interior.
- 2 of 10. Exterior view looking southeast at the northwest (front) elevation.
- 3 of 10. Exterior view looking south at the northwest (front) and northeast (side) elevations. Note the metal fire escape, installed in 1915 when the second story was added to the building.
- 4 of 10. Exterior view looking northwest at the southeast (rear) elevation.
- 5 of 10. Interior view looking southeast on the first floor.
- 6 of 10. Interior view looking east on the first floor. The space to the left of the chimney used to enclosed as a vestibule.

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- 7 of 10. Interior view looking northwest on the first floor. The primary entry door is in the center of the far wall, and the stairs to the second story were in the corner to the left of the door.
- 8 of 10. Interior view looking west on the second floor. The wall separates the classroom from the vestibule. Smoke damage from the 1951 fire remains visible on the wall.
- 9 of 10. Interior view looking south on the second floor. The banks of windows provide maximum daylighting to the interior.
- 10 of 10. Interior view looking southwest in the second-floor vestibule. Stairs to the first floor were located to the right of the newel post in the center of the image. Smoke damage from the 1951 fire remains visible in this space.

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.